

# WESTERN RECORDER

February 3, 2004  
Vol. 178, No. 5

## FOR THE RECORD

**Baptists**  
Baptist World Alliance leaders challenge Baptists to "stick together." *Page 2.*

**Southern Seminary**  
Russell Moore is new dean for school of theology. *Page 2.*

**Kentucky**  
Israeli musicians share spiritual pilgrimage. *Page 3.*

**Financial Forum**  
Pursue specific steps to alleviate long-term debt. *Page 4.*

**Editorial**  
Will Kentucky Baptists support Baptist World Alliance? *Page 5.*

**Family Forum**  
Consider starting points for church senior adult ministries. *Page 5.*

**Nation**  
Columbia astronaut widows tell how faith helped them survive past year. *Page 9.*

## Study to churches: Would somebody answer the phone?

Ventura, Calif. (RNS)—A word to the efficient: Don't dial your local church; they won't answer.

Being unreachable by telephone is a problem plaguing many of the nation's Protestant churches, a recent study found.

Of 3,400 Protestant churches phoned nationwide last month, a human being could not be reached at 55 percent, and 19 percent had neither a person nor a machine to answer calls.

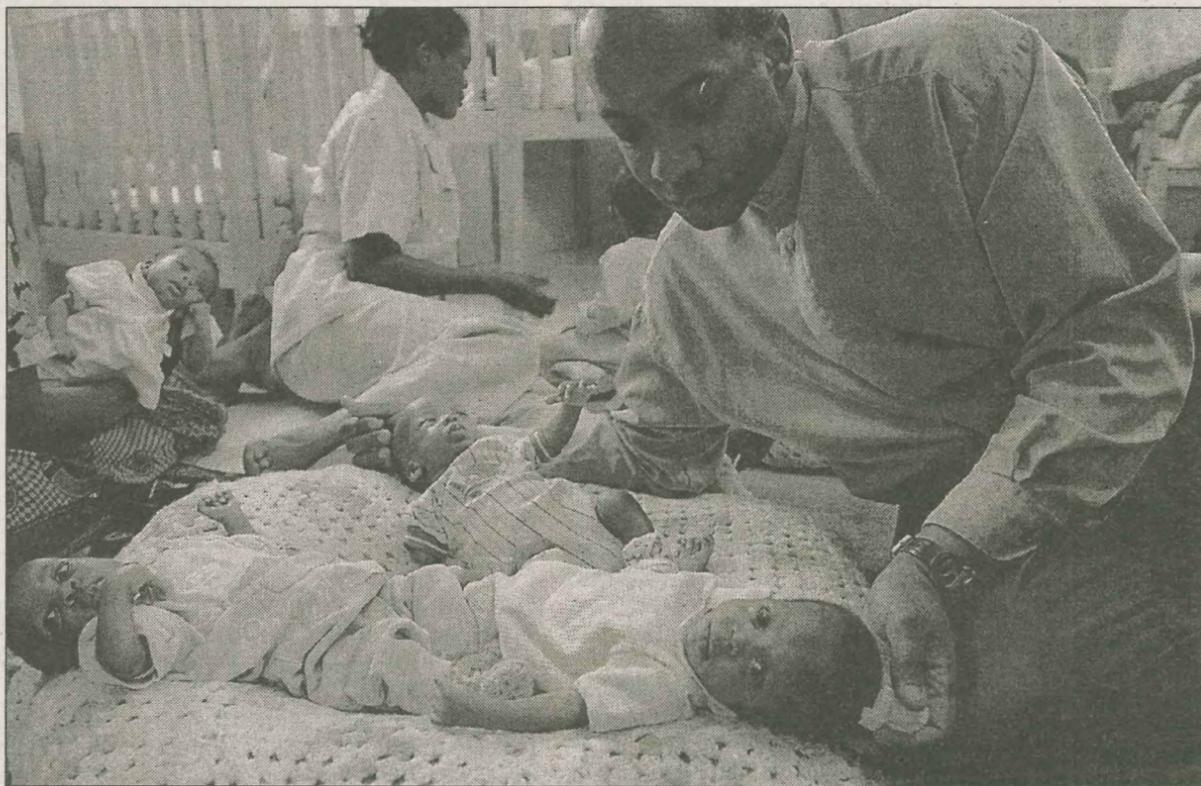
The Barna Research Group, based in Ventura, Calif., called each randomly selected Protestant church in the study at least five times during business hours.

