



WESTERN RECORDER

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Kentucky Notes



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FOR THE RECORD

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Survey: College students ignorant of constitutional religious freedoms

Washington (RNS)—America's undergraduates are mostly ignorant about the First Amendment's proclamation about freedom of religion, a survey shows.

A survey released Nov. 20 by the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education found that 30 percent of students overall named freedom of religion when they were asked to name any of the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment.

But when asked to specify which freedom is addressed first in the amendment, 10 percent of public college students and 5 percent of private college students correctly said freedom of religion.

"These survey results are disheartening, but they unfortunately are not surprising," said Alan Charles Kores, president of the foundation.

Far more students overall—73 percent—mentioned freedom of speech when asked to name any specific right guaranteed by the First Amendment. Twenty percent cited right of assembly and association and 6 percent mentioned right to petition.

The foundation seeks to preserve the liberty of students on college campuses and has defended students whose religious rights it believes have been abridged.

The survey polled 1,037 students from 339 colleges and universities. The findings had a margin of error of plus or minus 2.8 percentage points.

Tears for a forgotten city



GOSPEL BURDEN On the outskirts of a quiet Chinese town, peasants and factory workers walk to their employment. A Baptist worker there believes that if new Christians feel a burden for their city's lostness, God will use that to spread the gospel throughout the province. This month is the international missions emphasis for the Southern Baptist International Mission Board. The national goal for the agency's Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions is \$133 million (IMB photo)

Baptist worker, Chinese believers pray for miracles

Somewhere in China—Sheer hills rise around a quiet Chinese town, framing the idyllic setting like a Chinese alpine village.

Often overlooked in a province known more for ethnic minority groups, the city of nearly 500,000 people often is just a bus stop on a frequently traveled commercial route.

There is a park with a relaxed, festive ambience for strolling couples and groups of older women practicing aerobic dance at twilight. On sunny afternoons, men fly kites, pinpoints of color against the steep foothills

of southern China.

It was to the top of one of these surrounding mountains that "Barnabas," a Baptist worker, brought four natives of the city, Christians he had met.

Together, they looked out over the city.

Barnabas describes the city as being like many others in China, in the sense that "it has existed within a spiritual vacuum for so long," the result of a government preaching atheism to two generations of people.

A Buddhist temple and a Taoist monastery stand, "but nobody is be-

lieving in anything," Barnabas says. "Religion exists only in form, almost nonexistent.

"As we looked over the city," he says, "we asked them how many believers there were." The Chinese answered that there had been 1,000 believers, but now only about 300 Christians are still alive.

"Then I asked them: 'How do you think God feels about only 300 believers out of 500,000 people?' They dropped to their knees and began to weep," Barnabas recalls. "I didn't need to ask them how they felt about it. It was obvious by their weeping."

□ See "Baptist, Chinese ..." *Page 6*



That all peoples may know Him
Follow God's Purpose

Dated material — Please deliver by Wednesday, December 3

Advent customs grow in popularity among many evangelicals

By Christina Denny
Religion News Service

Washington (RNS)—Some Christians will celebrate the start of the new year next Sunday, but there will be no parties, parades or fireworks, unless you count a single lit candle.

And instead of raucous renditions of "Auld Lang Syne," you are more likely to catch the plaintive strains of a medieval Latin hymn when the new liturgical year begins on the first Sunday of Advent, Nov. 30.

Through Scripture, ritual and song, Christians who observe the reflective four-week season will, at home and at church, prepare to celebrate the nativity of Jesus.

But Advent, pastors say, is not just a spiritual counterpart to the secular holiday blitz.

"Advent is pre-eminently a calling into question of what we think of as ultimate," said Daniel Benedict, worship resources director for the General Board of Discipleship of the United Methodist Church. "We are waiting for what God is yet to do. Advent sounds that note very strongly."

Rooted in the Latin word "adventus," meaning "coming" or "arrival," Advent is a season of spiritual preparation both for Christmas, when Christians mark Jesus' birth, and for his Second Coming on Judgment Day. Its theological reach thus spans from the messianic prophecies and longings of the ancient Israelites to the end of the world.

Not as old as the feast of Christmas itself, Advent might have originated in fourth and fifth century Gaul and Spain, where a pre-Epiph-

any time of prayer and fasting was observed likely to prepare for baptisms held on the feast commemorating the baptism of Jesus.

By the fifth century, another custom had arisen of giving sermons exhorting the faithful to prepare for the feast of Christmas.

The observances spread; in 567 the Second Council of Tours called on local monks to fast from the beginning of December until Christmas.

It was later expanded to 40 days to mirror the Lenten fast, and the laity were encouraged to join in. In the 11th century, Advent was shortened, and it now starts four Sundays before Christmas.

The penitential dimension of Advent has largely been dropped, although Eastern Orthodox Christians still observe a 40-day period of

prayer and fasting before celebrating Jesus nativity.

By the time it was a fixture on the Christian calendar, Advent had been theologically linked with the Second Coming—a "dual Advent," as Dennis Bratcher terms it.

Bratcher is director of the Oklahoma City-based Christian Resource Institute (www.cresourcei.org), a Web site he created to provide non-denominational biblical and theological resources relating to everyday Christian life.

"We usually associate Advent just with Christmas," he said, "but it really has a double sense on a theological, spiritual level, as it articulates that sense of hope, of anticipation, that God has worked in history and will continue to work in history."

□ See "Advent growing ..." *Page 8*

State conventions cut budgets, affirm role of marriage

Nashville (BP)—One third of state Baptist conventions this fall reduced their budgets for next year in response to declining giving by churches. Meanwhile, 15 conventions affirmed marriage as a union between one man and one woman.

Financial cutbacks were approved by messengers in Georgia, Illinois, Kansas-Nebraska, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia. Slight decreases in next year's budgets were approved in New England, New York and West Virginia.

Messengers in Louisiana, Nevada, New York and Pennsylvania/South Jersey approved slight percentage increases in the amount of budget funds forwarded to the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program. In California, however, messengers lowered the portion they will send the SBC from 30 percent to 27 percent, stating an intention to repay the 3 percent when funds are available.

A motion failed in South Carolina to study incrementally increasing the percentage of Cooperative Program receipts forwarded to the SBC to 50 percent—up from the current 40/60 SBC/state convention al-

location.

In several states messengers passed resolutions encouraging churches to promote the Cooperative Program, including Maryland/Delaware, Mississippi and Oklahoma. The resolution in Oklahoma specifically encouraged CP-supported ministries to "resist the temptation of making direct appeals to our churches for operational funding."

The executive director and outgoing president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas asked churches to adopt a giving plan that would assign 79 percent of their missions budget to the BGCT and allow church members to decide where to send the remaining 21 percent, whether to the SBC or the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

Mississippi Baptists defeated a proposed constitutional amendment specifically excluding CBF members from leadership positions, and then approved a bylaws amendment encouraging convention loyalty.

Missouri Baptists voted to defund William Jewell College of more than \$1 million, citing concern over issues related to homosexuality and morality. The Baptist General Association of Virginia es-

crowded funds to Averett University due to unresolved concern that an AU professor condoned homosexuality and a guest speaker questioned biblical authority.

Support for the Federal Marriage Amendment came from Alabama, Arkansas, Indiana, Kansas-Nebraska, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, South Carolina and Tennessee.

Various resolutions supported a traditional biblical definition of the family and, in most cases, stated opposition to same-sex "marriage." Such resolutions were passed in Alabama, Louisiana, Maryland/Delaware, Michigan, New England, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Tennessee and West Virginia.

Faith statements affirmed

In Illinois and Maryland/Delaware, messengers affirmed various faith statements over the years as expressions of Baptist beliefs. Maryland/Delaware messengers passed an operating document affirming churches that adopt "the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 or 1963 or similar statement in accord with the beliefs expressed in those Southern Baptist documents."

Support of the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message revision was approved

by New York Baptists. Missouri Baptists approved the 2000 statement for the MBC staff. Michigan Baptists clarified that they "affirm in word and spirit the 2000 edition of the Baptist Faith and Message."

In West Virginia, messengers affirmed the inerrancy of Scripture and the exclusivity of the gospel. South Carolina Baptists affirmed baptism by immersion as the only biblical, historical and proper mode of Christian baptism. The resolution noted that churches no longer requiring baptism by immersion for membership have chosen not to be in good standing with the convention. Because it is a resolution, however, the statement apparently carries no enforcement power.

Support for military personnel and veterans was expressed in Alabama, Arizona, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina Utah-Idaho and West Virginia. Prayer for President Bush and other elected leaders was encouraged in Alabama, Arizona, South Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Utah-Idaho and West Virginia.

Opposition to gambling was expressed in Alabama, Kansas-Nebraska, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland-Delaware, Oklahoma, South Carolina and West Virginia.

BAPTIST DIGEST

Canadians celebrate cooperation. Canadian Baptists celebrated 50 years of cooperation with Southern Baptists during their recent annual meeting. Baptists in the northwest United States began working with Baptists in Canada in 1953. The Canadian Convention of Southern Baptists was organized in 1985 as an autonomous convention. D.K. Hale, national partnership/volunteer ministries coordinator, reported that 3,000 volunteers from the U.S. worked alongside 2,000 Canadian Baptist volunteers during the past year. The CCSB currently has 50 partnerships with state conventions, associations and local churches.

Dakotas establish convention. Dakota Baptists celebrated their 50th anniversary in Southern Baptist life by approving a move to state convention status and a name change from the Dakota Southern Baptist Fellowship to the Dakota Baptist Convention. The change to state convention status, which will provide Dakota representation on Southern Baptist Convention boards, will become effective Jan. 1. The fellowship's executive board elected Jim Hamilton, pastor of First Baptist Church of Sellersburg, Ind., as executive director of the new convention. He is a former president of the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana and the Alaska Baptist Convention.

Southwestern names vice president. Rudy Gonzalez, former director of interfaith evangelism with the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, has been named vice president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. Seminary President Paige Patterson said Gonzalez' responsibilities will include overseeing chapel and coordinating student services. David McQuitty, former dean of students at Southwestern, was named associate vice president.

Norton joins ABP staff. Associated Baptist Press has named Tim Norton director of development. Norton, 41, comes to ABP from the Lord's Day Alliance of the U.S., where he served as executive director. He previously was business manager for the Georgia Christian Index and associate vice president for development at Palm Beach Atlantic University.

Seminary names communications director. Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, has named Gregory Tomlin, 32, director of communications. Tomlin, a graduate of Southwestern, previously was associate director of communications. He also is an adjunct professor of church history.

LifeWay's 'Rickshaw Rally' VBS curriculum sparks controversy

By Bob Allen
EthicsDaily.com

Nashville—"Far-out Far East Rickshaw Rally—Racing to the Son" is a VBS race that will have kids dashing through the streets of Tokyo, climbing Mt. Fuji, and diving for pearls," says a promotion of LifeWay Christian Resources' 2004 vacation Bible school curriculum on the Southern Baptist agency's Web site.

But some Asian-Americans are taking offense at the use of stereotypes in Southern Baptist churches such as rickshaw races, kimonos, chopsticks, takeout boxes and karate uniforms.

"While LifeWay's attempt at incorporating diversity into their curriculum is admirable and appreciated, the resulting product is grossly misguided and inappropriate," contends a Web site, "Reconsidering Rickshaw Rally," (www.geocities.com/reconsidering_rickshawrally).

"I was stunned in this day and age there would be this degree of insensitivity, there would be this degree of just lack of awareness," said Soong-Chan Rah, senior pastor of Cambridge Community Fellowship Church in Massachusetts. "If you look at what a rickshaw is, it's a human being being used in place of an animal."

"The rickshaw symbolizes poverty and slavery," agreed Paul Kim, pastor of Berkland Baptist Church in Cambridge, Mass. He said the VBS curriculum "is misrepresenting Asian-American cultures."

Based on a recommendation from Kim's church, the Baptist Convention of New England adopted a resolution last month supporting state convention staff in their decision not to promote the "Rickshaw Rally" material.

"We believe that, however unintentional, a mistake was made with this year's theme," Jim Wideman, the state convention's executive director told Baptist Press. "Asian-Americans in New England have found this theme focusing on the rickshaw to be insensitive and to be a poor representation of Asian culture."

Wideman said the state convention is not at odds with LifeWay and plans to promote an older, alternative curriculum from LifeWay. A LifeWay spokesperson expressed appreciation for that but disagreed that the material is offensive.

"We have listened carefully to every person who has expressed a concern about the curriculum and responded appropriately," said Mary Katharine Hunt, VBS division project manager. "We simply disagree with those who make negative charges about our VBS curriculum."

For every concern raised by an Asian-American, Hunt said, "we are receiving dozens of positive responses from Asian-Americans that tell us we are fulfilling our intent to lift up another culture and share the message of hope for all people in Jesus Christ."

In a letter responding to earlier criticism, Jerry Vogel, director of childhood ministry publishing for LifeWay, said the content of next year's VBS material was not intended to be offensive. "While producing the material, we included folks who have served in Asian countries as missionaries and have also consulted people who are native Japanese. Some of our editorial team have actually visited Japan so that we would be as true to the culture as possible."

With additional reporting by Religion News Service

Missouri leader bars paper from Baptist meetings

Jefferson City, Mo. (ABP)—In a move unprecedented in Southern Baptist circles, a state convention president will attempt to bar a Baptist publication in Missouri from attending or reporting on state Baptist meetings.

