



WESTERN RECORDER

January 13, 2004
Vol. 178, No. 2

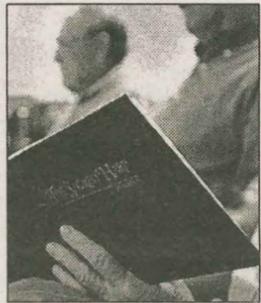
FOR THE RECORD

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Billy Graham has hip replacement, planning crusade in Kansas City

Kansas City, Mo. (RNS)—Two days after evangelist Billy Graham underwent partial hip replacement surgery, his organization announced he will hold a June crusade in Kansas City, Mo.

"I never expected to still be preaching at the age of 85, and yet my call to proclaim the gospel is as strong as ever," Graham wrote in a letter read to pastors and other community leaders attending an announcement in Kansas City Jan. 8.

"Health permitting, I am honored to join hands with area pastors and churches to proclaim the good news of the gospel."

Graham had traveled Jan. 5 to Jacksonville, Fla., for his semi-annual checkup at the Mayo Clinic. He broke his left hip in an overnight fall in his hotel room and had surgery at the clinic's St. Luke's Hospital on Jan. 6, said his spokesman Larry Ross.

On Jan. 8 he was continuing his recovery and was expected to begin physical therapy.

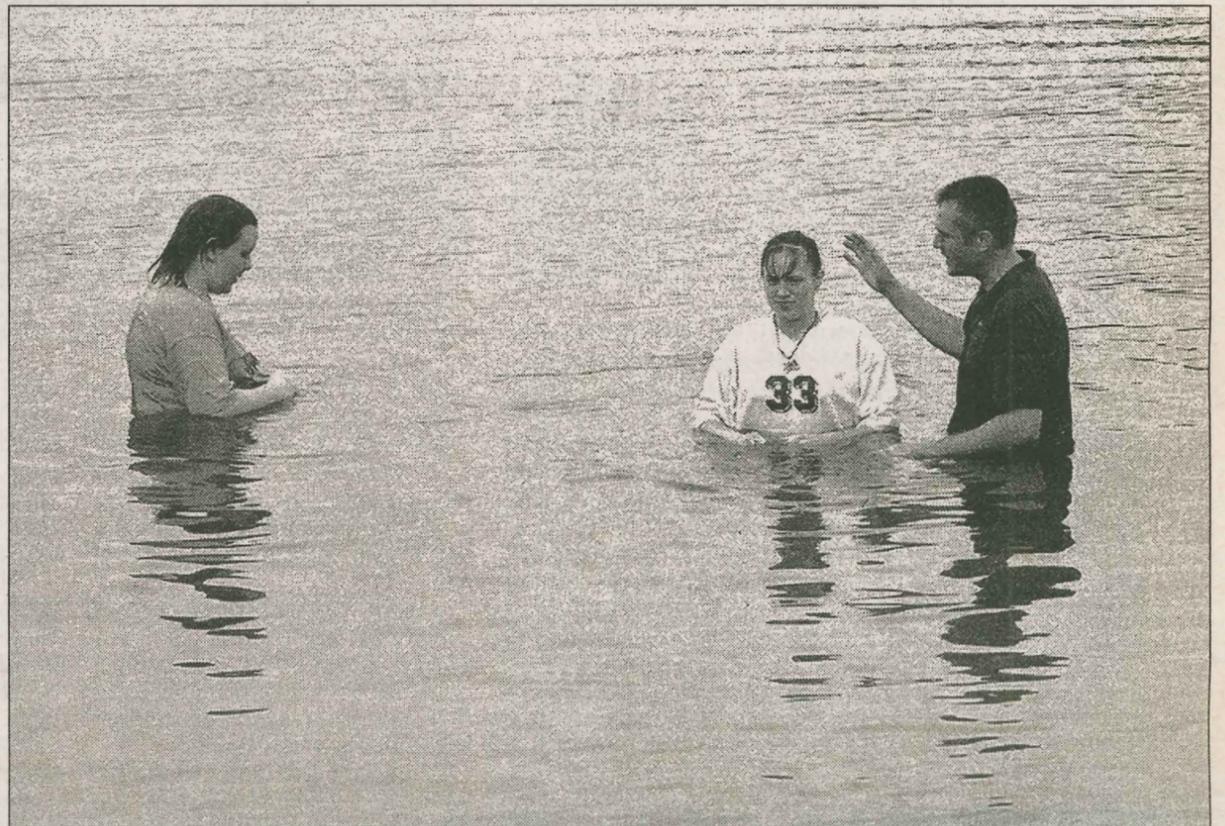
"Doctors still expect a complete recovery and Mr. Graham is looking forward to resuming his normal schedule that will include two crusades later this year," Ross said.

He said a second 2004 crusade will be announced in February and the evangelist hopes to lead at least one crusade in 2005.

The "Heart of America Billy Graham Crusade" will be held June 17-20 at Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City.

Churches from six states—Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska and Oklahoma—will be involved in the event.

Starting something new



LAKE BAPTISM Allison Eldridge (left) watches as Alan Witham, pastor of Lakeside Community Church in Taylorsville, baptizes Eldridge's sister-in-law, Nikki Eldridge. Witham is also a church planting strategist for the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Church starts continue throughout Kentucky

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

Taylorsville—Attracting between 35-50 people each week, Lakeside Community Church doesn't stir images of steeples and people dressed in their "Sunday best."

Nobody wears a tie at the worship services. During warm weather, some people come in shorts. Pastor Alan Witham delivers sermons in blue jeans after a praise band leads the congregation in contemporary-style music.

Birthing through a home Bible study that began two years ago, Lakeside now holds services in an elementary school.

Witham had hoped for faster growth, but he reminds himself that developing relationships outweighs the importance of numbers.

"The big reward I see is people's lives changed and seeing people connecting with God," said Witham, a church planting strategist for the Kentucky Baptist Convention. "Church planting is not a microwave process. It's a crock pot of building relationships."

Lakeside is one of 31 Anglo congregations started by the KBC during the past two years, with another 15 slated to begin by Aug. 31, 2004. The convention also started four Hispanic churches and three

African-American congregations last year.

With more than 3,700 churches of all denominations closing every year in America, starting new churches is vital, Witham said.

But replacing those that close isn't as important as keeping pace with population growth, he added.

"The population is growing faster than people are being reached and church attendance," Witham said. "Another necessity is reaching people groups that aren't being reached."

"A lot of times people say, 'Why do we need new ones when we have' □ See "Church starts take ..." *Page 3*

Poll: Most sexually active teenagers wish they had waited



By Erin Curry & Michael Foust
Baptist Press

Washington (BP)—Teens today might be more cautious toward sex than generally believed and might be paying more attention to their parents' warnings, according to a recent survey.

A study by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy found 67 percent of sexually experienced teens said they wish they had waited longer before having sexual intercourse.

The breakdown by gender indicates 77 percent of girls and 60 percent of boys regret becoming sexually active too early.

Eighty-five percent of teens agreed sex should occur only in a

long-term, committed relationship, and only 26 percent said it is embarrassing for teens to admit they are virgins. Teens credit their own morals, religious beliefs and concerns about the future for influencing their attitudes about sex more than concerns about pregnancy or STDs.

The opportunity to test those attitudes is significant, considering 42 percent of teens in high school said they had been at a party in the past six months with boys and girls where no adults were present.

Other findings included:
■ 84 percent of teens said teen pregnancy prevention programs should teach young people to be married before they have a child.

□ See "Poll finds most ..." *Page 9*

Baptists offer medical aid to Iranian quake survivors

Washington—Baptist World Aid, the relief and development agency of the Baptist World Alliance, is providing medical assistance to people left homeless and hurting after a massive earthquake hit Iran.

A quake measuring 6.7 on the Richter scale rocked the city of Bam the morning after Christmas. Some reports said it left 60 percent of the city in rubble, while others said 78 percent of the city was destroyed. Officials estimated the final death toll could top 30,000 people.

In addition to the BWA relief efforts, several other Baptist organizations also are responding to the tragedy. A group of Southern Baptist volunteers from five states left for Iran Dec. 31, according to Southern Baptist International Mission Board officials.

"We are in the process of working with local contacts in Iran in determining ways we can meet needs," said an IMB worker in world hunger and relief ministries. "We have already authorized \$50,000 and will be able to help more if needed."

Texas Baptist team responds

A group of Texas Baptist disaster relief volunteers left for Iran Jan. 9 to spend two weeks responding to needs. Texas Baptists previously set up field kitchens in Kurdish refugee camps in Iran in 1991 after Operation Desert Storm.

Additionally, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship has provided an



MEDICAL AID Relief workers provide medical assistance to survivors of the Dec. 26 earthquake that hit Bam, Iran. The 6.7 magnitude quake left most of the city in ruin.

initial gift of \$20,000 for earthquake victims. American Baptists' World Relief Office has donated \$15,000 to be channeled through Church World Service, the benevolent arm of the World Council of Churches, and \$5,000 through Baptist World Aid.

Sandor Szenczy, president of Hungarian Baptist Aid, the lead agency coordinating the international Baptist response on behalf of BWA, said more than 1,500 children in the area lost their parents.

In a report distributed by Baptist World Aid, Szenczy described the

scene in Bam: "A few houses lost only two or three walls, and the remaining part looks like a theater stage, with the clocks ticking on the wall and the refrigerator's open door showing the vegetables and milk inside.

"Most of the survivor inhabitants fled to other areas of the country. Those who stayed tried to warm up by a fire and slept in tents provided by the international relief organizations. Everybody wears a dust mask on the streets, and we can see the horror of the tragedy in the eyes."

Even the city's airport has been

turned into a makeshift hospital, he said.

"Everywhere we looked, injured and wounded people tried to get treatment, and those who already received it were lying on beds. However, the patients with the most serious injuries were being flown to other cities. After arrival, our doctors and nurses immediately started to treat those who came to us," Szenczy reported.

Clinic set up under trees

Baptist medical relief workers set up a clinic in tents pitched under palm trees in a park. More than 200 people received treatment at the "Baptist hospital" within the first few days, he noted.

"Some of them were badly injured. Some of them suffered from pneumonia or cold because at nights the temperature fell below minus 8 to 10 degrees Celsius," Szenczy reported. "One day, our team was also asked to go to two villages nearby Bam because survivors were found there, and there were not enough doctors to provide medical care, and the medications were not sufficient either."

Individuals can contribute to the BWA relief effort by designating gifts to "Iran Earthquake Appeal." Send gifts to Baptist World Aid, Baptist World Alliance, 405 N Washington St., Falls Church, VA 22046.

Based on reporting by Associated Baptist Press and Baptist Press

BWA VP opposes 'division over peripheral matters'

Nashville—Warning that "the unbelieving world ... will only rejoice in our separation," Baptist World Alliance vice president Branko Lovrec urged Southern Baptist Convention leaders to rethink their proposal to withdraw from BWA.

In a Dec. 29 letter to fellow BWA vice president Morris Chapman, Lovrec expressed concern about "the very sad news regarding the BWA relationship with SBC." Lovrec, former president of the Baptist Union of Croatia, and Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee, are among 16 BWA vice presidents serving worldwide.

"I just wonder how God looks upon this, as Jesus has prayed 'that all may be one,'" Lovrec wrote. "We are trying to develop Christian relationship with the similar, evangelical and other Christians in the specific countries and worldwide, and all of a sudden such news has been like a bomb."

Emphasizing that "only God can intervene and settle the matter," Lovrec urged SBC leaders to avoid "division over peripheral matters" while "sticking to the main issue of the gospel, which all of us hold tight."

In a Dec. 30 response to Lovrec, Chapman wrote that SBC leaders "have a strong desire to continue maintaining old relationships and building new ones with our Baptist brothers and sisters throughout the world."

"Our heart's desire is to allocate the funding that has been going to the BWA for the purpose of coordinating conferences in other countries if and when the Lord should guide other Baptist leaders to invite us," he added.

While the SBC proposal calls for withdrawing the remainder of what previously was a \$425,000 annual allocation to the work of BWA, Chapman wrote, "While we may withdraw from an organization named the Baptist World Alliance, the last thing we want to do is to separate from the fellowship of like-minded believers around the world. We wish nothing but continued success for the BWA in every endeavor it undertakes for the gospel. We will continue to pray and work in harmony with the BWA."

Lewis Drummond leaves legacy of evangelism

Asheville, N.C. (ABP)—Lewis Drummond, a prominent evangelist and former president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, died Jan. 4 in Asheville, N.C.

Drummond, 77, suffered a heart attack on Christmas Day after battling cancer for several years. He is survived by his wife, Betty.

Drummond led Southeastern during "a turbulent, transition time," as he described it. In 1988, he was the first president elected after conservatives gained control of the Southern Baptist school in Wake Forest, N.C. The school endured both financial crisis and academic probation by its accrediting agency, which factored into Drummond's resignation in 1992.

He preached crusades all around the world and was known as an expert on evangelism. Before going to Southeastern, he was Billy Graham Professor of Evangelism at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. He wrote dozens of books

and articles, including biographies of Billy Graham and Charles Haddon Spurgeon. He also was pastor of Ninth and O Baptist Church in Louisville in the 1960s as well as pastor of churches in Alabama and Texas.

The Lewis A. Drummond Center for Great Commission Studies at Southeastern is named in his honor. "His labor of love and the foundation that he established at our school is still bearing fruit," said Bart Neal, interim president of Southeastern.

After serving at Southeastern, Drummond was the Billy Graham Professor of Evangelism and Church Growth at Samford University's Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham, Ala., from 1992 until last summer, when he became evangelism professor in residence at the Billy Graham Training Center at the Cove in Asheville.