"If ministry is based on relationships and interaction, then many churches might find it easier to penetrate the community if they were more accessible to the people who are showing an interest in the church," said George Barna, president of the research firm.

Southern Baptists fared better than average in the study, with 61 percent of such congregations answering the phone. Other above-average response denominations included United Methodists (64 percent) and National Baptist churches (62 percent).

Churches in the mountain and Western states were more responsive, with two-thirds of all calls to those areas answered in fewer than five call attempts. The least responsive area was the South, where only one-third of the churches answered any phone calls.

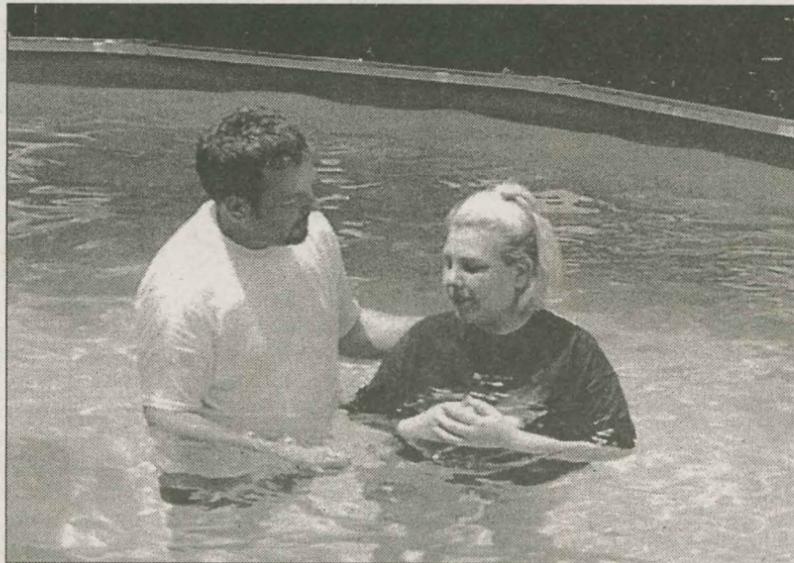
## A sea of victims



For Southern Baptist missionary Troy Lewis, the devastation of AIDS is more than numbers in another country. As AIDS/HIV program developer in Lusaka, Zambia, he's seen firsthand the effects of a disease that kills more than 6,000 people every day in sub-Saharan Africa. "We as Christians talk about the need to start churches," he said. "But if we don't do something about HIV/AIDS, we're not going to have anyone to go to the churches we start." **Above:** Lewis visits House of Moses, a facility that cares for infants whose parents, after discovering they were infected with AIDS/HIV, either abandoned them or died. One of the babies was found discarded in a plastic bag. **Right:** Lewis (center) and Samson Zulu, pastor of Bualeni Baptist Church, comfort Elija Chipeta with prayer. **Story on page 8.** (IMB photos by Warren Johnson)



## Kentucky congregations show three models of church planting



**POOL BAPTISM** Harry Rose, pastor of New Horizon Church in Danville, baptizes Brandy Smith. New Horizon, which started last March, is one of 31 new Anglo congregations started in Kentucky during the past two years.

By Ken Walker  
State Correspondent

**Mayfield**—His House Ministries is less than a year old, but the congregation has registered 95 professions of faith in Christ and attracts about 325 people to Sunday worship services—with only 100 members.

Like many new churches throughout Kentucky, the atmosphere at His House is casual, the music lively and the crowd younger than in traditional congregations.

His House is one of several non-traditional church starts that were launched throughout Kentucky in the past year.

With varying degrees of success, they are seeking to connect with people who might not attend a traditional church with steeple and stained glass.

"I've talked to a lot of people who say they would never go to

such-and-such a church," said Harry Rose, pastor of New Horizon Church in Danville. "It's just a perception they have, whether it's correct or not."

Out of the 31 Anglo congregations Kentucky Baptists started in the past two years, here are the story of three seeking to make a difference in the commonwealth:

### Mayfield: His House Ministries

You won't find a Sunday school class at this new church. That's because study happens in small home groups throughout the week.

That's just one of several unusual aspects for this new church.