David Tolliver, recently elected president of the Missouri Baptist Convention, informed the editor of the Word & Way that the staff of the 107-year-old news journal will no longer be allowed to attend convention meetings, including executive board sessions and committee meetings. Tolliver also will attempt to bar Word & Way from the convention's 2004 annual meeting, which is open to secular media.

In a Nov. 19 letter to Editor Bill Webb, Tolliver explained that his "directive" is a result of the action the Word & Way and four other convention agencies took to establish self-perpetuating trustee boards.

Word & Way, Missouri Baptist University, Windermere Baptist Conference Center and the Missouri Baptist Foundation changed their charters in 2001 to allow each entity to elect its own trustees rather than allow the convention to elect them. The Baptist Home trustees took the same action a year earlier.

The Missouri Baptist Convention filed suit in August 2002 to force the boards of the five entities to rescind their charter changes.

Big missions challenge

Grayson pastor sets ambitious offering goal to support missionaries abroad

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

Grayson—John Newland recognizes his church can't single-handedly send missionaries overseas.

But he believes God will bless its step of faith—collecting its largest-ever international missions offering.

After setting a \$10,000 goal in late August, First Baptist Church of Grayson raised \$2,600 in two months.

That surpassed last year's record offering of just over \$2,500. As of Nov. 24, the congregation had reached \$5,400.

Newland challenged the church to set the ambitious goal after reading the final issue of *The Commission*, the magazine published by the Southern Baptist International Mission Board.

Publication of the monthly magazine was suspended as part of financial cutbacks by the agency.

But what spurred Newland to action was news that the cuts also meant 100 missionaries would have to wait for appointments.

"I realize our group can't even get one missionary off the deferred list," he said. "But the bottom line is I feel we can't make it happen, but we can do our part."

"If we are faithful, God will multiply it and use it," Newland added. "We leave the results in God's hands, but do what He calls us to do."

First Baptist, which averages Sunday attendance of about 200, steadily had increased its giving to the annual missions offering. But the

pastor said the congregation hadn't aggressively challenged itself for a while in the area of giving.

A vision for \$3 per week

After praying about what they could do, Newland calculated that if each person in attendance gave \$3 a week for 17 weeks, the church would raise just over \$10,000.

He also drew inspiration from Matthew 24:14: "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."

"I thought, 'We are within reach of this and now is not the time to slow down,'" Newland said. "It was a rather mystical experience. I felt we should do something way beyond what we've done."

An interest in overseas missions is expected to motivate members to give in the next month.

Several church leaders recently expressed confidence that the church would reach the \$10,000 goal.

Thirty youth and adults traveled last week to Charlotte, N.C. to help pack shoeboxes with gifts for Operation Christmas Child, a ministry by Franklin Graham's Samaritan's Purse organization.

The church's special offering comes at a time when the leaders are struggling with other demands. Located in the downtown area, the church needs more parking and members have been discussing building renovations.

First Baptist also would like to call an associate pastor, the job



Newland held before he became pastor three years ago.

"I'm not going to sugarcoat it, we have a few people who think we're taking away from our ability to grow," Newland said. "We're kind of an in-between church. We're not big enough to support a second, full-time staff member, but we're big enough to need it."

Missions giving plan

This year's Lottie Moon drive is spurring consideration of other changes.

Newland has suggested setting aside a tithe of donations, with 8 percent going to the Cooperative Program and 2 percent to Greenup Baptist Association. That idea is being reviewed as part of 2004 budget planning.

In addition, a committee is considering establishing a unified mis-

sions offering. It would combine state, national and international missions offerings into a year-long effort, with each receiving a certain percentage of the total.

Newland said it is too early to tell if the Lottie Moon offering will spur more members to get directly involved in missions.

Along with its association and First Baptist Church of Sandy Hook, the church is helping start a congregation in Horton Flats, a small community near Grayson Lake.

As for the pastor, Newland is scheduled to leave soon for an overseas mission trip to a country that he can't talk about.

"When I was growing up, we hosted missionaries whenever they came in and spoke at our church," said Newland, a native of Henderson. "I've always had a fascination for exotic places."

"If we are faithful, God will multiply it and use it."

John Newland, pastor of First Baptist Church of Grayson

KBHC foster child goes from receiving love to sharing it from pulpit

By Julie Roberts
Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children

Hanson—Robert stood before his church congregation recently a changed man, with a message.

Just 15 years old, Robert was delivering his first sermon. The congregation at the Western Kentucky church was about to hear a message of changed lives, though few of them knew just how much Robert's life had changed.

Just nine months earlier, Robert and his older sister would spend their Sunday evenings like every other night, trying to avoid their stepfather's abuse.

For Robert, the abuse was physical. For his sister, it was sexual.

Tired, angry and hoping for justice, Robert eventually called authorities.

"I wanted him (the stepfather) to go away, but they took us instead," he said. "I didn't want to go into foster care, but I like it now. I know we're better off."

Robert and his sister came to the home of Roger and Carrie Morris, a couple who has spent 10 years ministering to foster children through Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children.

"They're just like every other kid; they want somebody to love them," Mrs. Morris said. "All they

want is for someone to accept them for what they are and care about them. We can do that."

Thrown furniture and a gun

The teens left behind a home where there was rarely any food, support or affection.

They saw their stepfather run over stray dogs in his car because the family couldn't afford to feed them. Chairs and other furniture often were thrown about, and Robert once was chased out of the house with a gun.

After Robert called authorities for help, their mother turned her back on the kids and chose to stick by the stepfather, who now faces a prison sentence for the sexual abuse.

The transition from a child's own family to a foster family is difficult, but Robert said he knew immediately something was special about the Morrises.

Part of the care KBHC and the Morrises provide is spiritual, making sure these abused and neglected children hear the gospel and learn of redemption through Jesus. That message really didn't hit home until Robert attended church camp that summer, he said.

"There was just something different about the people there," he

said. "There was no TV or anything, so all we really had to do was to focus on reading the Bible. I guess that's when I really started to understand things, because all we did was focus on God."

The focus on spiritual needs as well as basics such as food, clothing and shelter, is what helps set KBHC apart from many child care agencies, said Rita Grace, a KBHC foster care specialist who works with Robert and his sister and provides support for the foster family.

"Robert is a changed young man today because KBHC introduced him to Jesus and a family who loves him," Grace said. "That's our mission."

Feeling called to preach

Not long after he became a Christian, Robert attended a Promise Keepers rally where he witnessed pastors reaching out to some tough-looking gang members at the edge of the crowd. By the end of the event, one young man went forward declaring that he was "once a Cripp, but now I'm a Christian."

Robert said that's when he felt God calling him to preach.

"I knew that's what I wanted to do," Robert said. "I want to be able to reach out to people like that guy and let them know there's a better

way."

His first sermon, given on a Sunday night in front of 100 or more church members, was a good one, Grace said. Robert preached from Matthew 16, telling the crowd that Christians must take up their cross and "be willing to face suffering and death for His sake."

"When we give our lives to Jesus, we discover the real purpose for living," Robert said. "The best way to enjoy life is to loosen our greedy grasp on material objects and focus on serving God above all else."

It's a daily effort, Robert added, just as it is in overcoming his past abuse.

"I love my foster parents," he said. "Them and Rita (Grace), they've really helped me to get through a lot. I think I'm doing a lot better now."

KBHC and the Morrises will continue to support Robert and his sister as they get through school and look to the future. For Robert, that includes seminary training as he prepares to serve as a pastor.

"When you evaluate your life from an eternal perspective, you will find your life and your goals changing," Robert told the congregation. "God has given each of us a purpose, and we can trust Him to guide us."

"When you evaluate your life from an eternal perspective, you will find your life and your goals changing."

Robert, a teen receiving foster care through Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children.

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

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The blues, boredom & purposelessness

By **Erich Bridges**

Richmond, Va. (BP)—As surely as autumn follows summer, the approach of Christmas brings on the "holiday blues" for some people—along with numerous well-meaning and contradictory suggestions about how to deal with them.

Savor every moment of the season, the experts urge, but don't nurse unrealistic expectations. Treasure memories of holidays gone by, but don't live in the past. Eat moderately, but don't beat up on yourself if you indulge. Keep up with your exercise, but be sure to relax and take a break. Spend lots of time with family, but avoid those irritating relatives without feeling guilty. Decorate the house, but keep it simple. Cook up a storm; no, let others cook for a change.

Even for people who don't feel down over the holidays, it's enough to tempt you to call the whole thing off.

Depression's causes & symptoms

Seasonal blues eventually pass. Real depression, however, hangs on. You don't "snap out of it." Some form of depression afflicts about 19 million Americans every year, according to the National Institute of Mental Health. Its severity ranges from mild to deadly. Its causes include physical or mental illness, chemical imbalances, persistent stress, loss of loved ones, alcohol and drug abuse, aging, loneliness and isolation. Its potential symptoms: sadness, anxiety, hopelessness, feelings of worthlessness, loss of appetite, fatigue, loss of interest in what you once enjoyed, insomnia or oversleeping, thoughts of suicide.

Health authorities rightly warn against instant diagnosis of depression and the aggressive marketing of antidepressants—particularly among women—in our overly medicated "Prozac Nation."

"Doctors now want to medicate you for living your life," cultur-

al columnist Maureen Dowd complains.

But that doesn't lessen the pain of those who suffer from the real thing. Christians aren't immune; I've encountered many faithful believers who've struggled with deep depression.

Another cause of depression (or quiet desperation) among Americans, I believe, is boredom. Not the minor sort of boredom that causes people to seek temporary diversion, but the deep, energy-sapping lack of purpose that permeates so many contemporary lives. We think more possessions will make us happy, so we seek bigger cars and houses. We think exterior activity will compensate for the emptiness within, so we rush around doing things. When it doesn't work, we begin to despair. Our children tend to inherit these tendencies, as evidenced by the increasing rates of depression among school-age youth and college students.

Christians are quick to point out such purposelessness in secular society, but it also causes problems in the church. We get bored with our routine, so we insist on a new program. We get tired of the old building, so we assume God is leading us to build a new one. We sit around and look at each other instead of reaching out to the lost, so we start sniping and backbiting. We lose sight of God's purpose.

In recent remarks to staff at the Southern Baptist International Mission Board, speaker/author Beth Moore described the despair of people lost without Christ: "They feel purposeless. They don't have any-

What are you thinking?

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'Missions Beyond the Edge'

"Missions Beyond the Edge" was a memorable theme for the 2003 Kentucky Baptist Convention annual meeting. Although the meeting is now over, the theme continues to apply to this season of the year as we focus on international missions and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

For international missionaries, missions beyond the edge means moving beyond their familiar culture and making significant adjustments to live as a family in a very different place. It often involves learning a new language and way of life. It means building a community of Christian faith while overcoming tremendous challenges and resistance.

These missionaries have moved from the security of family and home to follow the command of Jesus Christ to share the gospel with everyone. Taking missions beyond the edge often means giving up frequent visits with grandparents and even sending older children to a

missionary boarding school.

And often God calls a missionary kid to be a missionary. I think of retired missionaries Jim and Betty McKinley of Louisville whose son, daughter-in-law and grandchildren are in a challenging place for missionary service. Both of the children of Southern Baptist International Mission Board President Jerry Rankin and his wife, Bobbye, also are serving in very difficult places, along with their families.

Missions beyond the edge this Christmas might mean that you and I give a record offering to missions. It could mean that we pray for selected missionaries and the unreached people groups with whom they work. Missions beyond the edge might mean that you and your family select a ministry during the Christmas season that will really stretch you.

For instance, there are international people in every small town in Kentucky. Tommy Johnson, a

thing that would be worth dying for—and therefore worth living for." They won't see any purpose in the lives of Christians, either, unless we live it among them.

God's primary purpose for us is quite simple: that we love Him, worship Him and lift up His saving name among all the peoples of the earth. "We may be tired at times ... but we have what the world is looking for," Moore said. "That we would pour our lives out for somebody else to know Him and to love Him, that is everything."

Discover God's purpose

Try these five ways to capture—or recapture—God's purpose for your life:

■ **Worship Him** with all your heart—not for any of His gifts, but for Himself alone. "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth" (Psalm 46:10).

■ **Tell a lost person** searching for purpose in life about Jesus.

■ **Become a missionary** "welcomer" to an international student, immigrant or refugee family in your community by helping, loving and sharing Christ with them.

■ **Take a volunteer mission trip** to walk among an unreached people group, then mobilize your church to help reach them with the gospel.

■ **Give sacrificially** this year to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions. Thousands of missionaries already living God's purposes need your participation. Many more who are ready and willing to go will never reach the field without it.

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

CHURCH

Special Christmas gifts don't have to be expensive

By **Doug Strader**

Christmas is a very special time of the year for most of us. However, some people do not enjoy Christmas for a variety of reasons.

It is especially difficult for people who are no longer physically able to do the things they once did. Some are homebound while others are living in a retirement home or some type of assisted living facility. How can we help those people enjoy the Christmas season with us this year?

I do not have the entire answer for that question, but I do have some suggestions that can be part of the answer.

■ **If you know individuals** who are not able to drive to the store to get the things they need to give presents or send Christmas cards, you can offer to take them shopping and help them with their purchases. Many senior citizens do not write as well as they once did and they might not be able to address their Christmas cards so you also could volunteer to address their cards.