A native of Illinois, Drummond held degrees from Samford University, Southwestern Baptist Theologi-

cal Seminary and King's College at the University of London.

"If I could show you a scholarly evangelist, a preacher of the Word, a biblical expositor, an encourager, a visionary leader, a gracious host, a good Samaritan, it would be Lewis Drummond," said Russ Bush, dean of the faculty at Southeastern.

Timothy George, dean of Beeson Divinity School, said Drummond "was one of the most encouraging and hopeful Christians I have ever known. He embodied the optimism of grace rooted in a vibrant personal relationship with Jesus Christ."

Drummond was a leader in the Baptist World Alliance. At the request of his wife, the Lewis Drummond Evangelism Fund has been established by BWA to receive contributions.

"Through his active participation in the Baptist World Alliance, the world became his pulpit," said Denton Lotz, BWA general secretary. "We are grateful for the tremendous contribution that he has made to the life of Baptists worldwide."

IMB sets up toll-free hotline for sexual abuse victims

Richmond, Va. (BP)—In response to recent concerns expressed by victims who were sexually abused on the mission field 30 years ago, the Southern Baptist International Mission Board has created a hotline to help victims of similar situations report their abusers and get help for their trauma.

The toll-free number will help people report incidents of abuse or inappropriate relationships—either past or present—to IMB staff

members who can respond to the concern, said Mark Whitworth, a member care consultant for the board and former missionary to Japan.

"We very rarely receive reports of such problems, but we don't want that to be because a victim feels he or she has nowhere to turn for help," Whitworth said. "This phone line will make it easier for people to call for help, which in turn will allow us to gather the

information we need to respond in an appropriate and timely manner."

The addition of the phone number grew out of conversations between IMB leaders and people who experienced sexual abuse as children on the mission field in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Information about the toll-free number is being provided directly to current and former missionaries and their children.

Labor of love

*Kentucky adviser/
writer helps 'hero'
Burkett pen last book*

By Victoria Moon
State Correspondent

Paducah—Kentuckian Jeremy White said his work on a new book with Larry Burkett was as much a tribute to his friend as it was an effort to share financial advice.

White helped Burkett and Ron Blue co-author "Wealth to Last: Money Essentials for the Second Half of Life." The book was recently released after Burkett's death from cancer last July.

Blue and White both said Burkett, who finished work on the book one week before his death, was passionate about the principles espoused in the book.

"He was reviewing the final pages of the manuscript in the hospital before undergoing surgery," said White, a Paducah accountant and regular columnist for the Western Recorder's Financial Forum.

"He didn't need the book to be a success," he added. "He was working so hard on the manuscript because he felt the message was important."

"Larry was writing to our generation," said Blue, 62. "We both saw there was a tremendous need to address the financial issues of people our age, and Larry, who was 64, had a passion for helping people at the same stage of life he was in."

Advice for a different stage in life

White said "Wealth to Last" is a book for people who have moved beyond the basic steps of debt reduction, budgets and building savings.

"We found there wasn't a lot out there for people at this stage," said White, who began working with Burkett after the editors of Burkett's financial newsletter spotted an article White had self-published



THREE FOR THE MONEY. Paducah accountant Jeremy White (center) worked with Ron Blue (left) and Larry Burkett on Burkett's last book.

on financial management.

"The financial decisions you make in the second half often have a lot of zeros behind them," White noted. "That was why we thought this book was needed."

Blue said the book's Christian perspective also make the book unique among financial advice books.

"Spirituality is worked out to a large extent through one's checkbook," he said. "A biblical world view is going to lead us to make different recommendations than one might see in a book written from a strictly secular perspective."

One example of this difference in perspective is found in the authors' recommendation to pay off all debt, Blue added.

"Secular advisors would tell you that some debt is good—they would think it was stupid to pay off a home mortgage, for example," Blue said. "But the Bible says 'the borrower is servant to the lender,' so we recommend having no debt at all in order to be free to do whatever God wants you to do."

The authors also recommend avoiding retirement.

"Larry felt, and I feel, that retirement is not biblical but rehirement is," Blue said. "People shouldn't look toward 60 years old as the retirement age, but as a time to offer one's experience to another generation. If you manage your finances

right, you can make a career switch like that."

"The idea of retirement is a relatively new idea, born from an affluent American culture," White said. "In the book, we point out that you don't retire from God's work. While you may leave a job, you still have the opportunity to go on short-term missions trips, for example, or volunteer."

Besides expressing passionately held beliefs, Blue said the book also was a great expression of his and Burkett's longtime friendship.

"Larry and I were friends since the late '70s," Blue said. "It was a great experience to be able to write this book with him."

Most of the material came from Burkett and Blue, but White blended the two men's writing styles and served as a writing and financial consultant on the project.

"Larry and I often said the same thing, just in a different way," said Blue, who added that people often mistook him for Burkett. "This was the first time we co-authored a book together, and Jeremy did an excellent job of bringing our two styles together to make one voice."

"Larry was one of my financial heroes, and a hero to a lot of people," White said. "He was as humble and real in real life as he was on the radio. It was an honor to work with him and Ron on a project as important as this."

Growing wealth for golden years

The book "Wealth to Last: Money Essentials for the Second Half of Life" offers a variety of ways to avoid the anxiety of planning for one's "golden years" and enjoy the second half of life:

Eliminate high-interest debt. "The best investment you can make is to get rid of all high-interest, short-term debt," the authors state. "By paying off credit card balances and automobile or other installment loans, you get a guaranteed return of 15 to 21 percent—money you would otherwise be losing to exorbitant interest charges."

Think "reirement," not retirement. "We recommend not retirement as an adventure-filled next phase of life," Burkett and Blue write. "Expect to work and seek meaningful work. ... God may have more in mind for your retirement years than you imagined possible."

Invest only surplus income and diversify. "Invest your excess after paying regular expenses and consumer debt," the authors write. "Don't take risks with money that you need to live on or to pay debt with. ... By spreading your money among different types of investments, you minimize your overall risk."

Get help. The authors recommend sitting down with a qualified, trustworthy investment adviser and designing a plan that will meet one's God-directed goals.

Keep an eye on spending and remember to budget. Blue states that the No. 1 area the over-50 crowd goes overboard on spending is in the areas of leisure and recreation. "People in their 50s still have to watch their spending habits, precisely because they have more income," he writes.

Evaluate insurance policies to see which ones are truly needed. Plans for flights, extended warranties and repair insurance for appliances, pet health care and identity theft insurance are examples of insurance policies you usually can do without, Blue and Burkett recommend. Health insurance, life insurance and long-term care insurance are examples of policies that might be more important.

Husbands and wives should talk about and plan for their financial future together. Burkett and Blue warn that when one spouse dies, the other often has no idea about the financial situation. Good communication and organizing your estate together will help avoid this problem.

Make a plan of what will happen to money after death, and communicate that to heirs. While it is important to provide for and care for one's family, careful distribution of wealth to include charitable giving allows for the solid biblical principles that one adhered to in life to be carried on after death.

Church starts take many forms throughout commonwealth

Continued from page 1

so many churches already?' But in any given community, regardless of how many churches we have, there's a rate of 50 percent-plus of people who aren't being reached."

Others involved in church planting in Kentucky agree new options are needed to reach those who have not been receptive to "old-time religion."

J.D. Payne, director of the church planting center at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, said two popular models are cell-based groups and house churches.

Although they usually meet in homes, cells tend to associate themselves with other cell groups under a primary leader. House churches generally function as autonomous groups, Payne explained.

Churches like Lakeview, which develop a core group via home Bible studies before starting worship services, are also common, according to the assistant professor of church planting.

"I don't see this as a passing fad," said Payne, who oversees students working in 20 new churches in six states. "They will always be around, meeting in homes and schools and community centers."

Todd Robertson, mission strategist for Louisville's Long Run Baptist Association, is overseeing three church plants and several other Bible studies that could grow into churches.

"One of the beauties of this model is it's quick and easily reproducible," Robertson said. "The laity are strongly encouraged to be involved."

While unconventional churches are not intended to replace traditional buildings, this form of meeting could become the wave of the future, Robertson said.

Instead of large buildings and programs, Kentucky Baptists must consider the value of small, relational outreaches that don't require as much money, he said.

"We're going to look at doing things in a new way," Rob-

ertson said. "We don't have the resources to do a big blowout church plant every time we want to start something. A vital part of church planting is willing to be flexible and creative."

Battling "turfism"

Still, starting new churches has its share of challenges. One of the biggest challenges Payne sees is "turfism," opposition from existing churches who see newcomers as competition.

The only way to combat that is through prayer and sound, biblical teaching, the professor said.

Other frustrations that church planters face are in adequate finances and leadership development, Payne said.

One solution to removing barriers to church starts is to answer the question, "What is the church?"

"How we answer that question affects everything we do in church planting," Payne said. "It affects our understanding of finances, leadership development and other

resources being involved."

For Witham, serving with a new church has given him a better understanding of the obstacles other church planters face—especially juggling competing demands in a bivocational role.

"But on a positive note, I'm seeing people who want to work in the community to build relationships," Witham said. "It goes back to the question, 'Is bivocational ministry the ideal or less than the ideal?' There's a constant tension."

Grant Cannoy, a Southern Seminary graduate who was an intern at Lakeside Community Church while in school, learned that church planting involves hard work and persistence. "I did a lot of door-to-door (canvassing)," said Cannoy, who is starting a church in Mount Sterling. "Out of all the visits you make, one person might show up. I'd encourage anybody who reads this article to keep church planters in their prayers."

WESTERN RECORDER

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Louisville, KY 40253
(USPS 679-380)

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

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

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Help support BWA

I am grateful for your Jan. 6 editorial on the vital gospel work of the Baptist World Alliance.

I am also grateful that Kentucky Baptists voted at their November convention to give \$730 to BWA, and hope that next year we will vote to send BWA a half percent of the 36 percent that the Kentucky Baptist Convention currently gives to Southern Baptists.

Joe Phelps
Louisville

God 'was made flesh'

A letter in the Dec. 23 edition of the Western Recorder had a rebuttal of a Dec. 2 article criticizing President Bush for his statement that he believes Christians and Muslims worship the same God.

To get a simple "yes" or "no" answer, just ask a Christian or a Muslim if this statement describes God: He "was made flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14).

Johnny Owens
Elkhorn City

Being still in a fast-paced world

By Henry Blackaby

Atlanta (BP)—God has a significant encouragement in His Word: "Be still—and know—that I AM God! ... the Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge" (Psalm 46:10-11).

Our minds are active and at times racing; our lives often are lived at a frantic pace; our families are at times overly active; and, in our marriages too, we often cannot find enough time even for each other. The pace at work can increase to weariness, and even our church calendars are too full of activities in which we are expected to participate. Even the television news is too fast-paced, so we can't take it in.

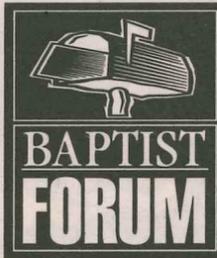
God knows our tendencies to always be "doing something!" We hear people urging us, "Don't just

'Reign of mediocrity'

Some studious minds, observing the current culture, have written of this as "dumbing down." They refer to the cheap fare almost across the board in contemporary culture and society.

In that brief context, they imply that Americans have compromised quality. This promotion of a popular standard or fad caters to poor taste that eschews the more adequate answers of scholarship. This is also a slippery slope to heresy and discrimination against true scholars. This accounts in great part for the dominance of many churches by a fundamentalist mindset.

For at least 40 years I've observed what I call "the lull in excellence and the reign of mediocrity." It seems to me that mediocrity at best—and cheapness at worst—reigns in too many officials' positions. In many instances, this performs a necessary service, for some institution and some person must carry on.



I'm the first to appreciate professionalism. I read after scholars or relate informally to professionals in many fields. But I believe that in many sacred and secular roles—both public and private—those in these roles do not represent the more excellent. Thus, a transcending role awaits those who aspire to greatness, though they are pushed aside to an alternative service. Grasping for some medium to express a definite character and abilities they might not otherwise attain.

I suppose this analogy may be offensive to some. But according to mathematicians, the zero is a place holder. That is its chief function. Could it be there are zeros ... ? I won't finish that.

I have to believe this zero business applies especially to much of the present administration in Washington, both in Congress and in the executive branch.

Don Cassidy
Premium

ing some spiritual R&R into your life? Into your schedule for your personal life? Into your family? Into your workplace? Into your church? Stillness! Quietness! And rest!

Do you take time for "thinking through" situations in your life? Or do you continue to rush from one situation to another, hoping things will just all work themselves out? Do you meditate with God on His goodness, His faithfulness, His mercy and His grace in your life? When you do, great encouragement and great energizing will come to your life. Do you take this kind of intentional caring toward your family, your co-workers and even your fellow church members?

God still calls us to do just that. Be still—and know God!

Henry Blackaby, the author of "Experiencing God," is president of Blackaby Ministries in Atlanta

the presentations work in the local churches.

Building a Bridge is a great theme for Kentucky Baptists because of the huge goals in reaching and keeping people that have been established in the new Kentucky Baptists Connect emphasis being launched this year. We want to build bridges to one another and between all unreached people and Jesus Christ. Spiritual and relational vitality are essential for growth to occur.

One of the greatest encouragements to me as a young pastor in Eastern Kentucky was attending the state evangelism conference. God used the conferences to shape my vision for evangelism and to provide renewal for that vision.

Join me in prayer for a Holy Spirit-empowered conference this year. We could not meet in a better location to focus on evangelism than Hillvue Heights where the pastor, Steve Ayers, and the church members are passionate about reaching people for Jesus Christ!