Offices are in an old warehouse, which is also the site of Sunday night youth group meetings. Sunday morning services are held at Graves County High School.

See *Congregations show ...*, page 6

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, February 4.

BAPTIST  
DIGEST

■ **The Southern Baptist North American Mission Board** is airing a five-part FamilyNet television series on "One Nation, Under God" that explores the state of Christianity in the United States. NAMB President Robert Reccord is hosting the series which debuted Jan. 30. It will air on FamilyNet each Friday in February at 7 p.m. and each Saturday at midnight.

■ **Al Mohler**, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, expanded his daily radio talk show to several cities across the nation effective Feb. 2. Mohler's show, formerly titled "Truth on the Life," has been renamed "The Albert Mohler Program." Salem Communications is syndicating the program which airs live daily at 5 p.m. Eastern Time from Mohler's on-campus radio studio.

■ **Carol Kaylor**, former controller of the Missouri Baptist Convention, has filed suit against the state convention, its Executive Board and Executive Director David Clippard. The lawsuit, filed Jan. 21 in St. Louis, lists three counts—libel and slander, gender discrimination and retaliation. Clippard fired Kaylor April 10, 2003, for alleged misconduct. The suit charges that Clippard "regularly degraded, demeaned and belittled Kaylor and other women." Kaylor previously filed a complaint with the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. She withdrew the EEOC action in order to file the civil suit.

## BWA leaders challenge Baptists to 'stick together'

By Ken Camp and Marv Knox  
*Texas Baptist Standard*

Dallas (ABP)—Southern Baptist Convention withdrawal from the Baptist World Alliance would mean not only the loss of one fourth of the organization's income, but the loss of a unified Baptist witness worldwide, say BWA officials.

"We belong together because we belong to Christ," BWA General Secretary Denton Lotz repeated at every opportunity during a tour of several U.S. cities.

During two days in Texas Jan. 26-27, Lotz and BWA President Billy Kim spoke to a dinner at Park Cities Baptist Church in Dallas, a luncheon at Dallas Baptist University, a news conference and staff meeting at the Baptist General Convention of Texas office building and a rally at First Baptist Church of Plano.

The pair also spoke in Atlanta, among other stops.

## Infighting creates "confusion"

Infighting among Baptists in the United States creates "confusion" among Third World Christians who do not understand denominational politics and distinctions between various Baptist groups in the United States, Kim said.

"We need to stick together," he added.

Kim and Lotz traveled with the 60-member Korean Children's Choir, representing Kim's Far East Broadcasting Company, who performed at each Texas venue.

The choir also sang at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth. Paige Patterson,

president of the seminary, is the author of the SBC study committee proposal to cut ties with the BWA.

Kim told reporters he had talked with Patterson on the phone, but they merely exchanged pleasantries. However, Kim said he invited Patterson to preach at his church, near Seoul, South Korea, and he hoped at that time to have a conversation of "more substance" regarding strained relations between Southern Baptist leaders and the BWA.

Kim acknowledged his hope that the sweet voices and smiling faces of the children would "soften the hearts" of Southern Baptist leaders and cause them to reconsider the proposed separation from BWA.

Even so, Kim and Lotz said they are unaware of any positive response from members of the SBC study committee to an invitation they and the vice presidents of the BWA issued. Leaders of the BWA urged the SBC Executive Committee to table the committee motion to withdraw funding and membership from the worldwide fellowship, and they offered to meet with SBC leaders "anytime, anywhere to discuss reconciliation."

Lotz again refuted charges of any "leftward drift" in the BWA, saying the organization affirms historic, biblical Christian doctrine. He said the term "liberal" is relative. "Russian Baptists think Southern Baptists are liberal because the women wear lipstick and makeup," he said.

Charles Wade, BGCT executive director, affirmed Texas Baptist support for the BWA at several venues during the two-day tour. Wade told

the Plano rally, "No matter what others do, we as Texas Baptists shall, until Jesus comes, be partners together with Baptists around the world, and we will support the Baptist World Alliance."

Kim called on Baptists to come together to take on a task with eternal consequences. "I believe God has called us to a job as Baptists to fulfill the Great Commission in our generation," he said.

## "Return to Scripture"

Lotz picked up that same theme, urging Baptists to move beyond labeling each other. "We've got to get over that and return to Scripture and what Paul tells us about loving one another," he urged.