■ **If you have friends** who are not able to get out and go to church often, you can offer to take them to church for special Christmas activities. Otherwise they might not be able to attend. If they are not able to get out of the house, you can arrange for some church members to go caroling to brighten their day.

■ **Another good project** is to bake cookies, breads, cakes, etc., and take to some people who can no longer bake. Find out from a family member or friend what their favorite cookies are and bake them especially for that person.

■ **Find a family** who does not have any close family members living in the area and invite them to share a meal with your family sometime during the Christmas season. You also could invite some of the senior adults from your church to your house for a meal with your family.

Christmas is about gift giving because Jesus is the greatest gift ever given. Sometimes we can give gifts that do not cost much money that will be the most appreciated and most meaningful for you as well as the individuals you are helping.

Go ahead and give it a try and see if it provides you one of the best and most meaningful Christmas celebrations ever.

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



PARTNERS IN THE MISSION



Bill Mackey

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

How can newlyweds establish meaningful holiday traditions?

Q: My husband and I are newlyweds and wish to begin our holiday traditions together. Any ideas on how to start the process?

Traditions are fun and serve a great purpose in life. Make new traditions or maintain old ones based on what is positive and meaningful to both of you. Be careful, however, that your traditions don't begin to mean more than the people involved.

In the Bible, Jesus noted that traditions weren't always in the best interest of those involved. Some religious traditions were becoming rote and overbearing. For example, God set aside the Sabbath as a day of rest.

MARRIAGE But the religious leaders created a vast number of traditions that made figuring out how to rest difficult. In Luke 6:6-11, Jesus confronted the Pharisees for following the traditions without following God.

If a tradition ever gets out of hand in your home, think about letting it go or suggest a new activity instead. Traditions should be cause for celebration and service, not groaning and complaining.

Enjoy the traditions that keep you close to those you love. Create new ones to celebrate occasions big and small. Trim the traditions that get in the way of joy. Then every now and then, take a moment to close your eyes and cherish the memories traditions have brought into your life.—Jon Rainbow

Q: My husband and I are both Christians and we attend church and Bible study regularly. However, we don't pray together. How can I encourage my husband to pray with me?

You raise an issue with which many Christian couples wrestle. Typically, one person desires to engage in conversational prayer and the other person does not. That reluctance can come from a variety of sources. The spouse might have little or no history of praying out loud with someone else. He might fear sounding silly or unskilled in his prayer. Reluctance might be set up from his intimidation by what he perceives could be a lengthy prayer time.

Be patient with your spouse. The truth is that the Bible says a lot more about "praying for" one's spouse than "praying with" him or her. You might invite your spouse to begin with one of the following:

- Talking with one another about daily concerns for which each would desire prayer.

- A brief time together where each quietly prays for the other.

- Taking turns each saying a brief prayer before a meal.

- Saying the "Lord's Prayer" together before falling asleep.

The apostle Paul gives us a wonderful model of intercessory prayer in Ephesians where he encourages us to pray that our spouse may know God better, and that he or she will know the "glorious inheritance of the saints" and be connected to the family of God (1:18). We also should pray that our spouse will know the great dimensions of God's love (3:18) and will experience this love personally (3:19).

Finally, pray that your spouse will know the power of God to keep from conforming to a secular lifestyle (2:11-22); to confront the secular forces in culture (3:8-10); and to be open to the filling of the Holy Spirit so that the marriage can mirror the relationship between the Heavenly Bridegroom and His bride, the Church. (Ephesians 5).—Scott Wigginton

Family Forum writers are:

David Garrard, minister to children at St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville. E-mail: dgarrard@smbclouisville.org

Jon Rainbow, a clinical gerontologist and professor at Campbellsville University. E-mail: jrainbow@campbellsville.edu

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Scott Wigginton, director of LifeCare Counseling at Walnut Street Baptist Church in Louisville. E-mail: swigginton@sbx.edu
Send questions for Family Forum to Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253 or e-mail wesrec@earthlink.net.



Sanctity of marriage is worth protecting

Coming up with a working definition of marriage isn't exactly rocket science. It's as simple as turning to the owner's manual and reading the explanation from the Inventor of marriage: "For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24).

Jesus Christ quotes this Old Testament passage in Matthew 19:5 and adds, "What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate."

The sanctity of marriage—a lifelong commitment between one man and one woman—is a bedrock principle in Baptist congregations. During last month's Kentucky Baptist Convention annual meeting, messengers adopted a resolution affirming that marriage "is ordained by God as the basic unit of society" and that it is "a sacred and exclusive covenant between one man, one woman, and a holy God, intended for life."

Affirming the growing covenant marriage movement across the nation, the KBC resolution also expresses support for "efforts in Congress to protect the sanctity of marriage." Even that language was expanded by an amendment calling on Congress to "amend the U.S. Constitution to include 'Marriage in the United States shall consist only of the union of one man and one woman.'"

And Kentucky Baptists aren't alone in their call for supporting the traditional, biblical view of marriage. State convention messengers in Alabama, Arkansas, Indiana, Kansas-Nebraska, Mississippi, Missouri, South Carolina and Tennessee pledged support for a Federal Marriage Amendment. Other resolutions addressing such issues as the biblical definition of the family and opposition to same-sex "marriage" were adopted in Alabama, Louisiana, Maryland/Delaware, Michigan, New England, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Tennessee and West Virginia.

Recent polls show that approximately 60 percent of Americans oppose same-sex marriage and that a majority support a constitu-

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

tional amendment protecting traditional marriage.

The Federal Marriage Amendment introduced this summer in the U.S. House of Representatives by Rep. Marilyn Musgrave, R-Colo., currently has 107 cosponsors.

Sen. Wayne Allard, R-Colo., introduced the measure last week in the Senate. That action came one week after the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court legalized same-sex marriage in that state. The 4-3 vote, unless overruled by a state constitutional amendment, will make Massachusetts the first state in the nation to sanction same-sex marriage.

The proposed constitutional amendment that seeks to combat such rulings reads: "Marriage in the United States shall consist only of the union of a man and a woman. Neither this Constitution or the constitution of any State, nor state or federal law, shall be construed to require that marital status or the legal incidents thereof be conferred upon unmarried couples or groups."

As the legal and moral battle lines are drawn, some observers voice concern that the precedent in Massachusetts will spill over into other states. Others suggest that the Defense of Marriage Act signed into law in 1996 is sufficient to protect states from being forced to recognize another state's same-sex marriage.

Whatever the outcome of the legislative and judicial wrangling, Christians have even more important issues to address in our efforts to protect and promote the sanctity of marriage. The recent KBC resolution urges "all Kentucky Baptists to commit themselves to the biblical principles expressed by the covenant marriage movement."

It's difficult to convince society that marriage is worth defending, however, when far too many Christian marriages are plagued by abuse, adultery, disrespect and divorce. Modeling and teaching faithful, healthy biblical marriage is an essential starting point for encouraging others to pursue the same path.

Something worth living and dying for

By Samuel Atchison

Trenton, N.J. (RNS)—In January 1956, five young American missionaries—Jim Elliot, Ed McCully, Pete Fleming, Nate Saint and Roger Youderian—were speared to death as they attempted to bring the Christian gospel to the hitherto unreached Auca Indians in the jungles of Ecuador.

Chronicled in grim detail in Life magazine, the story sent shock waves around the world. "To the world at large this was a sad waste of five young lives," wrote Jim Elliot's wife, Elisabeth.

And so it appeared. Five dead men—all of them husbands, four of them fathers—left behind a small army of widows and orphans to mourn their loss in the wilds of the Amazon jungle.

Yet an amazing thing occurred. All but one of the widows resolved to continue the missionary work that drew them to Ecuador in the first place.

As Cornell Capa, the photojournalist who broke the story in Life, notes in the forward to Elisabeth El-

liot's memoir, "The Savage My Kinsman," Marj Saint and Marilou McCully, with three children each, moved to Quito to work in missionary headquarters; Elliot and Barbara Youderian stayed in the jungle with their small families, working among the Quichua and Jivaro Indians.

Olive Fleming, who had been on the mission field for only two months prior to her husband's death, returned to the United States and eventually remarried. In 1989, she visited the site where her first husband, Peter, had been martyred more than 30 years before. She subsequently wrote a book, "Unfolding Destinies," which brings the story of the Aucas up to date.

For Elisabeth Elliot, the nearly three years of work following the death of her husband merely laid the foundation for her two-year sojourn among the Aucas themselves. Together with her 3-year-old daughter, Valerie, and Nate Saint's sister, Rachel, Elliot was invited by the tribe that killed her husband to live

and work among them.

Thus did they fulfill the true meaning of Jesus' commands to "turn the other cheek" and "love your enemies."

Nearly 50 years later, the selfless legacies of the martyrs and their families stand in stark contrast to the "name it and claim it" theology propagated by many churches in the United States today. The airwaves often seem dominated by media "ministries" whose focus is more on promoting and achieving prosperity than on serving those Jesus referred to as "the least of these my brethren" (Matt. 25:40). Such confusing messages often leave one wondering whose kingdom is being built, the minister's or God's?

Still, the courageous examples provided by missionary heroes past and present are both heartwarming and challenging. In an age where people are crying out for something real, such examples bear witness to something worth living and dying for.

Samuel Atchison is a prison chaplain in Trenton, N.J., and a fellow of the George H. Gallup International Institute in Princeton, N.J.



RIPE FOR HARVEST When communists took over China in 1949, they found one Muslim mosque for every 30 Dongxiang people. By recent counts, there are 13 Dongxiang Christians. (IMB photo)

Among China's Dongxiang, only handful know Christ

Near China's Yellow River—Just a few years ago, there wasn't a single known Christian among China's Dongxiang people. Today 13 Dongxiang follow Jesus Christ.

And together with a group of Han Chinese Christians, several of those Dongxiang believers are working to reach their people group with the gospel.

Recently, one of the new Dongxiang Christians walked along the banks of China's Yellow River with his friend, a Southern Baptist who has made China his home. They knew it would be their last meeting for months; in a few days the Southern Baptist would travel with his family to the United States.

They discussed truths they had studied during recent months. They spoke of the young believer's wife, who still doesn't know Christ. In a culture where spouses often live in different cities and frequently engage in extramarital affairs, this new Christian is learning how really to love his bride—and trusting his love will draw her to Christ.

As they walked along the river, they talked about baptism. The Southern Baptist explained once again the scriptural command for a new believer to identify publicly with Christ and the body of believers. Though the young man wasn't baptized that day, God's Spirit soon convicted Him and he obeyed.

They discussed the young man's dream of translating the Bible into the Dongxiang language. He sees it as his gift to his people—something to live on long after him.

Eight hundred years ago, this young man's people group embraced Islam. From that time until 2001, not a single Dongxiang individual was a known believer.

And though there are 13 Christians today, "that's not enough," said the Southern Baptist. Nearly half a million Dongxiang still don't know Christ.

The Dongxiang are among the poorest and least educated of China's minority people groups. They follow external guidelines of Islam, but most understand very little about their religion.

Their language has no word for Christian, and few Dongxiang have heard the gospel. But when they do hear of Jesus, they are very attracted to His teachings.

"Pray that new Dongxiang believers will share in their families and communities and move toward rapidly-multiplying, indigenous churches," said the Southern Baptist who knows them.

Baptist, Chinese Christians pray for miracles

Continued from page 1

Barnabas knelt, and together with his Chinese friends, wept for the city. "Our tears were like a prayer," he says. "This was our beginning."

Shortly after this experience, the gospel began moving in the quiet town—reaching into hearts that had been waiting to hear the truth.

As someone looking in from the outside and praying for a movement of God in the city, Barnabas' enthusiasm is barely contained.

"People are believing the gospel almost instantly—as soon as they hear it!" he says. "One lady, as soon as she watched the 'Jesus' film, believed in the Lord and started sharing with her family and friends."

"Another man believed and was delivered from alcoholism," he says. "It wasn't like in Western society where (many people) add religion as another component of life—accepting Christ became a whole new life for him, his reason for being."

This particular man "heard the gospel from another new believer, who had heard from someone else, who had heard it from (a visitor to the city). It's a chain reaction," Barnabas says. "It's like the New Testament; they don't have to be told to share—they just want to."

A need for more

Barnabas and the Chinese Christians in the city know, however, that much more needs to be done, particularly in getting the gospel further into the city's growing business center. Through creative seed-sowing methods, dozens of business owners have read Christian materials and many have been looking for more.

Through self-initiative and curiosity, one businessman who heard the gospel "began studying the Gospel of Luke every morning," Barnabas says, "two weeks before anyone ever came to talk with them. They were ready to believe and be trained. God is doing this work."

"Mr. Zhou," who owns several restaurants, enjoys flying kites in the late afternoon. After dark, once the dinner crowd has moved on and the short, greasy tables are wiped clean, Zhou's extended family gathers in their restaurant by the lake and eats their own evening meal.

In the warm restaurant, the fam-



CHINA HOPE Christians in this city are praying for a movement of God to help them reach their neighbors. (IMB photo)

ily makes small talk and quick work of plates of vegetables, fried chicken parts and pickled meats.

Confident hope

Barnabas is confident that it is within God's plan for people like Zhou and his family to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ.

This will happen as the numbers of believers and house churches "grow to the point of reproducing and training their own leaders. This will be a self-sustaining movement within the house churches," he says.

The people of this once-forgotten city will be reached as local Christians grow to love God and desire the city to come to Him, he adds.