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

COMMENTARY

stand there!" God, however, wants to say to us: "Don't just do something, stand there! Concentrate! Meditate! Think! Pursue and consider carefully! Lie down 'in green pastures' that I provide for you (Psalm 23), and rest a while. Take time—in quietness!"

The prophet Isaiah knew the power and strength in being still when he said to God's people, "For thus saith the LORD GOD, the Holy One of Israel: 'In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength.'" (Isaiah 30:15).

The army calls this "R&R" (rest and relaxation) and mandates it for an overall better performance. It gives strength back, and refreshes for further battles. Are you build-

'Build a Bridge' for evangelism

"Build a Bridge, Be a Witness" will be the theme for the 2004 Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference at Hillvue Heights Church in Bowling Green, Feb. 23-24.

I personally have heard almost all of the speakers in the line-up. Each one is involved in leading his church to develop and grow. Here are just a few of the outstanding preachers and practitioners you will hear:

■ **Rick Ousley** preaches with great intensity and has been blessed by God to experience incredible growth and ministry in The Church at Brook Hills in Birmingham, Ala.

■ **Charles Lowery**, a former pastor and current president of the Lowery Institute for Excellence, uses humor as a trained counselor and preacher to interpret and apply the Word of God better than anyone I know. He has learned from his preacher father and older brother as well as from his brother-in-law who is a Bible professor and editor.

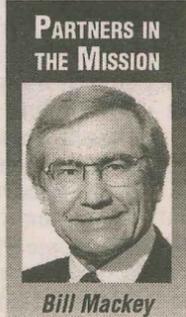
■ I always have been challenged

by **Ronnie Floyd's** focus on prayer, fasting and spiritual awakening. Floyd, senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Springdale, Ark., was one of the primary people who inspired me to practice prayer and fasting.

■ **Bret Robbe** served churches in Kentucky before moving to Clearview Baptist Church in Franklin, Tenn. He led Bellevue Baptist Church in Owensboro to develop a strategic plan that has continued to guide Bellevue in great growth.

■ **Bobby Welch**, pastor of First Baptist Church of Daytona Beach, Fla., has developed the FAITH plan of evangelism through the Sunday school and speaks across the nation encouraging churches to be intentional about church growth through Sunday school.

There also are more than 20 breakout sessions scheduled for Tuesday morning, as well as dialogue lunches with people who have demonstrated that the concepts and methods talked about in



Bill Mackey

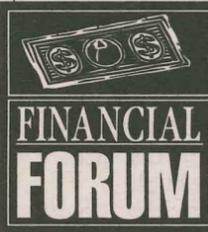
GIVING

Legacy giving options combine ministry, security

By Laurie Valentine

Many people would like to make gifts beyond their tithes and offerings to their church and other Baptist causes, but they don't know how to do it. Some people also are concerned that type of giving could affect their financial security and that of their family.

There are a variety of legacy giving options that permit you not only to fulfill your charitable giving objectives, but also provide for the future financial security of



your family.

A variety of assets can be used to make gifts to Baptist causes—cash, stocks, bonds, mutual fund shares, real estate, life insurance and retirement plan/IRA survivor benefits, to name a few. Using appreciated assets to make lifetime gifts provides multiple advantages—a charitable income tax deduction based on the current market value and avoidance of all or a portion of the capital gains tax.

There also are a variety of ways to make charitable gifts. Many of these do not require a lot of complicated documentation and some are not irrevocable (so you can make future changes).

Beneficiary designations.

You can designate a Baptist cause as a primary or contingent beneficiary of a life insurance policy, retirement plan survivor benefit or IRA.

Bequests. You can include a gift to your church or other Baptist cause through a bequest in your will. Bequests can be in the form of a gift of a specific amount, specific asset or a percentage of your entire estate.

Endowment funds. An endowment fund is a permanent, perpetual fund created during your lifetime or at your death for the support of one or more Baptist causes. Only the earnings of the endowment fund are paid to the causes you designate; the original value of your gifts is never distributed.

Life income gifts. Charitable gift annuities and charitable remainder trusts are plans that allow you to make gifts during life for the ultimate benefit of one or more Baptist causes, while retaining the right for you and/or others to receive payments for life.

Legacy giving provides the opportunity to help make a lasting difference for the cause of Christ in our world.

Laurie Valentine is trust counsel for the Kentucky Baptist Foundation

Use conflict resolution skills to curb tension with spouse

Q: During the recent holiday season, my husband and I seemed to have more conflict than usual. Any suggestions on how we can effectively handle such tension in the future?

Conflict is inevitable in relationships. No matter how much you love someone, you will have differing ideas, preferences or favored activities. Learning how to resolve these differences appropriately can avoid prolonged or destructive anger and hostility.

Conflict resolution skills include cultivating the right attitude as well as learning interpersonal techniques. An attitude of cooperation, valuing partnership, demonstrating trust and general goodwill toward one another help reduce and resolve conflicts.

Consider the following principles for conflict resolution:

■ **Try to take a problem-solving attitude toward issues rather than blame.** Problem solving is much more practical and leads people in a different—and more productive—direction than blame. Assigning responsibility is useful to the degree it helps generate solutions. Blame has a component of punishment attached.

■ **Learn to take responsibility for your anger.** Other people can't make you angry any more than they can make you happy or cause you to lose five pounds. It is true that you can take what they say to you and make yourself very angry about what they have said. When you are angry, you may need to discuss the issue at another time, enlist a referee or hold your discussion in a coffee shop (where the presence of others can help keep both of you from yelling or insulting one another).

Another option is to "argue" in writing. The advantage of writing to one another is that you likely will end up explaining your position more clearly, and remain more respectful as you commit your thoughts and words to paper. Include in your rules for arguments and discussions that neither of you will yell, call names, put down or otherwise insult or demean the other.

■ **Learn to take a "time out" in order to cool your anger until you're able to be responsible for your behavior.** Time outs should follow certain rules. For example, it's not OK to use time outs to silence the other person after you've had the last word.—Jon Rainbow

Q: Since receiving a new video game system for Christmas, our 13-year-old son has played almost nonstop. Without being Scrooge, how can we keep this gift from becoming an obsession for him?

Video games aren't the only culprit. Food, television, exercise, shopping and even reading can be overdone by both youth people and adults in the narcissistic and self-indulgent pursuit of enjoyment or isolation. Healthy balance is not the only thing sacrificed here; one's communion with God and others may be ignored.

Set guidelines for your son about how much time he can spend each day playing his new games. It is also important to realize that you will serve as a model for him concerning your own discipline and self-control. Accountability works both ways.

Parents do well to expose their children and young teenagers to a variety of activities in which they may experience their giftedness and excel. Some teens need more encouragement than others to try out new activities. I still remember the words of my father at one point when all I wanted to do was read—"I'm going to take you up to the YMCA and we'll look at all the brochures they have. You can choose an activity—or I will!" As I reflect on growing up, I'm grateful for parents who pushed me to try new things, and to move toward a healthy balance in life.—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.

James Stillwell, minister to singles at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington. E-mail: james@ibs-lex.org.

Scott Wigginton, director of LifeCare Counseling at Walnut Street Baptist Church in Louisville. E-mail: swigginton@sbts.edu.

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MARRIAGE

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Is your congregation pleasing to Christ?

One of my former pastors was fond of posing the question: "What kind of church would this church be if every member were just like me?" It's a reminder that each of us is responsible for our level of Christian commitment and involvement.

The same is true of individual congregations. With another new year under way, what ministry traits and priorities characterize your local church? Are you part of a church known for its missions heart, its evangelistic fervor or its divisive nature?

The work of the local church is so significant that God revealed specific messages to seven first century churches in the Book of Revelation. Those messages penned by the Apostle John continue to have relevance for congregations today.

As your church explores its God-given ministry for 2004 and beyond, consider the divine words of affirmation, rebuke and challenge shared with those New Testament congregations (based on an outline by theologian Fred Howard):

Ephesus, the spiritually inconsistent church. Christ's revelation about the Ephesian church affirmed their perseverance and their refusal to accept false witnesses. He warned, however, that the Ephesians had "left your first love." As important as it is to be doctrinally sound, Jesus cautioned against putting legalism above personal zeal for Him.

Smyrna, the spiritually rich church. Smyrna was one of only two churches that were not rebuked. Citing their faithfulness amid tribulation and poverty, Jesus urged them to remain "faithful until death."

Pergamus, the spiritually lax church. This congregation was affirmed by Christ because they chose to "hold fast My name and did not deny My faith." On the negative side, the church did not take a stand against the Nicolaitans, an extreme form of gnosticism that denied the deity of Christ and practiced immorality. While personal faith is essential, the

body of Christ also is called to hold fellow members accountable for their beliefs and actions.

Thyatira, the spiritually divided church. The list of Thyatira's positive traits include love, faith, service and perseverance. Like Pergamus, however, the congregation failed to take action against a false prophet who was leading some believers astray.

Sardis, the spiritually dead church. Warning that "you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead," Jesus said, "Wake up, and strengthen the things that remain." How many churches today live on the reputation they gained decades ago in their "glory years"? Instead, they need to evaluate their current ministry efforts and make a conscious commitment to "strengthen the things that remain."

Philadelphia, the spiritually aware church. Philadelphia is the other congregation that received no rebuke. "I have put before you an open door which no one can shut," Jesus declared, "because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name." Even with just "a little power"—perhaps a congregation few in number or with limited influence in a difficult setting—Christ urged the faithful group to "hold fast what you have." What an encouraging example for churches of all sizes to follow.

Laodicea, the spiritually indifferent church. This church earned Christ's harshest criticism: "Because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth." Make certain that your church isn't simply going through the motions of ministry while Jesus views you as "wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked."

Which of the seven churches is your congregation most like? Which one do you desire to emulate?

Make certain to avoid the sin of being lukewarm, to joyfully pursue Christ as your first love and to remain "faithful unto death."

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

In defense of optimism

By Erich Bridges

Richmond, Va. (BP)—Broken your New Year's resolutions yet? If not, what's taking you so long?

Sorry, that was a pessimistic question. A pessimist, they say, is an optimist mugged by reality—and human fallibility.

Some folks come by their pessimism more honestly than others, however. Pessimists usually fit into one of three categories:

■ **People who are pessimistic because of negative events or personal hardship.**

■ **People who are pessimistic by nature.**

■ **People who are pessimistic because they think it makes them look smarter than the rest of us.**

It's the third type that irritates British historian Paul Johnson, distinguished author of "Modern Times" and other works.

"Pessimism is the 'ism' that has succeeded Marxism in occupying the vacant space in the minds of the slobbering classes," Johnson writes. "Nowhere has it established a more feverish grip than among journalists, especially in Britain. ... There is no more depressing—and unenlightening—experience than reading our national press."

American news media are only marginally more upbeat than their European counterparts. But they're cheery compared to many intellectuals, who seem perpetually convinced that civilization is on the edge of collapse.

Why do we listen to these Chick-

en Littles?

"Part of the trouble is that few people study history or know anything about it," Johnson observes. "The idea that humanity has never before been in such poverty, danger and hopelessness ... is a fantasy. ... The sheer misery of the past, not least the comparatively recent past, is difficult for us to take in."

The recent past, Johnson reminds, includes the pointless slaughter of World War I, the tyranny of communism and fascism, the horrors of World War II and several generations of living under the threat of nuclear annihilation.

"For countless numbers, life was indeed nasty, brutish and short," he states. "Working democracy, freedom of speech and movement were luxuries confined to a few comers in the world."

Freedom is spreading

Today, by contrast, those freedoms are spreading to more and more people. India is a democracy, albeit a shaky and violent one. China's economic opening will inevitably bring an "irresistible advance" toward individual freedom, Johnson believes. Even if it doesn't, Christianity is spreading rapidly there.

Islamic terrorism, as destructive as it has been, should not obsess us. "It is a shadow of the past," Johnson contends, "not an adumbration of the future."

Is Johnson naive? Pessimists

would say so, but I wouldn't bet against a guy who's probably forgotten more history than most of us will ever know.

Besides the advance of political and economic freedom, the staggering progress of technology has changed so many things for the better. Take one example: powered flight. The Wright brothers' longest flight on that historic day at Kitty Hawk 100 years ago spanned 852 feet. As Nathan Bierma noted recently on ChristianityToday.com, that distance wouldn't even clear the tarmac at Chicago O'Hare.

Today, you can fly to the other side of the planet—and take the gospel with you. You can send the good news by e-mail in seconds to someone in the heart of the unevangelized world. Today, as never before, Christians have the means to take the light to every people—if they have the will.

Remember the spirit of the Wrights on that first day of flight, when so many were still saying it couldn't be done.

In the words of Albert Louis Zambone: "The two brothers, forever frozen in our memory on that North Carolina beach by a photograph of casual genius, ... joined together at the moment of triumph, with only the empty horizon in front of them. ... Even after a terrible century, that photograph urges us forward—faster, faster, farther, farther—into a hopeful future."

That's the kind of optimism the church needs now.

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

Poll: Bush could win by opposing civil unions

Washington (RNS)—If President Bush declared opposition to civil unions and faced a Democrat supporting them in the 2004 election, voters would re-elect the president by a 51 percent to 35 percent margin, a new National Public Radio poll shows.

In contrast, when voters were simply asked if they would vote for Bush or the Democratic nominee for president, their response indicated that Bush would win by a margin of 46 percent to 42 percent.

The poll demonstrates that civil unions and gay marriage will be among the most divisive issues in the presidential election campaign, NPR said.