"We defend religious freedom all over the world. That's what we do," Lotz said. Baptists, of all people, should be champions of religious liberty because on many occasions throughout their history they have been victims of religious persecution, he noted.

In Rwanda, the BWA brings Hutus and Tutsis—once bitter ethnic rivals who slaughtered each other by the millions in the 1990s—together for worship because they are one in Christ, he said.

In Cuba, BWA leaders contacted dictator Fidel Castro and gained permission to import 50,000 Bibles and to support the house churches where many of the 200,000 Cuban Baptists worship, he added.

The BWA also is providing similar support to Baptists in such countries as China, Poland, Nepal, Russia, Cambodia, Bulgaria, Ukraine and

Nigeria, Lotz said, adding that the BWA helped Baptists obtain 10 radio stations in Romania to proclaim the gospel.

Speaking to U.S. Baptists who think, "We're so big we don't need the BWA," Lotz told a parable from Africa about a small elephant who couldn't cross a streaming river because of the strong currents. Soon, some larger elephants noticed the plight and stood in the river to form a "bridge" out of their backs, so the smaller elephant could cross safely over.

"Baptists need to get the big elephants off the bank and into the river," he urged. "Quit fighting and drinking coffee and eating donuts and get in the river."

Kim called on Baptists in the United States not only to pray for revival in their own country, but also for unity in the worldwide Baptist fellowship.

"We love Southern Baptists, and we want to stick together," he said. "We want to pray together and reach the world together. ... Pray for us over the next two months that God somehow will turn around our situation."

Dallas Baptist University President Gary Cook, who helped arrange the BWA events in the region, urged Texas Baptists to support the worldwide organization.

"We are always going to support the BWA, even if our leaders take (the SBC) out," Cook said. "Just because people in Nashville vote to remove money they've promised doesn't mean we can't give it directly."

## Moore &amp; Scroggins appointed deans at Southern Seminary

Louisville—Russell Moore, 32, has been named dean of the school of theology and senior vice president of academic administration at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

Moore, appointed to the post by seminary president Al Mohler, succeeds former dean Daniel Akin, who recently was elected president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, in Wake Forest, N.C.

Mohler named James Scroggins, also 32, as dean of Boyce College, the seminary's undergraduate school.

"We looked all over America and sought leaders for these two positions," Mohler said, "and there was just no doubt that the right man for each was one of our own."

"I have absolute confidence that these two men have been given to us for this time and for years to come in order to make sure that Southern Seminary is always standing on the solid rock and on the cutting edge."

Moore, who previously was assistant professor of theology at Southern and executive director of the seminary's Carl F.H. Henry Institute for Evangelical Engagement, noted that "I am grateful to work alongside a president that has meant so much to me as a friend and mentor."

Moore is a graduate of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Southern Seminary. He is author of the forthcoming book,



Moore



Scroggins

## "Christ and the Kingdoms."

He also has been a contributor to Baptist Press, the SBC's news service. Moore's BP articles accusing the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of radical feminism and a CBF official of plagiarism have drawn criticism from the moderate Baptist group.

Before being named to lead Boyce, Scroggins was minister to students at Highview Baptist Church in Louisville where Mohler is a member.

"I am very excited to have come to this school as a student 10 years ago and for having been here through all the changes and all the different things that have happened here under Dr. Mohler's leadership," Scroggins said.

A graduate of Southern, Scroggins also was assistant professor of youth ministry at Boyce College. He succeeds Jerry Johnson, who has been elected president of Criswell College in Dallas.

Based on reporting by Associated Baptist Press and Baptist Press

## SBC meeting in June to feature Franklin Graham, Gaither quartet

Indianapolis (BP)—Evangelist Franklin Graham and the Gaither Vocal Band will highlight the closing session of this year's Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Indianapolis. The June 16-17 meeting will explore the theme, "Kingdom Forever."

The Wednesday evening session also will feature an overview of Southern Baptists' global missions efforts under the auspices of the International Mission Board.

"The annual convention in Indianapolis is an opportunity for Southern Baptists to experience the heart and passion of our ministry across America and around the world," said SBC President Jack Graham, pastor of Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano, Texas. "In a world facing terrorism and global unrest, we must rise to the challenge of our times."