That all peoples may know Him
Follow God's Purpose

A widespread church-planting movement lies first in the mountaintop experience Barnabas shared with his Chinese spiritual brothers as they wept for the city.

Prayer requests

Please pray during this year's Lottie Moon Week of Prayer:

■ For new believers in this city for their continued boldness, as many Chinese believers consider it an honor to share in Christ's suffering.

■ That the gospel will penetrate every segment of society. Many parts of this city are completely untouched by a Christian witness. Pray that Communist Party members, government leadership, hospital workers and business leaders will hear the gospel.

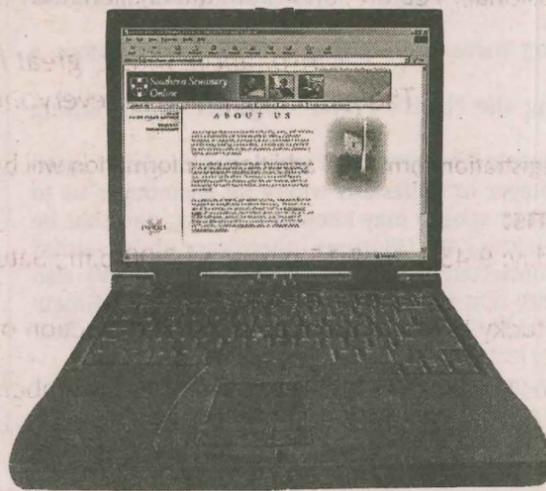
■ For indigenous churches to be born that will reproduce and reach the people of the city, and that these churches will have a vision to share the gospel beyond the city.

■ For people who distribute literature and gospel packets, as well as individuals and teams to prayerwalk the city.

"If we can stir, even within brand-new believers, a deep burden for the lostness of this city," he says, "God will use that burden to motivate (local believers) to share the gospel with everyone, and, ultimately, to other parts of this province, China, and even to other parts of the world."

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KENTUCKY NOTES

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**That all peoples
may know Him:
Follow
God's Purpose**

Season of
International Missions
November 30-December 7

Study: The Balkans

National Goal for
Lottie Moon
Christmas Offering
\$133 million

Kentucky churches gave
\$3,369,756
to the 2002-2003 offering

Winter 2003

JOIN US FOR OUR 101ST ANNUAL MEETING! From Generation to Generation

Kentucky WMU Annual Meeting
March 26-27, 2004
First Baptist Church, Hopkinsville



Missionaries:

Bill Clark and Ruth Thomas, emeritus missionaries to France
& missionary parents
Jeff and Cecelia Thomas Wallace, missionaries to Spain
Tim Bender, Catalytic Missionary to the Deaf
David Coram, Chaplain, 101st Airborne

Theme Interpretations:

With *Sisterhood*, a Christian Drama Ministry featuring women of the Bible

Testimonies:

Kentucky WMU women who are Linking Involvement, Needs, and Knowledge for Missions

Friday Lunch & Special Feature:

Join us for a "picnic" and GA Alumnae & Friends Celebration

Saturday:

Sharing the Missions Message with the Next Generation
Acteens Activators, KBHC "In Home" Missionary Testimony
Missionary Feature, and dramatic challenge by *Sisterhood*

Inspiration, music, great fellowship, and more.

The gathering place for everyone who cares about missions!

Poster, registration form, and additional information will be mailed to WMU Directors in January 2004.

Sessions:

Friday: 9:45 a.m., 2:15 p.m., and 7:00 p.m.; Saturday: 9:00 a.m. (Central Time)

The Kentucky WMU Business Session and Election of Officers will be Friday afternoon.

All former Kentucky WMU Executive Board Members are invited to purchase a ticket for the Executive Board Reunion Dinner, Friday evening, 5:00 p.m.



Women on Mission fall retreat attendees participated in pre-worship fun by playing bells at Cedarmore Baptist Assembly September 26.

A Personal Word

Linking Involvement, Needs, and Knowledge for Missions is what Missions LINK is all about.



Joy Bolton
*Executive
Director-
Treasurer*

Through Operation Missions LINK, WMU groups across our state kicked off the new Kentucky WMU growth plan and the Season of State Missions. Exciting reports of hands-on mission projects conducted in September have affirmed our new emphasis.

Fairview Baptist, Lincoln County, collected 44 stuffed animals for the Police Department and 173 items of non-perishable food, and their youth conducted two days of cleanup in the neighborhood. Keck Baptist, Knox Association, sponsored a medical clinic. They provided blood pressure and blood sugar checks, weight counseling, and exams by a physician. This clinic involved different age levels and persons who had not been involved before.

Smithfield Baptist Children in Action, Henry County, distributed food for their Farmers for Christ project. Church members gathered produce for the children to give away along with packets that contained a Gospel of John, a "How to Be Saved" pamphlet, and information about the church. Lewis Lane Baptist, Daviess-McLean Association, held a summer festival to reach out to the residents of an apartment complex. Games, hot dogs, music, a devotional and even fingerprinting for children were included in this outreach event.

Williamstown Baptist, Crittenden Association, canvassed over 800 homes and collected over 2,100 items for their local food pantry. Poplar Grove Baptist, Rockcastle Association, spent a day working on the grounds of "Christ Outreach for the Blind," a camp that is being established in the county. Waddy Baptist, Shelby Association, gave out water at Waddy Community Labor Day Parade.

First Baptist, Fredonia, Caldwell-Lyon Association, decided to "Love Our Town with Cookies." A platter of cookies was taken to 33 businesses in town along with a revival flyer and the message "God loves you." Shawnee Run Baptist, Mercer Association, held a pig roast. They reached out primarily to Hispanics in the community and had over 100 in attendance.

Bells Run Baptist, Ohio Association, held a workday with 43 men, women, youth and children participating. They divided into teams and assisted needy persons in the community with projects such as installing a handicap ramp, handrails, yard work, gutter cleaning, painting and more. First Baptist, Paris, Elkhorn Association, visited residents at the Bourbon Heights Nursing Home. Bethlehem Baptist, Muhlenberg Association, enlisted 25 adults and youth to help an elderly man in the community with yard work, home repairs and painting.

Many more reports have been received. It's not too late to get involved in Operation Missions LINK. You'll be glad you did!



Information for WMU Directors

Your faithful commitment as a WMU Director often sets the atmosphere for missions in your church. As you cheerfully encourage your leadership team, they catch your enthusiasm and love for missions. Your pastor and other church staff are influenced by the spirit in which you do your work. Some suggestions to remember: 1. Plan ahead; do not spring information on folks at the last minute. 2. Provide complete information—do not assume that others can read your mind. 3. There are times when a gentle and courteous reminder is in order. 4. Be generous in expressing appreciation to the staff and your leadership team. 5. When the secretary or others need information from you, be prompt in providing it. *The positive relationships you build can determine what people think about Missions Education and WMU for the years to come!*



Resource Kits?? Do you receive the WMU Leadership Team Resource Kit? Do your age level organizations receive their respective kits? Each kit provides worthwhile material that can make a difference in having a "boring" or an exciting, motivating meeting. I believe the materials provided are well worth the cost. Call our office at 1-888-254-5726 if you have any questions about the kit.

Annual Meeting—in March? Yes! March 26-27.

The Kentucky WMU Annual meeting for 2004 is a week earlier than last year. Make your reservations in Hopkinsville now in order to get the accommodations that you want. Plan to take a group from your church. The meetings will bless you all and traveling/staying together builds a great fellowship.

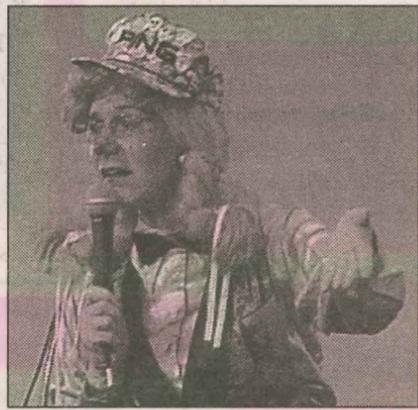
Annie Armstrong Materials. You will be receiving a sample mailing from our office with a bulletin insert, offering envelope and a poster. Mail the order card to us to receive the materials that you need. Your Pastor will receive a mailing from the North American Mission Board with additional information. Order your mission study materials from national WMU or from *LifeWay*.

Focus on WMU

Let this February emphasis help your church gain a new appreciation for WMU. See your 2003-2004 WMU Year Book and your winter *Dimension* magazine for ideas.

Don't forget to send us the report of your Project HELP: Restorative Justice activities Anna Mary Byrdwell

Adults



Ruth Hinkle, better know as "Freckles," entertains everyone at the WOM Fall Retreats.

The Women on Mission Fall Retreats were a wonderful time of rejuvenation and motivation to be part of "The Story." Approximately 620 women attended the retreats and had the opportunity to experience speakers such as Delaine Blackwell, Kay Mackey and Stuart Calvert. If you



missed this year's retreat, make plans to attend next year's now by marking it on your calendar. The retreat dates for 2004 are September 24-25 at Jonathan Creek and October 15-16 at Cedarmore.

Some other exciting events that will be going on in 2004 are the WMU 101st Annual Meeting on March 26-27 at First Baptist Church, Hopkinsville, and the Women's Lifestyle Evangelism Conference that will be held twice. The first conference, held in conjunction with the KBC Evangelism Conference, will have special speaker Lori Calierno and give women the opportunity to attend three breakout sessions. The cost is \$10 for breakout sessions and lunch, or \$5 for just the breakout sessions. The second conference will be held at Beacon Hill Baptist Church in Somerset on May 17 with speakers Lisa Welchel and Jennifer Kennedy Dean. Cost and other information will be available at a later date, so be on the lookout.

If you are a nurse or other medical professional, don't miss the annual Baptist Nurs-

ing Fellowship Luncheon to be held at the Annual Meeting on March 26-27. This will be a time to plan for the year and get to know some of your fellow members. Information will be coming soon for this event as well.

As my year of service draws to a close, I want to take this time to share how much of a privilege and honor it has been to serve you this year as your Interim Adult Consultant for Kentucky WMU. Meeting many of you in various locations around Kentucky has been a highlight of my year. My prayer is that you will keep the "fire" of missions education aglow and leave a spiritual legacy that will last many generations to come. Please be in prayer for Women/Adults on Mission and their leadership. Now, wrap your arms around yourself and give yourself a hug for me and know that you and your organizations will continually be in my prayers. God Bless!



—Jennifer Martin

Youth

The fifth annual **Youth on Mission Night** took place Oct. 17-18 at the Baptist Student Union building at the University of Kentucky. What a great time! The UK BSU students welcomed everyone with open arms and servant hearts.

Lorie Looney, former journeyman to Poland, was the speaker for the weekend. The theme for the weekend was, "The Rock" and Lorie encouraged everyone to make sure they stood on a solid foundation and would "get stoned" (you had to be there). Lindsey Kafer did a wonderful job leading the music for the weekend. Special thanks to HK Kingkade and Kristin Belcher for their help in organizing the weekend.

It is almost Christmas when our prayers turn

toward international missions. The **International Mission Study** focuses on the Balkans this year. The youth study is interactive and interesting. Your youth will learn a lot from it.

Plans are underway for **Exalt 2004**. It will take place April 16 and 17 at Campbellsville Baptist Church. Casey Hartley Gibbons will be with us. Casey was Miss American Teen and authored the book *A Girl's Life with God*. A praise band from the Campbellsville University BSU will lead the music, and the group will be turned loose on the CU campus Friday evening for a major scavenger hunt. It is going to be a blast, so bring all the girls in your church in grades 7-12.

You will notice that the pricing has changed for **Exalt** when you receive your brochure. In the past, registration fees have

been per person. Beginning this year, registration will be per church.

This will enable us to plan for the correct number of people. In the past, groups have registered late (and paid the late fee) because they needed to know exactly who was going. It was risky to pay for 10, for example, and have 3 girls drop out. The new fee structure give churches an advantage as well. You can add or drop participants will very little or no penalty to you. The price per church will be on a sliding scale with a break given to small groups of 1 or 2. Be sure to read all about it in the brochure. Call LaRaine Dail at 1-888-254-5726 with any questions.



—LaRaine Dail

Preschool

Preschoolers can discover the joy of missions through Mission Friends! During the winter quarter:

- Involve preschoolers in the **International Mission Study** in December. The study, which focuses on missions in the Balkans, can be found in the *International Missions 2003 Preschool Teaching Guide*.

- Observe **Focus on WMU**, February 9-15, to help your church recognize Mission Friends as a part of WMU. Plan with the church WMU director for this special emphasis. Ideas are in the *2003-2004 WMU Year Book*, pages 58-59.

- Begin preparing for the **North American Mission Study** coming up in March! Now is the time to set a date to have the study. The study is an extension of the March unit in Mission Friends and is an insert in the spring issue of *Start*.



Children

December marks the emphasis for International Missions. Provide the opportunity for the children in your church to participate in the **2003 International Mission Study for Children**. Children will go on an exciting journey to the Balkan



region. Through games, food and first-hand stories they will discover what it is like to be a child there. Encourage members of Girls in Action, Royal Ambassadors, and Children in Action to attend. Use this special time to invite boys and girls who are not involved in missions education.

It is not too early to begin preparation for the **2004 North American Mission Study** coming up in March. The study material is free and your church will automatically receive it by January. See page 40 in the winter issue of *Aware* for details.