Fifty-six percent of respondents were opposed to gay marriage—defined as a gay or lesbian couple marrying each other legally—while 30 percent supported it.

Opinion among respondents was split evenly at 45 percent when asked if they favor or oppose allowing homosexual couples to legally form civil unions that would give them “the legal rights of married couples in areas such as health insurance, inheritance, pension coverage and hospital visiting privileges.”

Researchers interviewed 1,002 voters nationwide, giving the survey an overall margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points.

The religion factor

Several Democrats scramble to match Bush's ease with faith-based matters

By Mark O'Keefe
Religion News Service

Washington (RNS)—Gen. Wesley Clark says he is a Methodist turned Baptist turned Catholic who attends a Presbyterian church.

Congressman Richard Gephardt says his religion is “to care about the poor first.”

Howard Dean, who in the past has criticized the mixing of religion and politics, now promises to talk about Jesus when he campaigns in the South.

In a crowded Democratic field, presidential candidates are increasingly trying to show that they “get” religion. It's far from clear, however, whether any Democrat can compete with President Bush on this front.

Polls indicate Bush holds a commanding lead among the most religious voters, a 2004 advantage he did not enjoy over 2000 Democratic nominee Al Gore.

In a Gallup Poll conducted Nov. 10-12, Bush held a 67 percent to 30 percent lead among religious voters over the Democratic front-runner, former Vermont Gov. Dean. In hypothetical head-to-head races with both Gephardt and Clark, Bush's lead was 65 percent to 33 percent.

“It seems that in the three years since the (2000) election, Bush has become the go-to candidate for those who feel that religion is important to their vote for president,” wrote Gallup religion and values editor Albert Winseman.

White Roman Catholics and evangelical Christians have become increasingly Republican over the last 15 years. Jews and black Protestants have remained loyally Democratic, but their numbers are not large enough to counter the overall religious migration to the GOP.

Faith matters in elections

The shift could be significant, particularly in Southern and Midwestern states, where religion can spell the difference in a close election. According to Gallup polls, religion is “very” or “extremely” important to the voting decisions of about one in three nationally. And among these Americans, it's advantage Bush.

In August 2000, a Gallup Poll showed religious voters evenly split between Bush and Gore at 46 percent each. Like former Presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton, Gore was a Baptist from the South, comfortable with religious symbolism and the vernacular of faith. Gore also invoked religious principles in addressing the environment, civil rights and other issues.

But with the exception of Sen. Joe Lieberman, an Orthodox Jew with a record of applying his faith, no leading Democrat in the 2004 race professes a compelling religious narrative to compete with Bush's story of giving up drinking through the power of Christian faith.



DEMOCRATS Seven of the nine Democratic candidates for president pose before a debate near Des Moines, Iowa. From left, are: Rep. Dennis Kucinich of Ohio, Sen. Joe Lieberman of Connecticut, Rep. Dick Gephardt of Missouri, North Carolina Sen. John Edwards, Sen. John Kerry of Massachusetts, former Illinois Sen. Carol Moseley Braun and former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean. Not pictured are Al Sharpton and Gen. Wesley Clark. (RNS/Reuters photo by Rick Wilking)

Bush, a United Methodist, employs religious words and principles in addressing a wide variety of issues, including preventing terrorism, spreading democracy, adopting faith-based initiatives and banning gay marriage.

Howard Dean has tried in recent days to close the religion gap. In an interview with the Boston Globe, he said he has refrained from religious language in the Northeast, where faith is more private. But he said he will tell voters in the South how Christ's example has inspired him.

In a departure from past practice, a Dec. 27 Dean campaign event opened with prayer by a minister. That same day, Dean told voters, “I think religion is important and spiritual values are very important, which is what this election is really about.”

The faith-friendly tone follows a December cover story, “Howard Dean's Religion Problem,” in The New Republic magazine. The article called Dean “one of the most secular candidates to run for president in modern history.” It quoted Dean, whose wife and children are Jewish, saying he doesn't go to church “very often” and that “my religion doesn't inform my public policy.”

In fact, Dean's religious narrative has been held up to some scrutiny. In the early 1980s, Dean became a Congregationalist because he objected to a local Episcopal diocese's reluctance to surrender its property for a scenic, nine-mile bike path.

Candidates' spiritual stories

Other Democratic candidates have more spiritual stories. For example, Sen. John Edwards of North Carolina turned to the Bible after his 16-year-old son, Wade, died in a car accident. But Edwards has been uncomfortable talking about this, saying it's a private family matter.

Al Sharpton, ordained a Pentecostal minister at age 9, naturally draws on religious themes when campaigning. In a Democratic debate in December, he told voters he prays daily, adding, “I can assure you in my talks with God, He is not a registered member of the right wing of the Republican Party.”

Wesley Clark, whose father died when he was 4, has a mixed religious pedigree. His mother raised him Methodist, then Baptist. At 24,

Clark learned his father was Jewish. When he confronted his mother about the secret, she tearfully explained she didn't want him to face discrimination.

Clark eventually adopted his wife's religion, Catholicism. But the general stopped attending Mass after one too many sermons criticizing the military. He still considers himself Catholic, though he attends Second Presbyterian Church in Little Rock, Ark.

“If you're going to live your faith, you've got to take care of people,” Clark told an audience recently in Baton Rouge, La.

Joe Lieberman, who refuses to campaign on the Jewish Sabbath, has made religion an issue in veiled references to other candidates.

“They forget that the constitutional separation of church and state, which I strongly support, promises freedom of religion, not freedom from religion,” Lieberman said at a recent campaign stop.

Church-state issues were the focus of a Richard Gephardt interview on the Fox News Channel's “The O'Reilly Factor.” In it, the Missouri congressman said “the government has to divorce itself” from religious beliefs and that a Ten Commandments display must be removed from government property in Alabama, even though polls showed a majority of Americans want it to remain there.

Gephardt, a Baptist, then distinguished between public policy and his personal belief, which teaches him to care for the poor and “love your enemy as much as you love yourself.”

Jim Wallis, editor of Sojourners magazine, a progressive publication that covers faith and politics, sees that as a start. But Wallis, a Democrat, said Gephardt and the others also must apply religious principles to nitty-gritty Democratic issues like health care, child care and the need for affordable housing.

“When they're asked about religion by a reporter, the Democrats say, ‘I go to church, I pray, but that won't affect my political beliefs because I believe in separation of church and state,’” Wallis said. “That's a mistake. Separation of church and state doesn't mean banishing morals or religious values from the public square.”

Poll: American voters want their president to be 'deeply religious'

Washington (RNS)—Almost 60 percent of likely voters surveyed said it's important for a president to believe in God and be deeply religious while also having the backing of most Americans on how he is managing the economy and foreign policy.

A new O'Leary Report/Zogby International Values Poll that looked at the political and ideological divisions in the nation showed significant support for personal religious involvement by the country's top leader.

Among the survey's findings:

■ 59 percent of those polled said having a president who is religious is more important to them than having one who is not religious, while 30 percent said the opposite.

■ In so-called “red states,” which were won by President Bush in 2000, the percentage is higher—67 percent—who favor having a religious president who also is considered to have done a good job managing foreign policy and the economy.

■ In the “blue states,” won by former Vice President Al Gore, the percentage in favor of a religious president was lower—51 percent.

■ 62 percent of respondents agreed that “by removing prayer in school, by removing the words ‘under God’ from the Pledge of Allegiance, and fighting the display of the Ten Commandments or a nativity scene, we have eliminated our moral compass in daily decision-making.” Thirty-four percent of likely voters polled disagreed.

■ 34 percent of likely voters said federal and state governments should recognize civil unions between people of the same sex who seek a state license granting them the legal benefits of marriage.

■ 62 percent said governments only should recognize marriage between a man and a woman.

■ 52 percent said abortion destroys a human life and is manslaughter; 36 percent said abortion doesn't destroy a life and is not manslaughter.

“It is ultimately very important for a presidential candidate to identify with a supreme being and with what are perceived to be family and church values,” said pollster John Zogby, whose Zogby International organization is based in Utica, N.Y.

He said that view is shaped by Americans' conservative or liberal tendencies, with born-again Christians viewing religion in absolute terms and mainline Protestants and liberal Catholics having a more live-and-let-live philosophy.

Roy's Rock: Most popular attraction that isn't there

By Roy Hoffman
Religion News Service

Montgomery, Ala. (RNS)—For visitors to the capital of Alabama, the granite monument of the Ten Commandments is the most popular attraction that isn't there.

In the rotunda of the state Supreme Court building, behind the U.S. and Alabama flags, the floor shows only vague scuff marks where the monument used to sit.

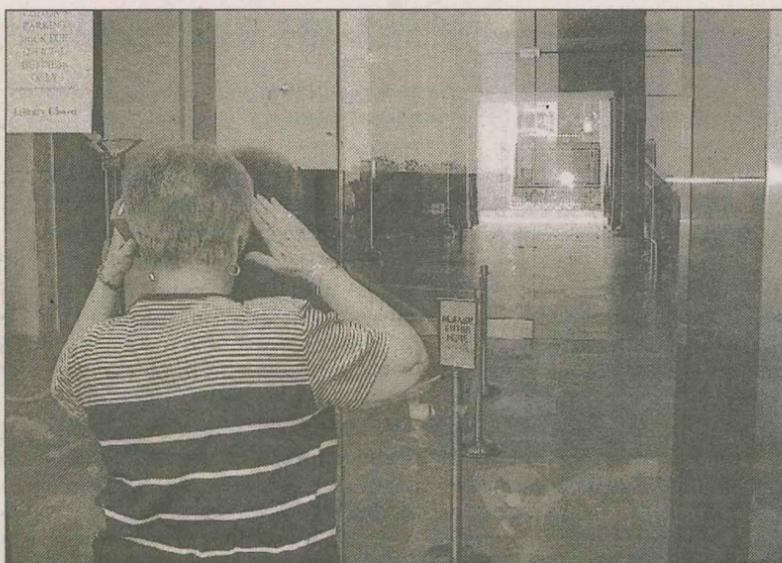
But even in its absence, the Ten Commandments has a presence.

Tourism, according to Willie James, a courthouse marshal, has gone up since the controversy over former Chief Justice Roy Moore's monument became national news this past summer. "Visitors always ask, 'Where are the Ten Commandments? Can we see them?'" James says.

Monument locked away

The response is that the 2.5-ton monument is locked away in a room, the private property of Moore, and, under court order, off-limits to the public.

That room, in fact, is through a first-floor lunchroom available only to those with a key pass; then, from the lunchroom, through another door locked to all except people such as James and building manager Graham George Jr., a retired U.S. Army colonel and former Vietnam War bat-



alion commander.

It was George, following court instructions, who presided over the physical removal of the commandments monument on Aug. 27.

"The media was pasted up against the glass," he remembers, referring to the tempered panels rising 30 feet at the front door and 50 feet to each side of it. He pushes his hand against the glass; it has some give. He says that with the crush of people outside who were peering in, he worried the glass might give way.

George had contracted with a mover, who got the monument

up off the ground, then rolled it to the storage room, where the door had to be sawed an inch and a half wider to get it through. It sits there now, he says, but not in the dark.

"I keep the lights on it," he says.

Tourism continues

Tall, bearded and wearing a jersey with a silk-screened image of the Ten Commandments monument, Steve Kukla, 53, paces about the Supreme Court rotunda, looking at the spot where the stone used to sit.

Kukla and his wife, Bonnie, are singing evangelists who live in Tulsa, Okla. They were driving from Louisiana to Atlanta when they decided to stop and pay homage to the Ten Commandments.

"We came specifically to see where the monument was," says Steve Kukla.

"It's a solemn feeling," says his wife, stepping up next to him.

They take photos of each other in the vicinity of the flags; they look around at the empty spaces. They see a bronze copy of the Bill of Rights near the entrance foyer.

"It's like visiting a graveyard," says Kukla, "a graveyard of the moral absolute this country once stood for."

Another group enters, a three-some visiting Montgomery from Savannah, Ga. Among them is Tony Foley, a young lawyer who says he wanted to see where the monument was because of his interest in the legal complexities of the issue—and because "I think they should put it back."

Foley and his friends look around, pause at the empty place near the flags and head back out the door.

Then, all is silent, a dramatic contrast to August, when satellite trucks crowded the street, and supporters of Moore prayed on the steps, and people wearing sandwich boards printed with the Ten Commandments took up their positions near the building's columns outside.

"There was one man who came until only recently, every morning about 7 a.m., and knelt on the courthouse steps," says State Law Librarian Timothy Lewis.

But that man is gone now, too, Lewis says.

In all of Lewis' years as law li-

Moore files appeal of ousting

Montgomery, Ala. (RNS)—Former Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore formally has appealed his state's Court of the Judiciary ruling ousting him from office, saying his rights were violated because the court didn't decide whether the federal court order Moore disobeyed was lawful.

The Court of the Judiciary should have heard Moore's arguments that the federal order requiring his removal of a Ten Commandments monument was unlawful, and not doing so violated his due process rights, Moore's lawyers said in written arguments filed Jan. 8 with the state Supreme Court.

"The Court of the Judiciary's crucial failure to distinguish between lawful and unlawful orders sets a dangerous precedent for all judicial officials in that, as a matter of judicial ethics, it requires obedience to all court orders, including those that are illegal and unethical," the lawyers wrote.

The Court of the Judiciary removed Moore from office in November after a one-day trial. It ruled that he violated judicial ethics rules by disobeying U.S. District Judge Myron Thompson's order to remove a Ten Commandments monument from the state judicial building's rotunda. Thompson said the monument violated the First Amendment's ban on state establishment of religion.