In addition to Franklin Graham, "Kingdom Challenge" messages will be delivered by Roy Fish, longtime professor of evangelism at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas; David Jeremiah, senior pastor of Shadow Mountain Community Church in El Cajon, Calif.; and evangelist Jay Strack with the Student Leadership University in Orlando, Fla. This year's convention sermon will be preached by

Steve Gaines, pastor of First Baptist Church in Gardendale, Ala.

Online messenger registration, opened Feb. 1 at the SBC's Web site, [www.sbc.net](http://www.sbc.net). Hotel reservation information currently is posted on the Web site.

The June 14-15 Pastors' Conference preceding the SBC annual meeting will focus on the theme of "Jesus Came Preaching" with such speakers as Adrian Rogers, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in suburban Memphis, Tenn.; Bible teachers Stephen Olford and Voddie Baucham; and Mike Haley from Focus on the Family.

The Woman's Missionary Union annual meeting, focusing on the theme of "Christ Followers," also is slated June 14-15 in Indianapolis and will feature a number of missionaries with the SBC's International Mission Board and North American Mission Board.

Nine downtown hotels are within easy walking distance, with six hotels connected directly with the convention facility," said convention manager Jack Wilkerson. Shuttle services will be available to and from all airport-area hotels and from several downtown hotels outside walking distance to the Indianapolis Convention Center.

## Grant to help Campbellsville nursing program

Campbellsville—Campbellsville University expects to launch a nursing program in fall 2005 as a result of a recent federal grant.

The school will receive \$300,000 to establish an associate degree in nursing as a result of the federal Omnibus Appropriations Bill.

"Campbellsville University has shown great responsiveness to the needs of Kentuckians," Sen. Jim Bunning said. "These funds for its nursing program will provide jobs for those with a caring spirit, and care and compassion for those in need."

The money is part of \$4 million in federal funding for various health and education programs throughout Kentucky as part of the appropriations bill.

Campbellsville President Mike Carter said the program will help the school address one of the most "serious health care needs that have been identified by area hospitals and health care professionals."

"The university looks forward to working with all the hospitals in our region to help meet the growing demand of health care services over the coming years," he added.

Frank Cheatham, vice president for academic affairs at Campbellsville University, said the potential to provide an associate degree in nursing is "exciting for Campbellsville University and this region."

John Chowning, vice president for church and external relations and executive assistant to the president, said this appropriation will encourage others to provide the additional support needed to fully fund the nursing program at the university.

# Israeli musicians share faith journey

## Baptist missionaries with Kentucky ties guide couple to faith in Christ

By Trennis Henderson  
Editor

Louisville—When Esther and Yaacov Horesh describe their faith in Christ, it's a rich blend of their strong Jewish roots and the influence of Southern Baptist missionaries to Israel.

"Jesus was Jewish and the first believers were Jewish," Esther noted. "Jesus is my Messiah and this is my life."

Yaacov, the son of Holocaust survivors, candidly acknowledged, "I hated to be a Jew, but I hated also Christians because they persecuted me."

But the consistent love of missionaries serving at Israel's Baptist Village ministry complex eventually helped draw him to faith in Christ.

"Hatred and being rejected is a terrible feeling that doesn't fade away just instantly," Yaacov explained. "It's a process. Hatred can be only healed by love."

"When I came to Baptist Village, I was so overwhelmed with this warmth of being accepted, I didn't know what to do with it. ... I had no theological problems with Jesus. I had emotional problems" caused by cultural and political hurdles.

### "The love of the Lord"

"The reason we are here is because of these missionaries," Esther emphasized. "I came to know the Lord because of the love of the Lord in these people. You can do anything and everything, but you will not win a Jew to come to know the Lord unless you really have the love of the Lord in you."

The Horeshes, both professional musicians, are sharing their faith journey through music and testimony during a six-month visit to the United States. Since many of the missionaries who influenced their lives have strong Kentucky Baptist ties, Louisville is serving as the couple's home base during their first trip to the States.

Norman and Martha Lytle, former missionaries to Israel, are hosting the Horeshes.

"When you've spent half your life overseas and then you leave and come back (to the States), all of these people who have been a part of your life are not with us anymore," Norman said. "The thing that hit me is how seldom it is that we're able to introduce people who have had an impact on our lives."