Girls and boys in Girls in Action and Children in Action are invited to the **GA and Children in Action Missions Event** on Saturday, March 27, during the WMU Annual Meeting at First Baptist Church, Hopkinsville. This is a special time for children and leaders to meet missionaries, make new friends, sing and have lots of other fun. The cost is \$2 per person attending. No pre-registration for the event is required. Children attending the event can be involved in a ministry project by bringing one canned food per person to the event. The food collected will be distributed to programs for needy families in the Hopkinsville area. For further information contact Kentucky WMU.



—Brenda Price



President's Perspective

At the writing of this article, we have just completed all our women's fall retreats at Cedarmore and Jonathan Creek. I hope you were as blessed as I was at these events. Our attendance was excellent! If you missed a fall retreat for some reason, decide now to have your whole WoM group participate next year. The retreats are a great way to kick off a new WMU year with new ideas, renewed enthusiasm and the motivation to get out there in the community and world and minister.



Cathy Chinn
Kentucky
WMU
president

Our Eliza Broadus Offering is still coming in—be sure your church has watched our video and taken its offering. So many ministries in Kentucky are depending on our offering. We are all praying that our offering will exceed what was given last year. Our Missions LINK program is spreading across our state. Be an encourager for new programs to begin in your church or association. Pray for our LINK Team members as they cover our state hoping to involve new people in missions.

Many of you have already had your international mission study on the Balkans. This is an area we have not had a lot of information about, and hopefully we all learned some things we will not forget about this area of the world. In general, life there is hard and the number of evangelical Christians is small. Please promote our Lottie Moon Offering in your church. Mission needs worldwide are critical and our offerings for international missions are not sufficient at the present. The missionary appointment service that was held in Lexington during our KBC Annual Meeting should have inspired all of us in attendance to dig a little deeper when giving our Lottie Moon Offering this year.

It is not too early to begin making plans to attend the Kentucky WMU Annual Meeting that will be held at Hopkinsville First Baptist Church on March 26-27, 2004. We began making plans for this meeting almost as soon as our last one in Winchester was over. Once again, it will be a very inspirational and informative meeting with international, North American and Kentucky missionaries present. We will also hear some testimonies from WMU women in our state who are involved in ministries at the local level. We have a few surprises that you will not want to miss. Our theme is "From Generation to Generation."

MissionsFEST is coming to Kentucky in 2004! Some of you Kentucky girls have already begun following it wherever it goes, but next year it will be right here in our state in Prestonsburg on April 18-24.

Be watching for the WMU brochure with the details of signing up for this missions experience. We hope to have many from Kentucky participate. Last year, many of you went to Cincinnati to be a part of this great program of ministry. I hope to see you at Prestonsburg!

—Cathy Chinn

Heritage Fund

Celebrate the missions heritage that has been passed on to you through a gift to the Kentucky WMU Heritage Fund. Our endowment fund exists to provide resources to promote, develop, and sustain the work of Kentucky WMU. We invite you to make special gifts to the Heritage Fund or donations in memory of or in honor of a WMU leader, loved one, or special friend.

Heritage Fund donors from June 1 - August 31, 2003 include:

Donor:

Frankie Johnson
Shirley Taliaferro

In Honor Of:

Presbyterian Women
Jane Kent

Donor:

Ethel Harman WMU
Carolyn G. Simpson
Shirley Taliaferro
Mr. & Mrs. Robert D. Wells
Davies-McLean Baptist
Association WMU
Shirley Taliaferro
Long Run WMU Leadership
Team

In Memory Of:

Ruby Lamar
Thelma Mengedoht
Ruth Gillespie
Janis Warford
Sarah Jones

Roxie Duvall

Roxie Duvall

Hotels for the Annual Meeting March 26-27, 2004

Holiday Inn

2910 Fort Campbell Blvd
Hopkinsville 42240
270/886-4413
Rate: \$79.00 (includes Breakfast)
Use Code: Kentucky WMU
Cut off date: February 26

Econo Lodge

2916 Fort Campbell Blvd
Hopkinsville 42240
270/886-5242
Rate: \$49.00 + tax
Use Code: Kentucky WMU
Cut off date: February 26

Fairfield Inn by Marriott Suites

345 Griffin Bell Drive
Hopkinsville 42240
270/886-5151
Rate: \$79.00 + tax (Double and King)
Use Code: Kentucky WMU
Cut off date: February 26

Best Western

4101 Fort Campbell Boulevard
Hopkinsville 42240
270/886-9000
Rate: \$69.00 + tax
Use Code: KWMU
Cut off date: March 15

MissionFEST at Prestonsburg April 18-24

Spend one to six days in the beautiful "spring" mountains of Kentucky AND have the joy and satisfaction of making a positive difference in the lives of folks who have needs. MissionFEST is a partnership between national WMU, Ky WMU, Appalachian Regional Ministry and Enterprise Baptist Association. Arrangements are made for you—you pay a set fee, get a MissionFEST shirt, make new friends and have the joy of serving Christ. Rates for six nights vary from \$160 per person (4 per room) to \$265 per person (2 per room). Call Ky WMU at (888) 254-5726 for a brochure.

Are you eligible for a WMU Scholarship?

All WMU scholarship applications are due in the Kentucky WMU office by February 1, 2004. Acteens Scholarships are for Acteens who are in their senior year and have excelled in missions involvement. The Rubye D. Wetterer, Mrs. George B. Eager, and Janie Cree Bose Anderson scholarships are for those who are preparing for missions, WMU work or a full-time church-related vocation. The Eager and Wetterer scholarships are specified for students of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. The Wetterer scholarship is the only one that is occasionally given to a man. Scholarship amounts are dependent upon current interest income. For additional information or an application, call 1-888-254-5726, or in Louisville call 244-6485.

Calendar

December

- 11/30- Season of Prayer for International
- 12/7 Missions & Lottie Moon Christmas Offering

February 2004

- 9-15 Focus on WMU
- 23-24 Evangelism Conference, Hillvue Heights BC, Bowling Green

March

- 5-6 Creative Ministries Festival and Youth Mission Workshop, Severns Valley BC, Elizabethtown
- 7-14 Season of Prayer for North American Missions & Annie Armstrong Easter Offering
- 12-13 Creative Ministries Festival and Youth Mission Workshop, Immanuel BC, Lexington
- 25 KY WMU Executive Board Meeting, First BC, Hopkinsville
- 26-27 KY WMU Annual Meeting, First BC, Hopkinsville
- 27 GA/Children in Action Missions Event, First BC, Hopkinsville

April

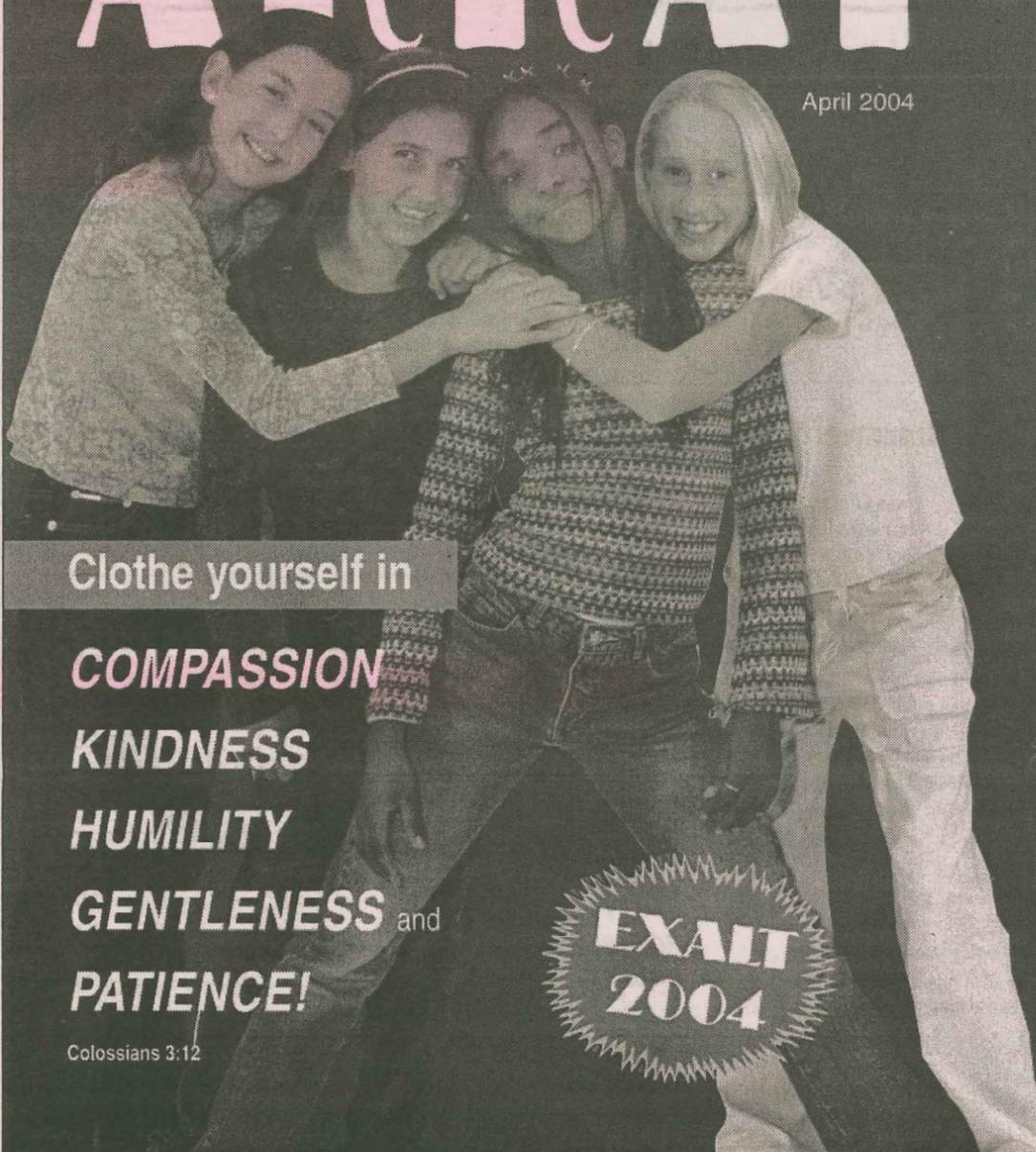
- 11 Easter
- 16-17 Exalt (State Acteens Conference), Campbellsville BC, Campbellsville
- 18-24 MissionsFEST, Prestonsburg
- 27 Senior Adult Celebration, Third BC, Owensboro



EXALT 2004 • April 16 & 17 • Campbellsville Baptist Church • Campbellsville, KY

ARRAY

April 2004



Clothe yourself in

COMPASSION

KINDNESS

HUMILITY

GENTLENESS and

PATIENCE!

Colossians 3:12

CAMP 2004

Mission Adventure Camp for Girls - Cedar Crest (at Cedarmore)

June 14-18	Grades 4-6
June 18-19	Mother/Daughter Overnight
June 21-25	Grades 4-6
June 25-26	Mother/Daughter Overnight
June 28-July 2	Grades 4-6
July 5-9	Grades 4-10
July 9-10	Mother/ Daughter Overnight
July 12-16	Grades 4-10

Mission Adventure Camp is for all girls who have completed grades 4-10. This includes girls who are members of mission education organizations such as Girls in Action, Children in Action, Mission Kids (Brotherhood), Acteens, and Youth on Mission. Girls who are not presently involved in a missions education organization are also invited to attend.

COST: \$145 for weeklong camp (includes camp souvenir, meals, lodging, and program fee)
\$35 for Mother/Daughter Overnights (includes meals, lodging, and program fee)

Overnights at the Creek – Jonathan Creek

June 25-26	Mother/Daughter Overnight (grades 1-3 and moms or mom substitutes) GA Overnight (grades 4-6 and chaperones) Acteens Splash (grades 7-12 and chaperones)
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COST: \$33 for Mother/Daughter Overnight (includes meals and lodging)
\$35 for GA Overnight (includes meals and lodging)
\$40 for Acteens Splash (includes meals, lodging, and waterfront activities)

The 2004 camp information will be mailed to church leaders in January. For further information, contact the Kentucky WMU office at (888) 254-5726.

Missions LINK

Have you set goals for Missions LINK? Special forms for churches and associations to report their LINK goals are available from Kentucky WMU. These forms will guide you through the six key elements of Missions LINK.

Before setting growth goals, it is *vital* that you lay a spiritual foundation for growth. LINK is not a plan handed down from the state WMU office with a list of things to do. Rather, LINK is an outline for seeking God and His will for your church and WMU. Before setting goals or planning projects, the most important step is prayer.

To get started with Missions LINK in your church or association, get your WMU leadership team or a group of concerned women together to pray. Seek God's direction for WMU and missions involvement. Based on what God leads you to do, use the appropriate LINK form to guide you in setting goals.

For more information, contact your associational WMU director or Kentucky WMU.

Be a Summer Missionary! Be a Mission Adventure Camp Staffer!

Position Deadline	Length of Service	Qualifications	Application
Unit Leader Lifeguard Cabin Leader Kitchen Coordinator	6 weeks	College age	February 1
Assistant Cabin Leader	5-6 weeks	High School Junior or Senior	February 1
Volunteer Nurse	1 or more weeks	Certified	May 3

For an application and more information about camp positions, contact Kentucky WMU office at (888) 254-5726; P.O. Box 436569, Louisville, KY 40253-6569.