Moore's lawyers want Moore to be reinstated as chief justice and asked the Supreme Court to hear oral arguments in the case.

State Attorney General Bill Pryor, who prosecuted Moore on behalf of the Judicial Inquiry Commission, had no comment last week on Moore's brief. He has until Jan. 29 to file a response with the court.

At a press conference Jan. 8, Moore said he still is talking with members of Congress about placing the granite monument in the U.S. Capitol.

In response to questions, he said he has had no contact with Alabama Republicans about any political plans. He said he expects to write and publish a book as soon as he can, explaining the issues in the case. He said he also plans to propose federal legislation next month to remove the acknowledgment of God from federal court jurisdiction.

brarian for the court—17 total—he has never seen the commotion that the Ten Commandments set going.

He remembers a boy of about 12 who stood outside his library window blowing a ram's horn. A religious symbol from the Old Testament, the horn was used to herald worship. It became popular among Ten Commandment supporters on the courthouse steps.

Lewis had to call marshals to chase away the boy and his distracting horn. When Lewis later viewed security tapes, he saw the boy blow the horn, then peep into the window to see if anybody had noticed.

For \$6, Lewis will provide a video to anyone of "Court of the Judiciary, Case No. 33, In the Matter of Roy S. Moore." At least 100 people, he says, have requested copies of the Alabama Court of the Judiciary proceedings of Nov. 12 and 13 that resulted in the ouster of Moore as chief justice.

The court's nine members unanimously declared that Moore had violated the state's Canons of Judicial Ethics and brought "disrepute" when he refused to remove the monument from public view as ordered by U.S. District Judge Myron Thompson.

One day in the future, Lewis predicts, the courthouse corridors will contain an educational display about the Ten Commandments controversy.

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Is 'One nation under God' patriotic or religious?

By Adelle Banks
Religion News Service

Washington (RNS)—The Bush administration is at the head of a long line of individuals and organizations urging the U.S. Supreme Court to declare the Pledge of Allegiance constitutional.

"The reference to a 'nation under God' in the Pledge of Allegiance is an official and patriotic acknowledgment of what all students—Jewish, Christian, Muslim or atheist—may properly be taught in the public schools," said Solicitor General Theodore Olson in a brief filed on behalf of the federal government. The government is a party to the case to be heard by the high court later this year.

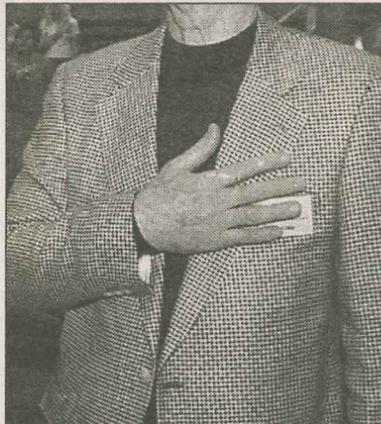
In addition, at least two dozen friend-of-the-court briefs have been filed in the case, with politicians, veterans, religious legal groups and educational associations weighing in on the topic of whether schoolchildren should say "under God" in a daily pledge to the flag.

The case began when atheist Michael Newdow sued an Elk Grove, Calif., public school district saying his daughter should not be led by a public school teacher in saying such words. The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals agreed with him in a June 2002 ruling that has sparked much controversy.

Supreme Court arguments in the case have not yet been scheduled and are not likely until after mid-March.

Organizations for and against

At least one organization, Americans United for Separation of Church and State, intends to file a



brief supporting Newdow and asking the high court to uphold the appellate decision.

"The public schools are places where all students should feel welcome," Americans United legal director Ayesha Khan said. "We believe that the appeals court correctly concluded that government shouldn't be mandating a religious message in this Pledge of Allegiance. The pledge has served its purposes for decades before the words 'under God' were ever added to it."

Most of the organizations filing briefs with the high court opposed Newdow's position and argued that the pledge is a patriotic rather than a religious statement. But many had additional concerns.

The solicitor general argued that Newdow's case should be dismissed because he lacks standing due to his parental situation. His daughter spends most of her time with her mother, who does not object to her reciting the pledge.

The Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group of the House of Representa-

tives noted in its amicus brief that the words "under God" were added in 1954 to differentiate the United States from the communist Soviet Union.

"In the attempt to distinguish between the two countries, the legislators focused on the fact that the founders of this nation were theists, whereas the founders of the Soviet Union were nontheists," the group said.

Others from Capitol Hill added to the stack of briefs filed in the high court, including the Republican members of the Senate Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Property Rights.

God mentioned in anthem, motto

That group was among those citing the other national documents that refer to God—such as the country's anthem and motto.

"Logic and reason dictate that these commonplace and customary references to the Almighty ... do not establish an official state religion in violation of the First Amendment, any more or less than does the reference to God that is contained in the Pledge of Allegiance," the subcommittee members argued.

In a brief filed on behalf of almost 70 Senate and House members, the American Center for Law and Justice argues that the pledge should not be endangered because Newdow is offended by it.

"The First Amendment affords atheists complete freedom to disbelieve; it does not compel the federal judiciary to redact religious references in patriotic exercises in order to suit atheistic sensibilities," officials for the center wrote.

That group also contended that the First Amendment does not prevent the recitation of the pledge or other historical documents that reflect the country's religious heritage.

The ACLJ said such recitations—along with the singing of Bach's choral arrangements and African-American spirituals—would become "constitutionally suspect" in public school curricula if the appellate decision is upheld.

In the education realm, the National School Boards Association and the National Education Association both filed briefs supporting the California school district. The school boards association said merely eliminating the words "under God" from the pledge would create rather than solve problems.

"Such parsing invites and practically guarantees future litigation against school districts in matters of educational programming," it argued.

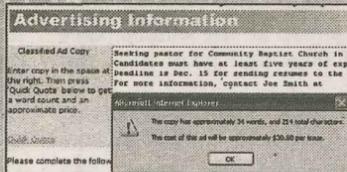
The NEA quoted from its policy stating that it does not believe the words "under God" in the pledge threaten the principle of separation of church and state.

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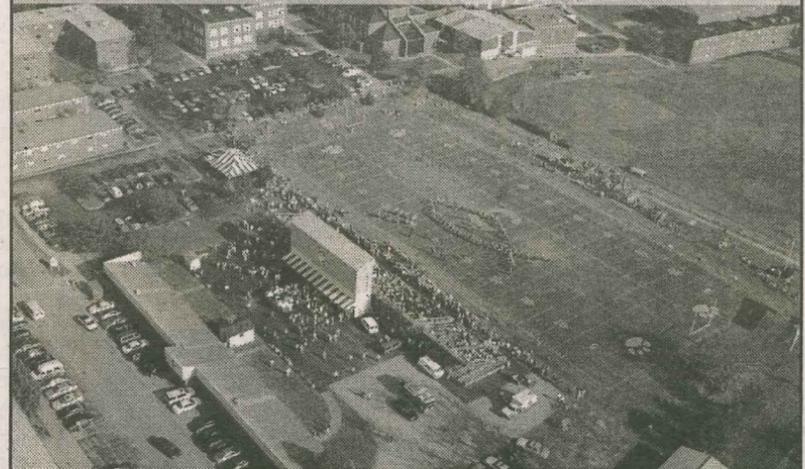
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Pat Robertson: God said Bush wins '04 election 'blowout'

Washington (RNS)—Religious broadcaster Pat Robertson said he believes God has told him President Bush will be re-elected in a "blowout election" this fall.

"I think George Bush is going to win in a walk," Robertson predicted on "The 700 Club" program on his Christian Broadcasting Network Jan. 2.

"I really believe I'm hearing from the Lord it's going to be like a blowout election in 2004," Robertson said.

He told viewers he spent several days at the end of 2003 in prayer, Associated Press reported.

"The Lord has just blessed him," the broadcaster said of Bush. "I mean, he could make terrible mistakes and comes out of it. It doesn't make any difference what he does, good or bad, God picks him up because he's a man of prayer and God's blessing him."

Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State and a frequent critic of Robertson, made his own prediction: "Pat Robertson in 2004 will continue to use his multimillion broadcasting empire to promote George Bush and other Republican candidates."

Should government pay tuition scholarships for future pastors?

New Orleans (RNS)—While the U.S. Supreme Court weighs whether taxpayers must subsidize college students training for careers in the pulpit, in three states citizens are already on record supporting such students.

Louisiana, North Carolina and Maine are the only three states whose laws and constitution do not forbid spending public money on private religious education, according to the Institute for Justice, a libertarian advocacy center in Washington, D.C.

That means that unlike their counterparts in most of the country, Louisiana students equipped with Tuition Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) money can prepare for careers in the ministry at the Baptist-affiliated Louisiana College, said George Eldredge, general counsel for the state's Office of Student Financial Assistance.

State financing of religious education was the subject of a Dec. 2 U.S. Supreme Court hearing that tested whether states can withhold public money from college students who want to pursue religious careers.

Lawyers told the court that Joshua Davey qualified for aid under Washington state's Promise Scholarship program, but the state withdrew its aid when it learned he wanted to pursue a major in pasto-

ral ministries at Northwest College, affiliated with the Assemblies of God.

Davey argued that because he otherwise qualified for the grant, he was being discriminated against solely on the basis of his religiously oriented course of study.

The question before the Supreme Court was whether, in some instances, taxpayers must finance religious education.

Supporters see it as a matter of evenhandedness; opponents regard it as a forbidden promotion of religion.

Washington is one of 37 states whose constitutions contain "Blaine Amendments" that prohibit public money for religious instruction. Twenty-nine states—including some with Blaine Amendments—also protect their citizens from "compelled support" of religion. (Kentucky's constitution has both.)

That leaves only three states—Louisiana, North Carolina and Maine—with little or no restrictions on spending public money in religious institutions.

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary had the option of taking advantage of Louisiana's TOPS money, but Clay Corvin, the seminary's vice president for business, said trustees decided to turn down the money because it is supported by gambling revenue.

Poll finds most sexually active teenagers wish they had waited

Continued from page 1

■ 45 percent of teens said their parents most influence their decisions about sex compared to 31 percent who said their friends are most influential. Religious leaders got only 7 percent, slightly ahead of teachers (6 percent) and media (4 percent).

■ 88 percent of teens said it would be easier to postpone sexual activity and avoid teen pregnancy if they were able to have more open, honest conversations about such topics with their parents. Meanwhile, only 32 percent of adults surveyed believe parents are most influential in their teens' decisions about sex.

■ Most adults and teens (87 percent and 88 percent) said they would prefer for the media to show more about the consequences of sex, including teen pregnancy.

Richard Ross, a founder of the True Love Waits abstinence movement, said few youth ministers realize that parents are the most powerful determinants of core values and decisions among teenagers.

"We absolutely must call and equip our parents to teach biblical truth and to integrate it into the flow of daily life," said Ross, a professor of youth and student ministry at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. "We must call and equip them to model that same truth before their children. Abdicating that role to the church has just about done us in."

Ross said the vital element for parental influence is a "heart connection between parent and child."

"When parents get distracted with making money and other adult issues, the teenagers grow cold and empty," Ross said. "In their immaturity, they often try to fill that void in the arms of an equally empty 'lover.'"

Founded in 1996, the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy is a private nonprofit organization with the goal of reducing the teen pregnancy rate by one-third between 1996 and 2005.

For more information, see www.teenpregnancy.org.

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Movie showcases 'Sacred Harp' singing to rest of U.S.

Sacred Harp is also known as shape-note singing, and fasola singing.

By Howard Miller
Religion News Service

Henagar, Ala.—Ask Shane Wootten how long he's been attending Sacred Harp singings and for a moment the question hangs in the air as if it's silly.

"All my life," he answers.

Wootten was carried to singings while an infant. He's 30 now, and he still loves it.

And since he's one of the Woottens of Sand Mountain, it's expected among the locals that he, like members of the Ivey, Haynes and other families, will carry on the tradition of Sacred Harp singing. It's not uncommon to hear voices from three or more generations united in harmonious song.

That was the case at a recent Sunday night singing at the simple white Liberty Baptist Church in northeast Alabama.

The crowd was a bit smaller than usual; several of the regular singers were in California attending the Los Angeles premiere of the movie "Cold Mountain" and taping a TV appearance for the A&E Network.

"Cold Mountain" calling

Two songs on the soundtrack of that major feature film were recorded in Liberty Baptist Church. "Cold Mountain," based on the acclaimed 1997 Civil War novel by Charles Frazier, opened nationally Christmas Day. The soundtrack went on sale in late December.

Shane Wootten was one of the singers recorded at the church in June 2002. He had been invited to the California red-carpet party, but declined.

"I'm getting my baby chickens tomorrow," he said.

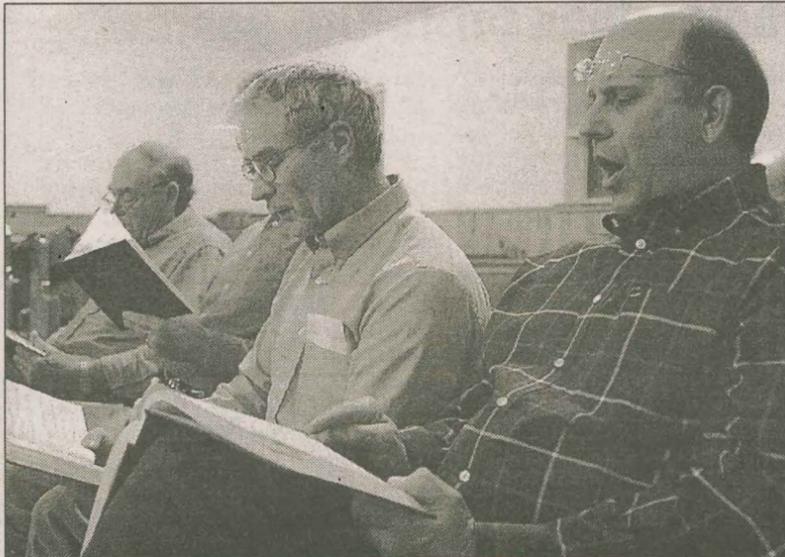
Wootten, a poultry farmer, laughed at the notion he might give that up to "go Hollywood" and sing for the movies.