Noting that "Esther and Yaacov have blessed us richly," he recalled that during their years in Israel together, "We would go to their house for Hanukkah and Passover and they would come to our home for Christmas and Easter. ... This is an opportunity for us to share this friendship with people here."

Scheduled to visit churches in several states from California to Georgia and Ohio to Texas, the Horeshes already have shared in churches in Louisville and the Williamsburg area.

Esther, who sang several years with the New Israeli Opera, performs songs ranging from classical religious pieces and Jewish synagogue music to Israeli folk songs.

Yaacov, a composer and music instructor, arranges his wife's music and accompanies her on the piano.

Affirming the privilege of sharing their faith with fellow believers, Yaacov said, "I found many times tears in my eyes as I accompanied her because it was a witness to me."

Robert Blackburn, pastor of Beechwood Baptist Church in Louisville, said his congregation enjoyed the opportunity to host the Horeshes for a recent concert.

"The people here at Beechwood absolutely loved it," he said. "It was music our people had never heard before; she sang a lot of Hebrew and Aramaic."

Esther "spoke about the Southern Baptist missionaries who worked with her," Blackburn

added. He said the couple's testimony clearly reflects "the real significance of our missionaries doing their work ... and why it is so important to pray for our missionaries."

Marty Murphey, a retired missionary to Israel, has taught music the past several years at Cumberland College in Williamsburg. She also taught music to Esther while she was a student at Baptist Village in the 1960s.

Other Kentucky-related missionaries who crossed paths with the Horeshes in Israel include Bob and Eddie Fields and Lee and Sarah Bivins who now work with cleftRock retreat center in Mount Vernon.

"It makes all of us very proud that we had something to do with these two lives," Marty said. "To see them love the Lord like they do and be willing to do anything for Him, it was a wonderful feeling that we did something right."

Jim Cordell, director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's worship/music department, extended the official invitation for the Horeshes to visit the U.S.

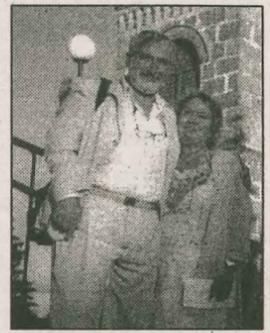
Describing their performances as a cultural experience, Cordell said, "To me, it's not only their musical contributions but that they are really products of our international missions efforts. This is an opportunity for our churches to understand more about other cultures and hopefully result in more ministry opportunities for us."

### Six-month tour of U.S.

The Horeshes, who have performed in several nations throughout Europe, look forward to continuing their U.S. tour.

After more than 35 years as a follower of Christ, Esther said, "This is what I am; this is what I love. I really wish this is what I could do from now on—just to sing and share for the Lord."

Churches interested in scheduling a concert by the Horeshes can contact Norman Lytle at (502) 895-5414 or by e-mail at norm-martha@juno.com.



**MUSIC MINISTRY** Yaacov and Esther Horesh pause after performing a concert there. The couple currently is sharing their music and testimonies in churches in Kentucky and across the nation.

## \$2 million gift endows missions chair at Cumberland College

By Mandy Webb  
Cumberland College

Williamsburg—Cumberland College will establish a chair of missions to honor former Kentucky Baptist Convention leader Franklin Owen through teaching and ministry opportunities.

The Franklin P. Owen Chair of Home and Foreign Missions was made possible because of an anonymous \$2 million donation.

Proceeds from half the endowment will fund the chair, in the school's religion and philosophy department. Income from the other \$1 million will support student activities and programs in home and international missions.

Robert Dunston, chairman of the religion and philosophy department at Cumberland College, has been selected as the first Owen



Owen

professor.

Dunston said the religion and philosophy department will add two courses to its curriculum as a result of the endowment.

Courses on missions history and missions strategy likely will include Kentucky guest speakers to share their missions experience with students.

Programs will not be limited to students and the campus, he added.

Dunston said he hopes to be able to organize conferences and speakers for events throughout Kentucky.

"Since Franklin P. Owen was so involved in Kentucky Baptist work and missions, the endowment we have should also bless all Kentucky Baptists, and encourage them to become involved in missions."

On campus, the new chair will

allow students interested in service to receive training, experience and encouragement in the field of Christian missions.