A unique missions support opportunity

Investments can generate funds for KBC missions work

Through a special arrangement with Invesco-National Asset Management, the foundation has established a personal investing opportunity that also provides, at no cost to you, money to support reaching our state for Christ.

You can invest your taxable and/or non-taxable funds in a large capitalization equity mutual fund that mirrors the large cap core equity portfolio of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, which is managed by Invesco-NAM. All stocks in this portfolio are screened to make sure the companies are not engaged in activities that would be inconsistent with our Christian ethics. The unique feature of this investment opportunity is that Invesco-NAM gives up 20 percent of the management fee it charges so those funds can be directed to the Reaching Kentucky for Christ Fund, administered by the Kentucky Baptist Convention Mission Board under the leadership of Bill Mackey.

This Reaching Kentucky for Christ Fund will be used to reach people groups for Christ as the world continues to come to Ken-

tucky. Many of the countries of the world are represented now by international students at Kentucky colleges. The fund also will help churches and associations start new ministries as they develop ways of sharing the gospel in an increasingly secular culture.

This is an investment, not a donation. The foundation itself will perform no services with respect to the actual investment by Kentucky Baptists in the I-NAM mutual fund, and the foundation has no role in advising the mutual fund. To obtain information about this mutual fund, call toll-free (877) 626-3863 and request a prospectus.

As you know, the investment management industry is undergoing an unprecedented period of scrutiny regarding late trading and market timing. It is important for all Kentucky Baptists to know that Invesco-NAM, Louisville, Ky., is not a subject of these investigations. Furthermore, I-NAM has never engaged in the questionable practices some other mutual fund managers have.

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

KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION



Barry Allen

She needs you to help tell her story.

Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children is looking for **volunteers** interested in sharing ministry opportunities for the abused and neglected children in our care with your congregation. If you have a heart for children, call us today at 1-800-456-1386.



At www.WESTERNRECORDER.com:

Poll Question: When do you begin celebrating Christmas?

Kudzu



Doug Marlette

Church of the Covered Dish



Thom Tapp

Bible Crosswords

Evelyn M. Boyington

- Across**
- 1 "Then _____ was wroth with the seer" (2 Chronicles 16:10)
 - 4 "I do _____ to day and to morrow" (Luke 13:32)
 - 9 "Behold, the _____ of the Lord cometh" (Isaiah 13:9)
 - 12 "His brethren ... Gilalai, Maai, _____ and Judah" (Nehemiah 12:36)
 - 14 "Which are blackish by reason of the _____" (Job 6:16)
 - 15 "_____ shall be as gods" (Genesis 3:5)
 - 16 Elliptical
 - 17 Relatives
 - 19 "Thou shalt be for _____ to the fire" (Ezekiel 21:32)
 - 20 Female reproductive organ, comb. form
 - 21 "I will _____ the other bullock" (1 Kings 18:23)
 - 23 "He hath _____ the dough" (Hosea 7:4)
 - 26 "Gather a certain _____ every day" (Exodus 16:4)
 - 27 Makes warm
 - 28 Northeastern area of the U.S., abbr.
 - 29 "This is _____ of the Hebrews' children" (Exodus 2:6)
 - 30 "The black horses ... go forth into the _____ country" (Zechariah 6:6)
 - 31 A poem
 - 32 King of Bashan (1 Kings 4:19)
 - 33 "All the _____ thereof shall be burned with the fire" (Micah 1:7)
 - 34 Mimicked
 - 35 "I am like a _____" (Psalm 102:6)
 - 37 Snow vehicles
 - 38 "And _____ gave names to all cattle" (Genesis 2:20)
 - 39 "_____ was a tiller of the ground" (Genesis 4:2)
 - 40 "O thou fairest among _____" (Song of Solomon 1:8)
 - 42 "Set it upon a _____" (Numbers 21:8)
 - 43 On or about, abbr.
 - 45 "And he smote them _____ and thigh" (Judges 15:8)
 - 46 "To the _____ of the glory" (2 Thessalonians 2:14)
 - 49 Albert, Allen, and Alex, for short
 - 50 "... and astrologers that were in all his _____" (Daniel 1:20)
 - 51 "As it was in the days of _____" (Luke 17:26)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12			13						14	
15			16				17	18		
		19				20				
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32			33				34			
35		36					37			
		38				39				
40	41				42				43	44
45				46	47				48	
49				50					51	

- 5 Single
- 6 Religion, abbr.
- 7 Electrical engineer, abbr.
- 8 "In the hand of him that _____ thee" (Ezekiel 28:9)
- 9 "When they had _____" (John 21:15)
- 10 "The _____ of violence is in their hands" (Isaiah 59:6)
- 11 Affirmative
- 13 "They brought down the king from the _____ of the Lord" (2 Kings 11:19)
- 18 Belonging to Una
- 19 Festival
- 20 Small flying insects
- 21 Sag
- 22 "The _____ of the mountains is his pasture" (Job 39:8)
- 23 "The name of the third _____-Happuch" (Job 42:14)
- 24 "On the seventh day God _____ his work" (Genesis 2:2)
- 25 "Repented not of their _____" (Revelation 16:11)
- 27 "Then _____ king of Gezer came up to help" (Joshua 10:33)
- 30 "They chose Stephen ... and Philip, and Prochorus and _____" (Acts 6:5)
- 31 "His ears are _____ unto their prayers" (1 Peter 3:12)
- 33 "_____ me under the shadow of thy wings" (Psalm 17:8)
- 34 "An _____ unto my mother's children" (Psalm 69:8)
- 36 "Give us of your oil: for our _____ are gone out" (Matthew 25:8)
- 37 "John also was baptizing ... near to _____" (John 3:23)
- 39 "Their visage is blacker than a _____" (Lamentations 4:8)
- 40 World Hockey Association, abbr.
- 41 "All the best of the _____, and all the best of the wine" (Numbers 18:12)
- 42 Teacher-parent organization, abbr.
- 43 "One of the villages in the plain of _____" (Nehemiah 6:2)
- 44 "When she was past _____" (Hebrews 11:11)
- 47 "God shall _____ with you" (Genesis 48:21)
- 48 "The Lord shut him _____" (Genesis 7:16)

Last week's solution

1	A	P	A	I	R	S	H	Y	7	M	A	D	
10	W	O	R	D	11	A	K	A	12	D	A	T	A
13	E	R	R	14	T	S	I	15	T	E	N	O	R
16	T	O	R	A	H	18	O	I	L	19	M	E	
20	V	21	W	O	E	22	S	P	E	A	R	S	
24	25	26	E	L	A	T	E	28	Y	E	T		
30	31	32	S	W	O	R	D	33	34	35			
36	B	A	R	37	A	V	A	I	L	N	O		
41	R	42	M	O	V	I	E	44	N	O	D		
46	47	48	B	A	T	49	N	E	G	E	B		
51	C	A	N	O	N	53	F	U	R	54	B	U	S
56	K	N	I	T	57	P	I	T	58	W	I	S	T
59	S	A	P	60	B	I	T	61	P	E	T	T	Y

Advent growing in popularity among many evangelicals

Continued from page 1

An ordained minister in the Church of the Nazarene, Bratcher said he has noticed a surge of interest in Advent—and all things liturgical among evangelicals.

"Many of the letters (I get) are from traditions that are just now discovering the liturgical dimen-

sions of Christianity," he said, noting that some of his more interesting letters come from Southern Baptists, who, like Nazarenes, are not historically liturgical.

Last year, almost 3 million spiritual surfers visited his Advent pages during the month of December alone, Bratcher said.

Part of the church year's appeal for evangelicals, he said, is its mystical journey.

"The church year takes people beyond longing and expectation before Christmas to reflection and repentance in Lent to the celebration of hope at Easter," he said.

And, for Christians who bemoan

the hijacking of their holiday, Advent has a special bonus.

"The recovery of Advent, or the institution of Advent, is a way to counter the commercialization of Christmas," Bratcher said. "It's a way to be deliberately spiritual. ... Advent is really a way to recover Christmas."

As evangelical Christians venture into the church year, however, they encounter a new set of cultural dilemmas that have faced their more high church brethren for years. Not least among them: what to do with Christmas carols during Advent.

"Many churches struggle with the issue of singing Advent hymns instead of going with the larger culture which is, by Thanksgiving, already playing Christmas songs in the stores," said Benedict, of the United Methodist Church.

Benedict noted that congregations now have a rich repertoire of Advent music, including the perennial favorites "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" and "Soon and Very Soon," a more contemporary piece by Andre Crouch.

Cultural tensions aside, Advent has a special texture and resilience all its own, according to Michael Burk, director of worship for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

"It's one of the seasons of the church year that people really get, that's a season unto itself," Burk said.

"There's a simplicity to Advent. ... There's a kind of solemnity and sacred quality to it when everything around seems busy and hurried."

Advent season traditions

Washington (RNS)—Like Christmas, the liturgical season of Advent has a range of rich traditions.

Here are some of the most common:

Advent wreath. Perhaps the most popular Advent institution, the Advent wreath is a tradition shared by Catholics and Protestants. Made of evergreens to symbolize eternal life in Christ, the wreath has four candles that count down the four Sundays until Christmas. An additional candle is lit each week—traditionally three purple candles and one pink candle, lit on the third Sunday of Advent (known as "Gaudete Sunday"). A fifth white candle may be used in the center to represent Jesus.

In churches, the Advent wreath is generally placed in the sanctuary, on or near the altar. Families who use the wreath at home most often place it on the dining table and light the candles during meals.

Liturgical colors. The sanctuary color of the Advent season has traditionally been purple. Associated with royalty, it signals a longing for Jesus, the "king of kings." Since purple is also the liturgical color for Lent, its use during Advent pro-

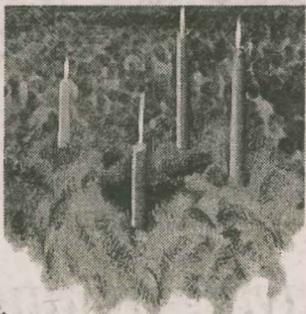
vides Christians with a visual link between Jesus' birth and death.

Blue is an increasingly popular Advent color in Protestant churches, according to Dennis Bratcher of the Christian Resource Institute (www.cresourcei.org). While some congregations use royal blue to signify royalty, others use bright blue to symbolize the night sky or the waters of creation in Genesis 1.

Hanging of the green. In the first week of Advent, many churches hold a service of the hanging of the greens to prepare the sanctuary for Christmas, according to Daniel Benedict, worship resources director for the General Board of Discipleship of the United Methodist Church.

The service is usually offered on a Sunday or weekday evening and involves Scripture readings and music. Volunteers hang wreaths on the church doors and place the Advent wreath and other evergreens in the sanctuary while congregants hear the religious symbols explained.

Christmas, symbols of Christ, are hung on fir trees as decorations in many churches, Benedict said.



'Missions Beyond the Edge,' part 1

Oneida Baptist Institute's ministry to students extends around the world

Kay and I recently returned from the annual Kentucky Baptist Convention. The theme of our convention this year was "Missions Beyond the Edge."

For the past several years, I have asked some of my students to perform a skit or give testimonies during my report. This year two students presented a skit depicting how Oneida Baptist Institute for years has truly provided "Missions Beyond the Edge."

Occasionally someone will question our interest in international students. They suggest that we should be focused on American students, especially after the terrorism attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. For the past 50-plus years, Oneida has opened her doors to international students. In recent years, 10 to 15 percent of our student body has been made up of internationals. Most are not Christians when they enroll; many have been brought up in other religions.

Three years ago, one of our students from China invited Christ into his life. This young man graduated last May and will most likely return to China after he completes college. In a country where we cannot send missionaries, he may become a real ambassador for the cause of Christ.

A few years ago a young man from Africa graduated from OBI and attended Clear Creek Baptist Bible College. He is now in seminary and looks forward to returning to his native country to preach the gospel. Many

other international students over the years have found Christ to be the answer to their greatest needs. They can provide a unique ministry in their native countries.

Upon returning to our campus from the KBC meeting, I was happy to hear that two of our international students had invited Christ into their lives. Soo Young is from South Korea and enrolled in summer school in 2002 as a junior. She is a marvelous student and earned a 3.14 grade point average last year. Two of her classes were advanced placement courses.

Soo sang in our choir last year and was impressed with the experience of being in a different church each Sunday. Traveling across the commonwealth gave her insight into Kentucky's rich culture. Soo is a model student and young lady. If she has ever had a bad day, I have not noticed. Every time I see her she is pleasant but serious. When she enrolled, Soo was quick to admit that religion was not really something she was interested in. Even so, that did not discourage us from allowing her to enroll.

All of our students are required to attend chapel every school day as well as Sunday morning and evening church services. I do not think Soo intended to give much thought to her spiritual needs. Fortunately, these two years at Oneida have not only provided her a chance to prepare herself academically, but have given her an opportunity to accept Christ as her Lord.

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

Preachers rethink merits of education

Going to college no longer seen as sign of weak faith

(Editor's note: The following is adapted from a September Association Press story by Roger Alford.)

Jim Norman wasn't always the articulate wordsmith who now shines as a Southern Baptist pastor. Not so long ago, Norman was just another high school dropout from Appalachia who had gone on to earn a living for his wife and children.

By his own admission, the 37-year-old carpet installer was unable to match subjects and verbs in simple sentences. He stumbled over many of the words in his Bible. So when he began sensing God's call to ministry, Norman felt he had to go to school. "I needed an education," he said. "I needed to be able to communicate, to relate to people. I needed to be able to understand the Bible, to interpret Scripture correctly."