He figures the \$200 he was paid will be all the financial return he will see from the film project. But he will keep going to singings.

"We have a lot of all-day singings in the summer," Wootten said, sitting on a wooden pew as other singers gathered.

Wootten said he thinks the movie will expose more people to Sacred Harp.

"We were surprised to get two whole songs in the movie. We expected to get about 30 seconds," he said. The two songs are "I'm Going



SACRED HARP Robert Walker (right) and Terry Wootten participate in Sacred Harp singing at Liberty Baptist Church in Henagar, Ala. The style of singing is featured on the soundtrack of the new film "Cold Mountain." (RNS photo by Carucha Meuse)

Home" and "Idumea."

One of the songs is used in a church scene in the film when the congregation learns that its state has seceded from the Union. One by one, the males stop singing, representing the soldiers going off to war.

Real Sacred Harp singing is now most often a community social event rather than part of a religious service, though churches and their grounds are often the setting.

Sacred Harp's origins

It gets its name from "The Sacred Harp," an oblong songbook published in 1844 by B.F. White and E.J. King. The pair lived in western Georgia, though the book was printed in Philadelphia.

Despite the name, no harps or other musical instruments are used in Sacred Harp singing. It's all a cappella.

The title is symbolic, probably because harps are mentioned frequently in the Psalms and are associated with King David. Others feel that the "sacred harp" is the human voice itself.

Sacred Harp is also known as shape-note singing, coming from the manner in which the musical notation is written, and fasola singing, after the syllables fa, sol, la and mi used to teach it.

The notes are shaped like a triangle, an oval, a rectangle and a diamond, representing those syllables respectively.

Sacred Harp singers sit in a

square and keep time by raising and lowering one of their arms.

Typically, a leader stands in the center of the square (the ideal place to hear the full effect) and calls out the number of the song. The tune is sung in the fasola syllables one time before the words are sung.

In Kentucky, Sacred Harp sings also are popular in the mountains and in Benton, according to Jim Cordell, director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's church music department.

"In May, they have a huge Sacred Harp sing (in Benton)," he said.

The Web site for the Appalachian Association of Sacred Harp Singers (<http://cs.engr.uky.edu/~raphael/fasola.html>) boasts 40 members and has events scheduled this year in Lexington and Berea.

Hollywood recognition

Singer-musician Tim Eriksen was partly responsible for bringing Hollywood to Henagar.

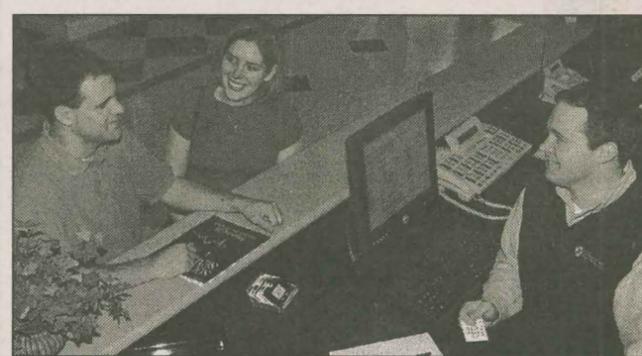
"I was hired to be the singing voice of the character Stobrod (played by Brendan Gleeson), who is an itinerant fiddle-player in the film," explained Eriksen from his home in Minneapolis.

When the film's music was being planned, Eriksen arranged a meeting between the movie people and the singers on Sand Mountain, a region known for its Sacred Harp music.

"The director had heard of a song called 'Logan' and that inspired him when he wrote the screenplay. He imagined a scene with singing coming out of a church," he said.

Eriksen taught Sacred Harp singing to two of the film's stars, Nicole Kidman and Jude Law.

"It's neat that, aside from the movie, Sacred Harp music is getting such a wide exposure," Eriksen said. "There's a possibility you might see some Sacred Harp at the Academy Awards."



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Patty, Vestal to be among GMA Hall of Fame inductees

Nashville (RNS)—Sandi Patty, the female artist who has received the most awards in contemporary Christian music history, is one of four industry contributors who will be inducted into the Gospel Music Association Gospel Music Hall of Fame in February.

Patty will join inductees Al Green, Vestal Goodman and Frances Preston in ceremonies on Feb. 11 in Nashville, the association announced Jan. 6.

"The newest inductees for the GMA Gospel Music Hall of Fame exemplify the great diversity and history of Christian and gospel music," GMA President John Styll said in a statement.

Patty, the winner of 39 Dove Awards and five Grammy Awards, has recorded 23 albums during her career of more than two decades.

"It is an overwhelming honor to be part of the Hall of Fame family," she said. "It has been an honor to share my journey with Christ through music for these many years and to have the affirmation of my peers means so much."

Green, known in both secular and religious circles, formed his first gospel group at the age of 9 in Forrest City, Ark. He toured with the Green Brothers before beginning to sing soul music on his own. After becoming an ordained pastor, he released a series of gospel albums and won seven gospel Grammy Awards.

Goodman, who has been called the "queen of gospel music," died Dec. 27 at the age of 74, but was notified of her induction earlier in the month. A founding member of the Happy Goodman Family, she was the first artist to win the Dove Award for female vocalist of the year. She recorded her first solo album in 1975 and was a frequent participant in Bill and Gloria Gaither's "Homecoming" tour and video series.

Preston, the president and CEO of BMI, a performing rights organization, is being inducted in the non-performer category. She joined BMI in 1958, opened its Southern regional office in Nashville and is a permanent board member of the Gospel Music Association.

The hall of fame has inducted 125 members since its inception in 1971, including Elvis Presley, Mahalia Jackson, Amy Grant, the Oak Ridge Boys and Bill and Gloria Gaither.

Gaither still influencing gospel music

By Stacey Hamby
Baptist Press

Nashville (BP)—Bill Gaither wasn't good enough for gospel music. At least, that's what he was told.

So, with his dream of singing Southern gospel music seemingly out of reach, Gaither went home and began writing.

More than 500 songs and dozens of popular videos later, Gaither and his wife, Gloria, were named Christian Songwriters of the Century in 2000.

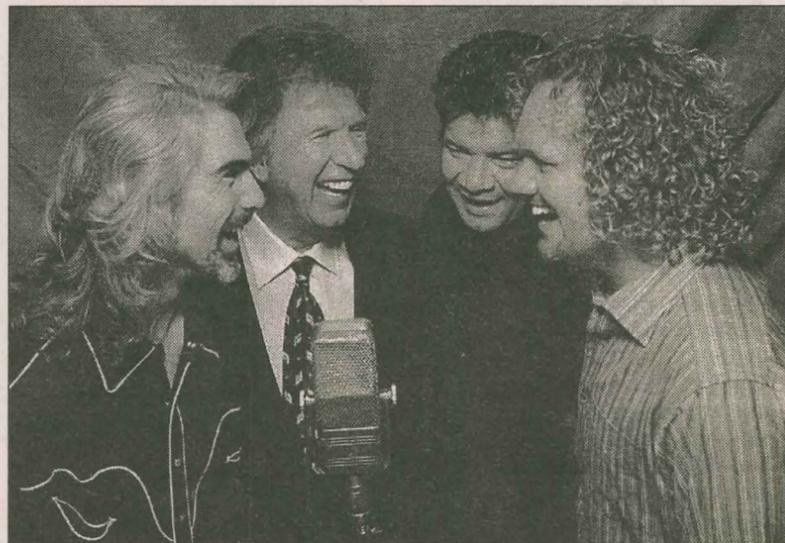
"I became a teacher because I was not good enough to do gospel music," said Gaither, who taught high school English in his hometown of Alexandria, Ind. "There were piano players and singers better than me. So I started writing songs. I never realized it would become this popular. Writing came naturally to me."

The Gospel Music Hall of Famers together penned songs that are mainstays in hymnals around the world. Those songs include "The King Is Coming" and "Because He Lives."

The song "He Touched Me" catapulted Gaither into the national spotlight in 1969 when Elvis Presley recorded it. Gaither, Gloria and his brother Danny founded the Bill Gaither Trio in the 1970s, and later he formed the award-winning Gaither Vocal Band in which he still sings bass.

How "Homecoming" started

In recent years, the Gaithers have been best known by their popular "Homecoming Series" videos and concerts. What has become an international phenomenon actually



BANDING TOGETHER Bill Gaither (second from left), with the rest of the Gaither Vocal Band (from left) Guy Penrod, Russ Taff and David Phelps.

started with an impromptu taping in a Nashville studio in 1991. The Gaither Vocal Band was wrapping up a recording session that had included several legendary Southern gospel music artists, including The Speer Family, The Cathedral Quartet and the Happy Goodmans.

After the planned session ended, the artists lingered and gathered around the piano, singing, swapping stories from the old days and sharing a few laughs and tears.

The video camera was still rolling. Gaither knew he had something special.

Today, there are Homecoming concerts in just about every major venue in the country, and the videos, which have sold more than 7.5 million copies, consistently rank in the Billboard video chart's Top Ten.

Gaither, though, takes it all with characteristic humility. "Whatever I did, I couldn't do without them (the artists)," he said. "I'm like the turtle on the fencepost. I didn't get there by myself. All I did was expose them; I let people see them and hear them sing."

Gaither, who recently released an autobiography, "It's More Than the Music," shows no sign of slowing down. In his mid-60s, he keeps an active schedule with his Gaither Vocal Band, Homecoming concerts, an annual "Praise Gathering" and the management of everything in between.

"I work together as a team with Gloria," he said. "We have no long-range plans for retirement. We never have. We just walked through the doors God has opened."

New year, new opportunities

January provides fresh start for new students at Oneida

Each new year brings opportunities for us to make changes in our lives. According to recent news broadcasts, nearly all Americans need to lose weight. Few of us get enough daily exercise for a healthy lifestyle. Others might consider trying to find more time for Bible study and prayer. While the new year provides us with a good place to begin, many of us refuse to make such commitments because we have failed so often in the past.

The beginning of a new year is a wonderful time for students who are having family and/or academic challenges to improve.

While the majority of our students come to us at the beginning of each school year in August, others enroll throughout the year. Each week we interview students who need the opportunities Oneida provides. We know that some are less serious about success than others. Some surprise us by excelling far beyond our expectations. Few things encourage us more than watching the changes that take place in the lives of students who are finding success, possibly for the first time in their lives.

The first Sunday in January, we were blessed to enroll 24 new students. These young people came to us from across Kentucky and the United States. The group had one senior. Nearly every January we enroll a new student who will graduate in May. While we welcome the opportunity to help them graduate, we realize that we are going to be very limited in helping them in other areas of their lives.



W.F. Underwood

There also were three new sixth grade students. Working with 11-year-olds can be challenging! They often lack the maturity needed to be away from home and live in a dormitory. Personal hygiene, laundry, roommate relationships and other day-to-day situations present substantial challenges to our support staff. But I would much rather have the opportunity to work with students when they are younger than to wait until their junior or senior year of high school.

We often are very limited in being able to help a young person develop the life skills he will need in such a short period of time. While we have had thousands of juniors and seniors invite Christ into their lives over the years, the opportunities are even greater when they are younger. Also, we normally can help younger students more academically and socially.

Just as it takes considerable time to turn a large ship in the ocean, it takes time—often a lot of time—to turn a life around. Though we frequently shy away from making New Year's resolutions, I hope that our new students will use the opportunity of a new year to seek changes in their lives. We know that some will be more successful in their quest than others.

Still other students will be enrolling in the months to come. We will accept students until the end of April when graduation will just be three weeks away. This is a great way to begin a new year!

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

His will through our will

Estate planning can provide legacy gift to institutions

A few months ago, my wife and I completed a needed revision of our wills.

They had not been changed since we made the decision of who would care for our three minor children. With five grandchildren, it was past time to bring these documents up-to-date. We also drafted health care directives and power-of-attorney documents. I hope you have made these decisions; it will make it easier on your loved ones.

You've probably read or heard Kentucky Baptist Foundation President Barry Allen's challenge to make a legacy gift

through estate planning. My wife and I decided to do this and through the foundation established the Bill D. and Rebecca Howard Whittaker Endowment Fund. With a minimal gift, the fund is already activated. We will make gifts to it throughout the remainder of our life. A percentage of three life insurance policies goes to the fund upon our individual deaths, and 10 percent of the last survivor estate goes to the fund. Income from the endowment is divided, with 60 percent to assist Clear Creek and

40 percent supporting the work of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

We want our estate to be a testimony of Christian stewardship. Everybody leaves something behind, and there are many options through which you can continue witnessing for Christ until He comes.

The Bible study class of Jennie Carter Black at Central Baptist Church in Knoxville, Tenn., has given to Clear Creek for many years. Last year Mrs. Black died and we recently received \$150,000 from her estate; a similar amount is expected in a few months. Mrs. Black stipulated half of her gift be used for improvement of facilities or new construction and half for

student scholarships. Her detailed will remembered her church, other charities, family and friends. Because Mrs. Carter was in God's will, she remembered God's work in her will.

Will God's will be done through your will? I encourage you to contact our development office or the Kentucky Baptist Foundation for assistance.

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



Bill Whittaker

Author: Remove distractions in order to connect with God

By Cecile Holmes
Religion News Service

Spooner, Wis. (RNS)—Deep within everyone dwells a divine spark that might never be recognized without making time for stillness and quiet, say the authors of a new book, "Connecting with God in a Disconnected World."

But too many people live in so disconnected a state that their day-to-day thoughts, feelings and experiences seem far removed from the divine, said one of the book's co-authors, Carolyn Coon Mowchan, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Spooner, Wis.

"If we want contact with God, we must send an invitation," she says. "We must take time to think about our experiences and our expectations."

With co-author, Damian Anthony Vraniak, a psychotherapist and a member of her church, Mowchan's goal is to map the steps to connect with God.

Instead of viewing faith as coming to terms with the Almighty's do's and don'ts, the pair wants to show seekers and Christians how to notice the presence of God in daily life.

"One of the primary intentions of this book goes back to the work I've been doing for a few decades, which is to map transformation," Vraniak says. "We all have all this information in our lives and ideas about what's good and what's not, but we don't have a very good map."

They set out to map the steps one might follow and produced a book that is as much about letting go and accepting God's love as it is about finding community and comfortable ways to pray.

Their book suggests such awareness builds through:

■ Gaining a deep appreciation for biblical figures who struggled to connect with God.

■ Developing patterns of personal prayer including setting aside regular time for intimacy with God.

■ Recognizing the need for balance, healing and integration in the physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual dimensions of life.

Learning to relax

"The process of healing has to begin with understanding that everyone has three levels of energy: psychological energy, emotional energy and physical energy," Mowchan says. "The exercises in the book are designed to help us learn to still the body. And learn how to relax."

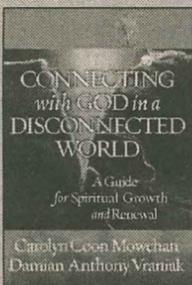
"Until you can do that, you can't get very far. Because the body kicks up so much stuff that gets in the way," she says. "Just coming to a worship service can be tough. You've

just rushed like mad to get there. Your kids have been screaming in the back seat. You make it half-way through the worship service before you take a deep breath."

Vraniak says people cannot start without the basics, one of the reasons he and Mowchan recommend working through their book with a friend or a small group. "To reconnect with God, you have to know when and where that occurs. To reconnect with God, you have to have some tools," he says.

They stress that "the place to start is just describing for yourself and God how you are really feeling."

"It's simply a time to be short and to the point—name and claim what's going on in your heart," they write. "If you can't do that, ask God to hold you until your confusion lifts. The goal is to let God take care of your feelings for a while by wrapping you in love until your heart is calm."



Shaped by the Word: The Power of Scripture in Spiritual Formation (revised edition). Robert Mulholland Jr. Upper Room Books, 2000. 176 pages. \$12. ♦♦♦♦♦ (out of five)

The prophet Isaiah, speaking of the spiritual condition of many people in Israel, writes: "He sees many things, but does not observe them; his ears are open, but he does not hear" (Isaiah 42:20).

Robert Mulholland Jr. suggests that many Christians come to Scripture with blinded eyes. We read without reading. The sad thing, he observes, is that we are aware of this barrier to authentic spiritual formation, which he defines as "the process of being conformed to the image of Christ for the sake of others."

Most of us have been trained as informational/functional readers. The characteristics of informational/functional reading are that it: tries to "cover as much as possible as quickly as possible," is linear, seeks to "master the text," is analytical, critical and judgmental, and focuses on problem-solving. While acknowledging the necessity and validity of this approach, Mulholland contends Christians must go beyond this level of reading to "formational" reading. In many respects, this approach is the flip side of the informational/functional approach.

Mulholland begins by examining the nature of spiritual formation. After defining the difference between the two approaches to reading Scripture, he offers suggestions on how to enrich not only our perception of Scripture, but our experience with it.

The last part of the book deals with practical suggestions on how to see and observe, listen and hear when we come to the Scriptures.

Overall, Mulholland challenges us to move beyond the insipid devotional readings in which many of us engage to a new place where we allow Scripture to shape our perceptions and actions. *Jim Holladay*

Can a Church Live Again? The Revitalization of a 21st Century Church. Ronny Russell. Smyth and Helwys, 2004. 134 pages. \$14. ♦♦♦♦♦

When I first picked up this book I had no idea how much it would come to mean to me.

Over the years I have read plenty of books on how to revitalize or renew a church, and have usually found something useful in every book. I cannot honestly tell you from where all the ideas that have gone into my ministry have come. I know that I have picked and chosen from many sources to put together a ministry of church renewal.

As far as that goes, this book offers little that is new or unexpected. What Russell offers is good, but not groundbreaking. If you have not read a book on renewing a church,

you might as well start with this one, if just for the process.

But what makes this one of my favorite books recently, and one of the most encouraging, is the honest way Russell describes how he felt as the pastor of a stagnant church, and then as he began the journey of renewal. Maybe what I needed (and what other church leaders might need, too) is to know that I am not alone and that the light at the end of the tunnel may not be a train (though there are no guarantees).

Russell deals honestly with the toll that working in a stagnant church took on his life, both personally and as a pastor, but he does not belabor it. The real impact of the book comes as the reader says, "Yes, that is exactly how I feel." Hope appears when Russell details how he faced the feelings, pressure and expectations of helping a stagnant church transition into a revitalized church.

Most pastors can relate to some part of this book. If the statistics are true, most pastors are now or have been in the same place as Russell: trying to cast a new vision for a stagnant church. *Wayne Hager*

Engaging Unbelief: A Captivating Strategy from Augustine & Aquinas. Curtis Chang. InterVarsity Press, 2000. 187 pages. \$12. ♦♦♦♦♦

My coffee-drinking, donut-eating buddy greeted me one morning at Donut Kastle with the recommendation that I review this book. For many reasons I was intrigued.

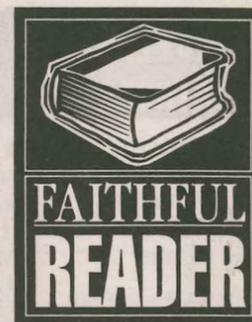
Curtis Chang is a campus minister with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, yet he is using two icons of the Roman Catholic Church as models for engaging the non-Christian world with the gospel.

I am sure my friend, who is Catholic, was drawn to the book because of Augustine and Aquinas, but he found himself caught up in Chang's effort to share the gospel. I had no other choice than to get my own copy. I was not disappointed.

Chang contends that Christians are facing new cultural challenges in witnessing the gospel. He asks: "How can we present the truth about Jesus to a world that rejects all truth claims as arbitrary? Can we find ways to engage in meaningful conversation without appearing arrogant or manipulative? Can we witness to the gospel with out simply enlisting in the ongoing 'culture wars?'"

To address these questions, Chang chose to turn, not to the latest market studies or evangelistic how-to book, but to two people who faced the challenge of witnessing to the gospel in radically changing cultural contexts. Augustine wrote "The City of God" to address a world that was accusing Christians for the fall of Rome. Aquinas wrote "Summa Contra Gentiles" at a time when Islam was threatening to engulf Christianity.

Chang does not believe we can parrot either Augustine's or Aquinas' arguments, but we can learn from how they approached the task, opening dialogue with those who were indifferent or hostile to the Christian message. *Jim Holladay*



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

Grammy-winner Jake Hess, 76, dies

Opelika, Ala. (RNS)—Jake Hess, a Grammy-winning singer who performed with some of the nation's top gospel quartets, died Jan. 4 at a hospital in Opelika, Ala.

Hess, who had suffered a heart attack Dec. 16, was 76.

The resident of Columbus, Ga., was best known in contemporary times as a regular member of "Bill Gaither's Homecoming Friends," which airs on Christian and country music cable channels.

"I've been blessed to have one of the heroes of my youth become one of my dearest friends," Gaither said. "Jake is larger than life. His spirit will live on long after he's gone. The world will miss him, and so will I."

Hess, a four-time Grammy winner, became a member of the John Daniel Quartet in 1943. He gained

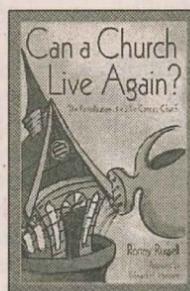
celebrity status with the Statesmen Quartet. He also founded the Imperials and sang with the Masters V.

Each of the groups has been named to the Southern Gospel Hall of Fame, as has Hess.

Hess was a backup singer on several of Elvis Presley's Grammy-winning albums and sang at Presley's funeral in 1977.

He also influenced Presley's singing. Peter Guralnick, author of a two-volume Presley biography, said the rock singer always sought to imitate the voices of Hess and singer Roy Hamilton.

"They were such virtuosos," Guralnick said. "Each had a voice that Elvis never felt he could fully emulate. What he did seek to do was to emulate the feeling they had in their singing."



PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following European Baptist Convention churches that are without pastors:

■ Berlin International Baptist Church.

■ Charity Baptist Church in Vilseck, Germany.

■ Faith Baptist Church in Kaiserslautern, Germany.

■ New Hope Baptist Church in Motta Santa Anastasia, Italy.

■ International Baptist Church in Eindhoven, the Netherlands.

■ International Christian Fellowship Baptist Church in Portimao, Portugal.

■ International Baptist Fellowship in Moscow.

■ St. Petersburg Bible Study Group in St. Petersburg, Russia.

■ International Baptist Church in Bratislava, Slovakia.

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **FLORENCE**—Greenview Church called **Bob Rainey** as music minister effective Jan. 4. He is a student at Cincinnati Bible College. **Steve Turner** is pastor.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Ashland Avenue Church held an installation service for Pastor **David Prince** Jan. 11. **Russell Moore** and **Thom Rainer** of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville were guest speakers.

■ **LONDON**—Jackson Memorial Church recently called **Ronnie Eversole** as pastor.

Laurel Chapel recently called **Randall Eversole** as pastor.

Sinking Creek Church recently called **Mike McQueen** as pastor.

■ **OWENSBORO**—Bellevue Church called **Terré Jasper** as director of

student ministries effective Jan. 5. **Greg Faulls** is pastor.

■ **PADUCAH**—Park Avenue Church recently called **Sandy Rogers** as pastor. He previously was pastor of Highview Church in Paducah.

■ **WILLIAMSTOWN**—**Ronald Chastain**, director of missions for Crittenden Association for 19 years, announced his retirement effective April 1. He and his wife, Patricia, will live in Burlington.

What's going on?

Mail your happenings to Mountains to the Mississippi at Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253. Fax: (502) 244-6474. E-mail: wesrec@earthlink.net.

Denominational statesman Albert McClellan dies at age 91

By Art Toalston
Baptist Press

Nashville (BP)—Albert McClellan, a key Southern Baptist Convention staff member for more than 30 years, died Jan. 9 in Nashville after a lengthy illness. He was 91.

McClellan had a hand in the formation of the committee that drafted the SBC's 1963 Baptist Faith and Message statement and he was one of the 20-plus members of the SBC Peace Committee during the mid-1980s.

"Before I knew I was a Baptist, I was a Christian," McClellan said in 1980. "Before I knew I was a Southern Baptist, I was pledged to God's people whoever they are. I chose the Baptists because they seemed nearer the New Testament, and because they relied on the Holy Spirit, not the decrees of men, for unity."

James Sullivan, retired president of the former Baptist Sunday School Board, described McClellan as "a very brilliant man, totally dedicated to his work." Sullivan also noted "his integrity and his freedom to be himself. He didn't have anything to hide."

McClellan held the position of

associate executive secretary and director of program planning when he retired from the SBC Executive Committee in December 1980. He joined the Executive Committee staff in 1949, serving 10 years as director of publications. He worked alongside three Executive Committee presidents, Duke McCall, Porter Routh and Harold Bennett.

Prior to serving with the Executive Committee, McClellan was editor of the Oklahoma Baptist Messenger in the 1940s. He also was pastor of churches in Oklahoma and Texas. After he retired, he taught Baptist history and polity at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

McClellan authored 14 books and hundreds of articles for denominational publications. He was a life member of Baptist Communicators' Association, and the top prize in BCA's annual public relations design contest is named in his honor.

McClellan's part in the formation of the committee to draft the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message

involved a meeting he and Porter Routh, then-executive secretary of the Executive Committee, had with Herschell Hobbs, then-president of the SBC, in Oklahoma City, where Hobbs was pastor of First Baptist Church.

The three men met to discuss controversy from a commentary on the Book of Genesis by a professor at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City.

The three men "decided to propose to the Executive Committee the appointment of a special committee to study the Statement of Faith that had been developed from the New Hampshire Confession of Faith and adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 1925."

When controversy erupted again in the SBC in the late 1970s, McClellan was among those named to the Peace Committee, which issued a report in 1985 that sought to address points of contention between conservatives and moderates.

In a speech to the Southern Baptist Press Association in 1964,

Theological Seminary in Saigon. She immigrated to the United States in 1975 and earned the associate of arts degree from Portland Community College in Oregon. She married Long Pham in 1980.

Prior to missionary appointment, she had worked as a teacher's aide in California and as a draftsman in Louisville. Pham had earned a degree in theology and was working on a master's degree in clinical counseling when she was diagnosed last summer with cancer.

She is survived by her husband; two sons, Benjamin and David; and one daughter, Kristine.



IMB missionary Mary Pham dies

Birmingham, Ala. (BP)—Van Thi Dao "Mary" Pham, a Southern Baptist missionary to the Philippines, died Dec. 27 in Birmingham, Ala., after a battle with cancer. She was 50.