Like Norman, a growing number of country preachers across Appalachia are opting for higher education, despite a pervasive mountain belief that those whom God calls to ministry should not seek a formal theological educa-

tion. Norman said some friends in his mountain community suggested he attend Clear Creek Baptist Bible College. Others, he said, warned that preachers who go to school are showing a lack of faith in God's ability to equip ministers for service.

Hiram Adkins, an Old Regular Baptist pastor from Pikeville, said preachers who go to school simply don't have the faith to trust God to prepare them for ministry. "A lot of time when you get into school, you have to take somebody's theory or you won't graduate. That's the problem."

Norman, pastor of McKinney Baptist Church in Lincoln County, said he resisted God's call to become a minister, primarily because of his lack of education. He said his language skills were so poor he flunked his first English grammar course at Clear Creek.

"The goal is to reach people with the gospel," he said. "Without that education, I would not be able to minister to everyone. To me, if God calls you, you need to be at your best."

Bill Whittaker is president of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, Pineville, KY 40977; (606) 337-3196

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

Some Christian leaders upset over Bush quote about Muslims

Washington (RNS)—Conservative Christian leaders have criticized President Bush for declaring that he believes Christians and Muslims “worship the same God.”

In a Nov. 20 news conference with British Prime Minister Tony Blair in London, the president was asked about his views on the subject.

“I do say that freedom is the Almighty’s gift to every person,” the president responded. “I also condition it by saying freedom is not America’s gift to the world. It’s much greater than that, of course. And I believe we worship the same God.”

Those words brought quick reaction from leaders of two prominent evangelical organizations.

Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, said Bush was incorrect.

“We should always remember that he is commander in chief, not theologian in chief,” Land said. “And when he says that he believes that Muslims and Christians worship the same God, he is simply mistaken.”

Ted Haggard, president of the National Association of Evangelicals, agreed.

“The Christian God encourages freedom, love, forgiveness, prosperity and health while the Muslim God appears to value the opposite,” Haggard said. “The personalities of each God are evident in the cultures, civilizations and dispositions of the peoples that serve them. Muhammad’s central message was submission; Jesus’ central message was love. They seem to be very different personalities.”

While Bush seems to differ with “the majority of evangelicals” on this matter, Haggard said conservative Christians do not expect him to be a theologian.

Author and research professor William Lane Craig of the evangelical Talbot School of Theology in La Mirada, Calif., said the president’s remark “obscured important differences” between the two faiths.

“President Bush would have done better to brush aside the question with a smile, saying, ‘I’ll leave that question to the theologians,’” Craig said.

Underwater memories



OUTDOOR EVENT A man emerges from his creek baptism in this photograph by Alabama photographer Caroline Davis. Davis has used her underwater camera for years to capture images of baptisms in rivers and creeks.

Outdoor baptism photos preserve dying tradition

By Greg Garrison
Religion News Service

Birmingham, Ala. (RNS)—With clouds of spray paint hanging thick in the air, photographer Caroline Davis scrambled on a late October day to renovate a suite on the third floor of Birmingham’s Dr. Pepper Building.

On the walls are the distinctive icons that comprise her life calling: pictures of river baptisms.

Davis, a recipient of two Alabama Arts Council grants for her work in preserving images of outdoor baptism, wants everyone to have a chance to see her pictures and hosted the opening for the Caroline Davis Photography Studio and Gallery for a show featuring the photos of what some believe is a dying tradition.

“The state of Alabama funded me for these pictures,” Davis said. “I would love for the people of Alabama to be able to see them. I was opening a studio and decided, ‘Why not make it a gallery and let people come see them?’”

Her photographs offer a glimpse into the way rural churches formerly baptized converts, a method that is now disappearing. A collection of 23 of her baptism photos has been displayed across the state in Alabama museums.

When Davis was a small child in Tuscaloosa, her nanny sang her to sleep with the hymn, “Wade in the Water, Children.” Annie Morgan, the former nanny, had been baptized in a river as a child in Selma. The hymns she sang were the same ones sung at river baptisms.

Underwater photography

Davis grew up to become a photographer specializing in underwater photography. She has used that technique to immortalize images of baptism in the river, former tradition in Alabama and other states where it once was considered a standard point of entry to Christian faith in the Deep South.

Though she now seems to have been born to take pictures of out-



INDOOR SHOT Davis also shoots photos of indoor baptisms.

door baptisms, she accidentally swam into her first one. While scuba diving in the Grand Cayman Islands in 1997, she encountered a group of Jamaicans who were conducting a baptism in the water. That same summer, Davis, a pilot, was flying in south Alabama and saw a river baptism. Shortly after that, a friend called and invited her to take pictures at a river baptism. Then church members would tell her about other baptisms.

Some of the pictures are in rivers or creeks; others are in baptismal pools dug in the ground and formed with concrete blocks. Her photographs were all taken in Greene, Sumter and Hale counties. Most of them show the action from both underwater and above.

Her underwater camera equipment couldn’t penetrate the silt-filled water in some of the rivers.

Davis still gets calls from the rural churches, alerting her to possible baptisms. But she said this summer was a low-water mark for her specialty.

“It was tough this summer,” Davis said. “Some of the churches didn’t have a new candidate to be baptized.”

A few predominantly black, rural Primitive Baptist churches still baptize in rivers or creeks. “Because these churches are so small, it’s unpredictable,” Davis said. “It might be canceled, it might rain. They don’t know when they’re going to baptize until that day. You don’t know when someone’s going to come forth.”

There are very few river baptisms still going on. Many of the churches that traditionally baptized in rivers typically quit as soon as they could afford a new building with an indoor baptismal pool, she said. Some are ashamed of river baptisms, because it means the church is too poor to build an indoor baptismal.

The photographs are all in black and white to convey the sense of an ancient tradition kept alive, said Davis, who was baptized by sprinkling as an infant in a Presbyterian church.

Racing to catch the unpredictable

River baptisms are rarely planned out in advance; she usually has very little notice. Davis spends a lot of time talking to church members, learning about when they are having revivals and whether there are any converts. The baptisms are usually immediately after a revival, if there are any converts.

It’s not unusual for only one person to be baptized. That means Davis has only a few clicks of the shutter to capture an emotional moment that lasts 10 minutes at the most. One church in Livingston that formerly baptized in the river stopped when there were reports of an alligator living in the water.

On occasion, some people didn’t want to be photographed at all and asked her to leave. She does.

Davis doesn’t name any of the churches or people who appear in her pictures, to protect their privacy.

“I work with people I have a good rapport with,” Davis said. “I let them know I’m just photographing a dying tradition. I’m not going to take advantage of them.”

American Baptist churches send clergy to the gym

Valley Forge, Pa. (RNS)—The American Baptist Churches USA has awarded 35 “wellness grants” to ministerial leaders to use toward such health-related activities as a membership in a local fitness club.

The \$300 grants were distributed during what the denomination’s Ministerial Leadership Commission called “Clergy Appreciation Season.”

That season, from October to November, is part of the commission’s Clergy Health Initiative that has sought to make clergy health a priority for American Baptists.

“The ministerial leaders cannot be healthy by themselves,” said Ivan George, the commission’s executive director. “Providing the wellness grant and performing other acts of support during Clergy Appreciation Season and throughout the year are ways in which the local congregation or other American Baptist agency becomes a partner with the ministerial leader in the pursuit of healthy lifestyles.”

The grants can be used for “wellness opportunities,” such as a one-year membership in a local health or fitness club, a family membership at the YMCA or a retreat at an American Baptist conference center or camp, the commission said on its Web site.

Pastors from throughout the country and an executive minister of a local Baptist association were among the recipients.

The commission previously created a definition of “clergy health” that includes balanced nutrition, emotional wellbeing, periods of spiritual reflection and a sense of fulfillment from one’s job.

HOW TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

By Paul Chitwood

The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering is named after a missionary whose love for her Lord and for the people she served was greater than her love for herself.

While Southern Baptists share God's heart to see the nations come to know the love of Christ, we also have a great burden to see the people in our own nation come to Christ. God's desire and our desire is that every person would experience a personal, saving relationship with Christ.

The Bible informs us that, because of our mistakes, failures and willful wrongdoing, people are living lives void of the most important and fulfilling relationship that we could ever know, a relationship with our Creator. Without this relationship, we cannot gain entrance into heaven and are destined to spend eternity separated from God.

Eternity separated from God would be the most miserable existence imaginable. When we are separated from the source of love and peace, we know only turmoil. When we are separated from the source of joy, we know only sadness and grief. When we are separated from the source of life, we know only death.

Yet God wants to make your life better forever by allowing you to have a personal, saving relationship with Him. This relationship is possible only through Christ Jesus who died for our sins on the cross. The Bible tells us, "If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved" (Romans 10:9). Believing and trusting in Him, would you confess Jesus to be your Savior and Lord today?

Paul Chitwood, pastor of First Baptist Church of Somerset, is a trustee of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **BOWLING GREEN**—First Church recently ordained **Mattie Cobb, Andrew Donelson III, Mike Jones** and **Joe Light** as deacons.

■ **CADIZ**—Trigg County Church recently called **Larry Brown** as pastor. ■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Pleasant Hill Church called **James Jones** as interim pastor.

■ **CLAY**—First Church recently ordained **Randy Bone, Brad Carlisle, Paul Cherry, Troy Grant, Paul Harvey, Dorris Kelley, Sam Pritchett** and **David Winebarger** as deacons. **Jeff McMains** is pastor.

■ **COVINGTON**—Latonia Church's sanctuary choir will present the Christmas cantata, "What Child is This?" Dec. 14, 7:30 p.m.

■ **DUNNVILLE**—**John Bennett**, pastor of First Church, recently was ordained to the gospel ministry.

■ **EKRON**—Zion Grove Church will install **Glen Gordon** as pastor on Dec. 7. **James Booker Jr.**, pastor of Kenwood Northeast Baptist Church in Crestwood, will be guest speaker.

■ **EUBANK**—Eubank Church recently ordained **Bill Chaney, Leroy Gibson, Bill Jones, Roger Moore** and **David Reynolds** as deacons.

■ **FAIRDALE**—Oak Grove Church recently ordained **George Maloney** to the gospel ministry and **Curtis Speer** as a deacon. **Dallas Catron** is pastor.

■ **FORT MITCHELL**—Fort Mitchell Church ordained minister of music **Tony Burdette** to the gospel ministry Nov. 9.

■ **FRANKFORT**—Calvary Church ordained **Scott Criscillis** to the gospel ministry Nov. 30. **Dwayne Southwood** is pastor.

■ **HODGENVILLE**—Nolynn Church recently honored **Katherine Bale** on her 90th birthday. **Dan Flanagan** is pastor.

■ **JEFFERSONTOWN**—Jeffersontown Church ordained minister of music **Nathan Platt** to the gospel ministry. **Sanford Hill** is pastor.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Grace Church recently honored **John and Juanita Sullivan** on their 50th wedding anniversary.

Victory Church recently ordained **John Archer, Bill Blackburn** and **Bobby Hibbard** as deacons and ordained **Chuck Sumner** to the gospel ministry. **Mike James** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Carlisle Avenue Church will host a Ladies Christmas Banquet Dec. 5, 7 p.m. **Jaylynn Cook** will be guest speaker.

Cedar Creek Church called **Jeff Keith** as minister to students. **Tim Beougher** is pastor.

Deer Park Church recently called **Clayton Nance** as music intern.

Highland Church will hold its annual Christmas dinner, Dec. 14, 6 p.m. **Joe Phelps** is pastor.

South Jefferson Church will hold a Christmas eve candlelight service Dec. 24, 7 p.m. **Danny Haynes** is pastor.

■ **MARION**—Emmanuel Church ordained **David Brown** and **Rich Gardner** to the gospel ministry Nov. 30.

■ **MIDDLETOWN**—First Church's sanctuary choir will present the cantata "Once Upon a Night" Dec. 14, 6:30 p.m., under the direction of **Leslie Hancock**. **Jim Cobban** is pastor.

■ **RUSSELL SPRINGS**—First Church recently ordained **Joe Branscum, Gary Godby, Wayne Hopper** and **Jeff Hubbard** as deacons. **Joe Allen** is pastor.

Campbellsville recruits 'friendship families' for international students

Campbellsville—With nearly 100 international students from more than 20 countries studying at Campbellsville University, many of them are unable to travel home for the Christmas holidays.

DeWayne Frazier, director of Campbellsville's international education, said that while some students will stay in residence halls during the break, "we are currently recruiting International Friendship Families who will allow the students to stay with them during the breaks."

"If you or someone you know would like to host a student for the break or just a part of the break, we would love to utilize you in this important ministry," he added.

For those international students without a sponsoring family, Frazier said Campbellsville officials are working to assist them during the break periods.

"We dare to believe that this is the most comprehensive and loving plan in Kentucky," Frazier noted. He said he knows of no other schools in the commonwealth that provide "a combination of residence halls open to students during the holiday break and make arrangements for meals."

"We are taking this one step further by hiring a person to help coordinate activities and serve as a

24-hour emergency contact for the students," he added.

Frazier said Marciano Netto from Brazil has been hired as the international resident assistant and contact person. He will coordinate special meals with local churches and other activities for international students.

"We are doing everything we can, with the limited amount of staff available during the Christmas holiday, to meet the needs of our students," Frazier explained. "We are so happy to offer this service to our international students."