Pham and her husband, Long, were appointed by the Southern Baptist International Mission Board in 1983. She served as a church and home worker with the Professionals 4 Christ team in the Manila metropolitan area.

"Mary was a well-respected woman of God," said missionary colleague Linda Pegram. "Friends knew her as a prayer warrior."

Pham, a native of Vietnam, earned a certificate in preschool education from Vietnam Baptist

McClellan noted, "In a society as large as the Southern Baptist Convention, there must be a certain amount of give and take. This is not to argue for compromise, but integration. Our SBC polity being what it is, we cannot be held together by any kind of authoritative control or paper pope. Neither is it right to compromise truth."

Leonard Hill, who worked under McClellan as managing editor of The Baptist Program publication for more than 20 years, said, "When I think of Albert McClellan—whether as friend, 'boss,' denominational worker, servant of Christ—I remember a small two-sided sign he designed himself which used to rest on his desk. On one side were the words, 'What are all the facts?' On the other side was printed, 'What is the spirit of the matter?' The sign disappeared over the years, but the principles remained as guideposts in Albert McClellan's life. He never ceased searching for all the facts. He never ceased exhibiting the finest Christian spirit, even in the toughest of times."

With additional reporting by Associated Baptist Press

SBC leaders launch church-focused prayer effort for spiritual renewal

Nashville (BP)—In an effort to promote supportive prayer among Southern Baptist Convention churches, SBC leaders have launched a new initiative called "Churches Praying for Churches."

The campaign, initiated Jan. 1 by the SBC Executive Committee, the North American Mission Board and the Empowering Kingdom Growth Task Force, is designed to encourage both individual believers and church prayer groups to pray for every Southern Baptist church during 2004.

To be a part of the prayer effort, individuals or prayer groups may register online at www.sbc.net or by calling (888) PRAYER2. Participants can commit to pray for one to five Southern Baptist churches each week for 12 weeks, including specific requests submitted by other churches.

"What could be better than to

pray for our sister churches and their ministries, that God might bless them in a mighty way?" asked Morris Chapman, president of the Executive Committee, in a sound clip at www.oneinamillionprayer.com.

Churches Praying for Churches also allows individual churches to submit specific prayer requests, such as church growth, evangelism and mission opportunities, as well as general prayer requests for the pastor, staff and members.

Noting that the concerted prayer effort "could result in the greatest blessing which God would ever pour out upon this convention," Chapman added, "May we pray for spiritual awakening, may we pray for revival, may we abandon self for the cause of Christ and just say, 'Lord, I can't, but You can help us reach this nation for the sake of Christ and His Kingdom.'"

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FOR RENT: Winter in Gatlinburg. Low daily rates. 2/2 condo. Walk to town. (251) 666-2175. pdw@worldnet.att.net.

SEEKING: Parkwood Baptist Church in Louisville seeks to fill pianist position immediately. If interested, contact Joshua Duke, minister of worship, (502) 366-8055.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music for Elkton church to lead morning/evening worship services. Submit resumé to: Elkton Baptist Church, PO Box 547, Elkton, KY 42220.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor. Apply to Liberty Baptist Church, c/o Joy Fletcher, PO Box 208, Russell Springs, KY 42642.

SEEKING: Broadway Baptist Church, a CBF affiliate in Louisville, Ky., is seeking an experienced minister of adult education and discipleship with an emphasis in developing small-group ministries and outreach. For more information, go to www.broadwaybaptist.org/search.htm, or write to the church c/o Education Search Committee, 4000 Brownsboro Road, Louisville, KY 40207.

TOUR: Alaska cruise. You are invited to join our Christian Life Tours group on a 7-day inside passage and glacier cruise June 4-11 with optional land tour. Enjoy Alaska with other Kentucky Baptists at the best prices. For brochure or to make a reservation, call (877) 557-0073 (toll-free). OK to leave message.

Purpose-Driven (prison) church

Inmates show church principles can work even in 'the yard'

By Tobin Perry
Baptist Press

Jamestown, Calif. (BP)—A group of inmates in a California medium-security prison are showing it doesn't take a steeple and stained glass to make the popular "Purpose-Driven Church" structure work.

The Sierra Christian Center is a non-denominational church at the Sierra Conservation Center, a prison in Jamestown, Calif.

In the past four to five months, a small flock has made an almost complete transition to the "Purpose-Driven Church" model of ministry.

The model is based on Pastor Rick Warren's book by the same name and his Saddleback Community Church, the nation's largest Southern Baptist church. It emphasizes five purposes for any church: evangelism, discipleship, worship, ministry and fellowship.

After going through 40 Days of Purpose, a national campaign based on Warren's book "The Purpose-Driven Life," the Sierra Christian Center almost doubled its attendance.

Small group Bible studies grew from about 20 prisoners to more than 150 in just a few months. Prisoners from different social and ethnic groups have begun worshipping together—a significant breakthrough in a prison system prone to racial violence.

Now their small church, from



CELEBRATION A new convert celebrates his baptism at the Sierra Christian Center, a small "Purpose-Driven" church of inmates in the medium-security section of California's Sierra Conservation Center. (BP photo)

inside prison walls, has launched worship services that are friendly to non-believers, including smiling greeters and plenty of greenery.

Members say stories of prisoners becoming Christians seem to be as commonplace as ones detailing fights on the yard.

"Many prisoners live in the meantime; they are always waiting until they get out to really start living," said Steve Rutenbar, Saddleback's missions pastor who has been to the prison twice since inmates started the 40 Days campaign.

"That is not the approach of the guys at the Sierra Christian Center. They accept that they are here, that their mistakes have led them to this place of life. But they are not in waiting mode. They are serving one another. They are deep in prayer

and studying God's Word together. They are fellowshiping with each other and holding each other up. That model will serve them well when they get out of prison."

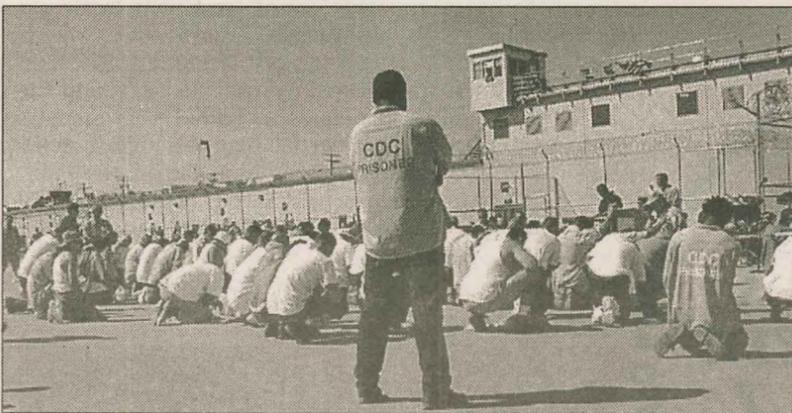
Inmates credit the "40 Days of Purpose" campaign for uniting Christians from different ethnic groups in the prison. During the campaign, prisoners from six ethnic groups preached the sermons that typically accompany the 40 Days campaign.

In the last few months, the Christians have played together on the only prison-wide interracial softball team. Some Christians have been attacked for their willingness to cross gang lines to play.

Not only did the interracial preaching schedule help unite different races within the prison, but it gave many of them the opportunity to be used in ministry for the first time.

Inmate Danny Duchene said he now sees a bigger vision for what God can do in the prison.

"We feel that God has entrusted us with something here," Deschenes said. "God has called us to a very special work on this yard. This is our land. This is our vineyard that God has given us to work in. We are going to take what God has given us here, the message of 'The Purpose-Driven Life' and share it with everyone on this yard. ... If God can do it here, He can do it anywhere. It's the ageless gospel of Jesus Christ."



PRISONERS' PRAYERS Worshipping at the Sierra Christian Center, prisoners kneel for prayer.

Jews for Jesus criticizes some evangelical leaders

Washington (RNS)—The messianic Jewish organization Jews for Jesus has criticized evangelical Christian leaders—including evangelist Billy Graham—for downplaying the gospel after being pressured by Jews.

"There are those who have worked both overtly and subtly to demonize Jewish believers in Jesus and to make the work of Jewish evangelism seem unacceptable," wrote David Brickner, president of the group, in a letter to donors, The Washington Times reported.

His six-page letter, titled "The War on Jewish Evangelism," was distributed to 110,000 donors.

In an interview with the newspaper, Brickner said some churches, and particularly mega-

churches, focus on attracting rather than offending.

"If you press (certain evangelicals), they will say, 'We believe everyone needs Jesus to be saved, but we don't want to be offending people,'" he said.

He said the most damaging statement for his movement was one made in 1973 by Graham: "In my evangelistic efforts, I have never felt called to single out the Jews as Jews."

Brickner wrote, "That comment ... is still quoted by Jewish community leaders as proof that Graham does not approve of evangelistic ministry directed to Jewish people."

He also cited several evangelical leaders, such as Jerry Falwell

and Pat Robertson, whose endorsements appear on the Web site of the Chicago-based International Fellowship of Christians and Jews.

Falwell said he understands the "frustration" in Brickner's letter but thinks it is misplaced.

"I have led many Jewish people to Christ, and many of them are members of the church I have pastored for 48 years," Falwell said. "Jews for Jesus should not interpret my friendship with other Jewish leaders as an affront to them."

The newspaper said Jews for Jesus, the nation's largest messianic Jewish organization, saw a \$371,130 drop in offerings in 2003 and a 25 percent decline in speaking invitations.

Senator: Change of heart about abortion began with ultrasound

By Michael Foust
Baptist Press

Washington (BP)—Sen. Zell Miller (D-Ga.) sees parallels between Roe v. Wade, the Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion, and Dred Scott v. Sandford, the decision that said slaves had no rights.

But Miller hasn't always felt that way. He was once pro-choice.

The Georgia senator's recounts his move from the pro-choice to pro-life cause in his book, "A National Party No More: The Conscience of a Conservative Democrat."



Miller

Miller spends much of the book criticizing the Democratic Party for what he sees as a drift to the left that has ended the party's appeal to Southerners.

But Miller, who is retiring next year, also describes how his position on abortion began to change in the 1990s when his great-grandchildren were born.

"I believe the thinking of many Americans is changing on this subject," he writes. "New science and technology

can now show the heart of the unborn baby beating in the mother's womb. I saw it on the front page of Newsweek, no less. I remember my grandson, only 20, carrying a sonogram around to show off his yet unborn, but so alive daughter. It gave new meaning to the old Roberta Flack song 'The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face.'

"I know it is wrong to take these lives. For me it is no longer a political issue but a moral one, as it should have been from the beginning. I hope someday Roe v. Wade will be reversed."

There was a time, Miller writes, when he answered questions about abortion by saying, "Leave it to the woman, her God and her doctor." Even when he was governor of Georgia in the 1990s, he considered himself pro-choice, with a few exceptions. He believed minors should receive parental consent before obtaining an abortion and he opposed using public funding for abortions.

"Then, as governor, I signed a state law in 1997 outlawing the terrible procedure of partial-birth abortion," he writes. "Still, I stuck with my position of supporting abortion, but with all these qualifications."

A great-grandfather's dilemma

He dates his transformation on the issue back nine years, when his great-grandchildren were being born.

"I began to seriously wrestle with where I was on the real question," he writes. "I began to pray earnestly for God's guidance."

Reflecting on a Christmas spent with his great-grandchildren, Miller writes, "I know how richly blessed we are that they were not four of the 42 million who have been aborted over the past 30 years, that they are alive, a fifth generation to celebrate Christmas in that old house."

Miller says he agrees with conservative Sean Hannity's comparison of Roe v. Wade to the Dred Scott decision. Miller sees one striking parallel.

"The elite, arrogant plantation owner believed his own self-interest to be more important than the slaves' self-interest," Miller writes. "A woman who favors abortion believes her self-interest comes before the unborn's self-interest. In each case, the judgment is a moral one, made deliberately. What could be more arrogant than to believe one has the right to designate a life not worth living?"

The most inconsistent position, Miller argues, is taken by those who are for abortion but against the death penalty. "It seems strange they shed tears for someone who has been found guilty of having committed heinous crimes, but cannot find equal compassion for an innocent infant who has hurt no one," he writes.

Miller, who says he does not believe an abortion litmus test should exist for judicial nominees, says he believes Americans will reject Roe v. Wade some day.

He points to polls showing both a decrease in support for abortion rights and an increase in the number of young people who oppose abortion.

"Ultrasound technology has proved the unborn baby is human, and abortion has become the moral and ethical issue my mother—that strong woman—always maintained it was."

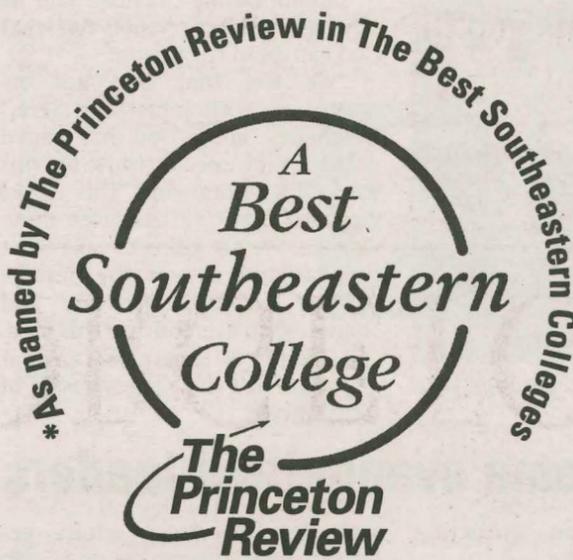
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GEORGETOWN

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