While Campbellsville's percentage of international students already exceeds the statewide average among colleges and universities, Frazier said the school's international student recruitment continues to grow. As a result, he said there will be an ongoing need for ministry to international students during holiday seasons.

"It takes a while to build up a solid base of families who have the means to keep students," he said. "We are optimistic but we understand this type of program takes time."

For information about becoming an International Friendship Family, contact Frazier at (270) 789-5051 or by e-mail at dpfrazier@campbellsville.edu.

Clontz retires after 18 years leading KBC discipleship training emphasis

By Brenda Smith
Kentucky Baptist Convention

Louisville—Kentucky Baptist Convention Discipleship Training Director Jim Clontz will retire Dec. 31 after 18 years of service.

Clontz has devoted his career to discipleship training since joining the KBC staff in 1985, serving first as associate director and then as director. He will remain active in Kentucky Baptist life as a discipleship consultant with the newly created church development/evangelism team.

"Jim is intensely loyal to discipleship training because it had such an impact upon his life," said Vernon Cole, leader of the KBC church growth team. "I don't know that I've seen or experienced anybody who has the intense loyalty personally as well as conceptually to discipleship training as he does."

Clontz also has served as a church training consultant for Long Run Baptist Association, as an area public relations consultant for the South Carolina Baptist Convention and as a special correspondent for South Caroli-

na's Baptist Courier. A number of his articles on discipleship training have been published in "Discipleship Training Magazine" and "Sunday School Leadership."

Clontz, a native of Asheville, N.C., grew up in South Carolina. He is a graduate of Furman University in Greenville, S.C.; Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville; and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

He was licensed to the ministry in 1977 by Eastern Parkway Baptist Church in Louisville, and ordained in 1985 by Gambrell Street Baptist Church in Fort Worth.

Clontz is a member of West Broadway Baptist Church in Louisville, where he serves as a deacon, leader of the adult discipleship training group, member of the discipleship training team, and chairman of the public relations committee.

He and his wife, Margaret, a Louisville native, have been married since 1977. They have two children, James, 23, and Lauren, 17.



Clontz

CLASSIFIED ADS

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

SEEKING: Music director, Mt. Vernon Baptist Church, Woodford County. Please call: (502) 863-1433 after 5 p.m.; or (859) 873-3337.

SEEKING: Church with exceptional growth potential seeks a God-called, prayer- and Scripture-based motivation speaker that keeps congregation excited about following God's Word. Passion for the lost is a must. An openness to various worship styles and highly developed people skills are essential as well. Please send resumé and a non-returnable video to: Pastor Search Committee, Kings Baptist Church, PO Box 380, Mt. Washington, KY 40047.

SEEKING: Minister to preschool/children/families. Experience in large church setting and seminary degree preferred. Resumés to Westside Baptist Church, 10000 W Newberry Road, Gainesville, FL 32606, Attn: Office Manager. E-mail: dmc_alhany@westsidebaptist.org; fax: (352) 333-9009, Attn: Office Manager. No calls, please.

SEEKING: Publications secretary—responsibilities in general duties and publications. Experience preferred. Send resumés to: Buechel Park Baptist Church, 2403 Hikes Lane, Louisville, KY 40218, or e-mail: rogers@bpbaptist.org.

SEEKING: Minister of youth and activities for First Baptist Church, Hopkinsville, Ky. College/seminary degree required. Send resumés to: Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 1400 South Main St., Hopkinsville, KY 42240.

SEEKING: Year-round part-time adult consultant for Kentucky WMU. Master's degree and experience with Women on Mission required. Position includes consulting work with churches, leadership training, and directing fall retreats. For additional information, contact Kentucky WMU Executive Director Joy Bolton, (502) 244-6485.

SEEKING: Part-time youth minister for Central Ave. Baptist Church. Please submit resumés to: Minister of Youth Search Committee, PO Box 736, Elizabethtown, KY 42702.

SEEKING: New Friendship Baptist Church in Auburn, Ky., is currently seeking a part-time music director. Interested applicants should forward resumés to NFBC, c/o Greg Hale, 6387 Friendship Road, Auburn, KY 42206, or e-mail to gah@logantele.com.

SEEKING: Associate pastor. Ovesen Heights Baptist Church in Hodgenville, Ky., is receiving resumés for part-time associate pastor. Primary ministry is with teenagers, but includes some preaching and pastoral responsibilities. Send resumé with references to: Personnel Committee, Ovesen Heights Baptist Church, PO Box 253, Hodgenville, KY 42748, or inquire to: DRichC@aol.com.

SEEKING: Worship leader position at Alton Baptist in Lawrenceburg, Ky. Accepting resumés until Dec. 10. Phone: (502) 839-3487; fax: 839-3488.

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Support for starving artists

Church-sponsored house helps men bridge gap between arts and faith

By Su-Jin Yim
Religion News Service

Portland, Ore. (RNS)—Knock on the door of any rental house in southeast Portland and you might find a group of twentysomething guys living together in messy, undefined bachelorhood.

But step inside one mud-brown Craftsman-style house here, and in the kitchen you'll spy a faded, framed St. Augustine poem extolling the beauty of art created in God's spirit.

A floor below, a pottery wheel, darkroom in progress and sound studio share the basement. A kitchen chalkboard schedules cooking duties for every resident, and another schedule outlines each man's creative project for the month.

These aren't the uptight rules of a guy whose name is on the lease and wants everyone to live his way. It's 26-year-old Peter Jenkins' solution to a problem he says few people in the Christian church worry about but should: how to keep both art and artists in the church.

"Generally, I find most churches to be pretty bland and uncreative places, and I see a lot of creative people in the church but they don't really have the resources or the skills or the discipline to develop their creativity," said Jenkins, who dropped out of Multnomah Bible College four years ago. "Your average Christian kid either goes to Bible college and forgets about art or goes to art college and forgets about the Bible."

Jenkins decided Christian artists needed another option. Two years ago, he and the Imago Dei Community Church started The Artistry, a monastery for male Christian artists.

House rules

Residents sign a yearlong contract to live in the rental house and follow its rules, which include no programmed TV, no girlfriends in your bed and no slacking. Every man must work a part-time job.

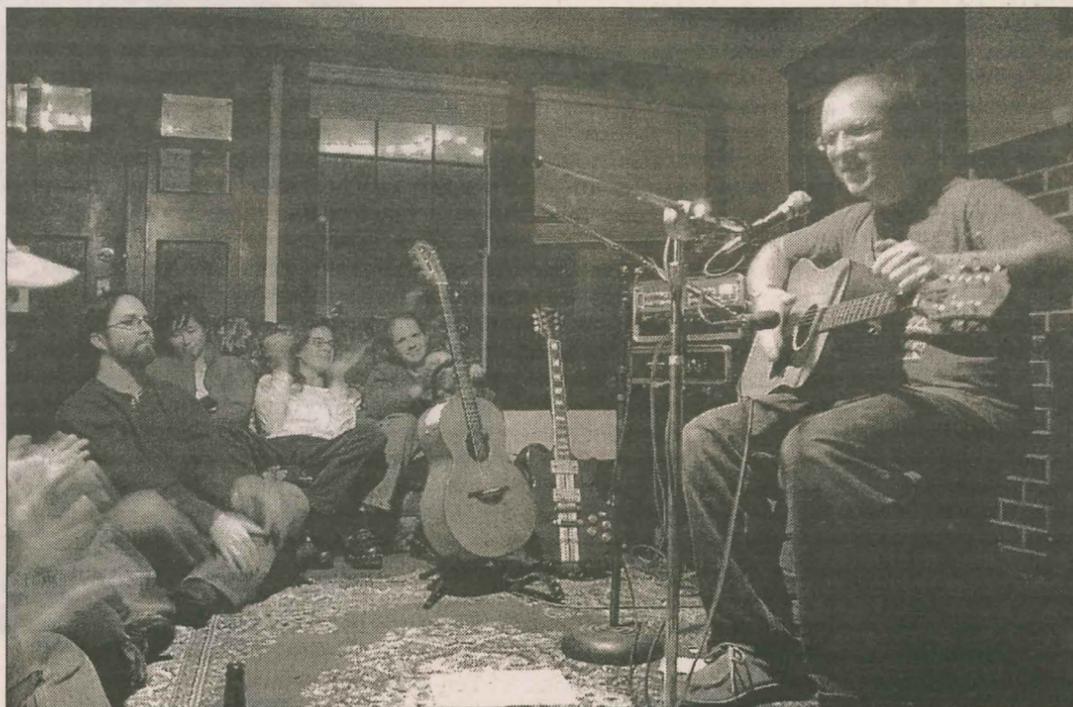
Rent and tuition come to \$400 a month, and each artist presents an annual show. They also run weekly meetings, from writing clubs to painting classes, that invite outside people into the house.

This is no artists Utopia. At The Artistry sometimes tempers flare, as they would in a house with five guys, one bathroom and lots of rules. There's also personal growth, fast friendships and the occasional early exit.

Resident Jonathan Manley just finished his year at The Artistry in late September. The 20-year-old Midwesterner calls his time there, despite some difficulties, "the best year of my life so far."

"Art comes from learning and life, so I just pulled a lot from the people around me and their encouragement," said Manley, a writer. "There are people that really encourage you to keep on following your dreams and the things you want to do."

Jenkins created The Artistry for



others, but it also answered a far more personal question.

After enrolling at Multnomah Bible College, the Tacoma, Wash., native flailed. He couldn't find a place for both his faith and his creativity at the school. He dropped out without a degree after two and a half years.

His friend and former classmate Daniel McKay watched Jenkins struggle. "At Multnomah, he decided he wasn't really cut out for academics, for book learning," McKay said. "In the work force, he discovered he wasn't really cut out for being under somebody else's supervision."

Jenkins found Imago Dei, a young church where Pastor Rick McKinley welcomed his vision.

Being intentional about art

"Everyone in Portland's an artist, right?" McKinley joked. "It was sort of a dream to say, 'Can we capture some of these younger guys rather than just having them flake and actually get them to be intentional about their art and see it as something bigger than them?' Their art might actually be used by God for the gospel."

Christianity is an integral part of The Artistry's mission. Residents are required to attend church regularly. But that doesn't mean spiritual questioning is forbidden.

The Artistry is too young to point to traditional success stories. No one's become famous since "graduating." Few people are even making their living at being an artist.

Jenkins hopes to expand The Artistry. He plans to open an artists' house for women in February. In 10 years, he wants to run four houses: two in the city, two in the country, split by gender.

Along the way, he also hopes it will change the way churches view artists and how comfortable artists feel in the church.

"It's kind of a vicious cycle. Because when artists don't get invested in, they don't turn into anything and they continue to be viewed as irresponsible and lazy," Jenkins said. "The thing is, I think God has created them to be artists for a purpose. He hasn't created them to be businessmen or carpenters necessarily. It's kind of a dilemma, and it's hurting the church because the church really needs to have beauty in it.

"It's essential."

ARTS "MONASTERY"

Portland resident Peter Jenkins (right) acknowledges applause from houseguests during a musical performance in the living room of The Artistry, a community house for young male Christian artists he founded two years ago. "Your average Christian kid either goes to Bible college and forgets about art or goes to art college and forgets about the Bible," Jenkins said. (RNS photo by Joel Davis)

Wouldn't it be great ...

... if churches had a resource to help families with the challenges they're facing?

You're holding it.

Every week, the Western Recorder offers Family Forum, a faith-based column to help with the variety of issues families face today. Specialists on parenting, seniors, singles, teenagers and relationships can help equip your congregation to live out their Christianity where it matters most. Shouldn't your members be getting Family Forum?



PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING
WESTERNRECORDER

U.S. religious investors rank top ethical concerns

Goshen, Ind. (RNS)—American religious investors cite the use of sweatshops as their top concern within the realm of business ethics, a new survey shows.

"The Ethical Issues Report: What Matters to Religious Investors," was released Nov. 12 by Mennonite Mutual Aid.

After sweatshops the rest of the top five concerns are, in order: product safety record, high CEO pay, environmental record and adult entertainment.

"These data may serve to demolish the stereotype that religious investors are narrowly concerned with only traditional 'sin' issues, such as pornography and abortion products," said John Liechty, senior vice president of financial services for MMA.

"While those topics certainly are a factor in the thinking of many religious investors, they do not preclude concerns about far-ranging ethical issues in the 'secular' business world."

Opinion Research Corporation International conducted the survey on behalf of the Goshen,

Ind.-based Mennonite organization. It polled 2,096 Americans including 1,199 investors.

Eighty percent of the investors surveyed said they considered themselves to be religious or spiritual.

MMA President Howard Brenneman said the findings on the religiosity of investors could have broad implications.

"It is apparent these investors are paying attention to the ethical practices of the world around them, including the businesses in their mutual funds and stock portfolios," he said.

The report found 33 percent of religious investors would dump a mutual fund if it involved companies that they consider unethical. Another 33 percent of them said they would consider dumping such a fund.

MMA is an organization that helps Anabaptists and others include biblical perspectives in their decisions about insurance, finances and charitable giving.

The survey conducted Sept. 11-15 has a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percent.



**That all peoples
may know Him**
Follow God's Purpose

**Week of Prayer for
International Missions**
and
International Mission Study
Nov. 30–Dec. 7, 2003

**Lottie Moon
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National Goal: \$133 million
Challenge Goal: \$150 million