Owen, the former executive secretary for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, said he is pleased to be recognized in a way that gives others more opportunities to serve.

"I have always been a supporter of missions," he said. "Through the position I was elected to, I have worked hard to build the mission program."

Dunston said he was honored to be chosen as the first professor to occupy the new chair. "I can follow his (Owen's) example of sharing Christ's love with others here and in other nations."

Owen, 90, was born in Missouri, the son of a pastor.

He followed in his father's footsteps after receiving degrees from

Southeast Missouri State Teachers College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He served churches in Missouri, Georgia, Alabama and Kentucky.

In 1972, he became executive secretary-treasurer for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, a position now titled executive director.

During his 10-year term as executive secretary-treasurer, the Kentucky Baptist Convention's annual income increased by more than \$13.6 million.

Owen, who also wrote "Slightly Soiled Saints," retired to Lexington in 1982.

Cumberland President Jim Taylor said the school's first endowed teaching chair will make a difference in the lives of students and others. "Thanks to this transcendent gift in honor of Franklin P. Owen, lives will be changed and lives will be saved."

## WESTERN RECORDER

P.O. Box 43969  
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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**POSTMASTER:** Send address corrections to: Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253.

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## Seek one accord

After reading the articles concerning the Southern Baptist Convention and Baptist World Alliance in the last few issues of the Western Recorder, I would like to ask if the SBC is becoming like the Pharisees of the New Testament era—being self-righteous instead of God-righteous?

They have preachers who can preach wonderful sermons but their attitude is all wrong. In Matthew 23:1-3, Jesus tells the disciples to obey and follow everything they tell you to do, however do not imitate their actions.

The SBC wants to cause divisions in the BWA because they can't rule over the organization. And by starting another organization, they seem to me to want to set up a hierarchy. Jesus taught in a parable in Matthew 13:24-30 that when the servant asked the farmer if he should pull up the tares, the farmer answered, "No, unless you pull up the wheat." The wheat represented the believers and the tares the sinners, so who gives the SBC the right to destroy others' faith? Jesus said He would separate them at harvest time—the end of the world.

In Mark 9:38-41, John the beloved disciple tells Jesus that he saw a man casting out demons in Jesus' name but told him to stop because he did not belong to his group. Jesus told John, "Do not try to stop him because he who performs a miracle in my name will not soon afterwards be able to speak evil about me."

1 John 4:9 says, "And God showed His love for us by sending His only begotten Son into the world, so that we have life through Him."

God wants all of His children to be in one accord and to love one another as He loves us. We certainly cannot do this by causing strife in the body of Christ.

R.J. Teems  
Salt Lick

## A bastion for truth

I attended Southern Baptist Theological Seminary from 1995-1997 when I received my degree. It was during the time that the "great turnover" of professors took place.

As a student, I found myself bothered by listening to professors who constantly treated the Scriptures as another piece of literature containing possible errors. "Did Moses really write the Pentateuch?" "Did Isaiah really write the book that bears his name, or did two, three, maybe four other 'Isaiahs' write it?"

Many of my colleagues grew discouraged and questioned whether the Bible was as reliable as they might have thought. "After all," they said, "my professor showed us many errors in it. How can I trust this book?"

Fast forward to August 2001. How different was the atmosphere! Many of those previous professors had moved on to other places. In their place were professors who (gasp) took the Scriptures as the Word of God. If there was a place in the Scriptures that did not make sense to them, it was our human fallibility rather than the Scriptures. The glory of God and the sufficiency of Scripture is first and foremost.

There is a reason why Baptists in the pews have voted every single year since 1979 to have a conservative president.

Blame Patterson and Pressler and Rogers all you want—the Baptists have voted and spoken. Praise God they have.

Thank you, Dr. Mohler, for turning Southern Seminary into a bastion for the truth, for the Word and for God's glory.

Matt Perry  
Lexington

## Baptists are 'family'

The Baptist World Alliance congress, held in Miami, Fla., in 1965, impressed an 8-year-old boy named David Hinson. Taken by my preacher father to this meeting of world Baptists, I still remember walking among persons who looked, dressed and talked differently from me. But I did remember one thing, and nobody had to tell me, we were all a "family of Baptists" and "one in Christ Jesus."

I will not engage in a war of words with those who choose to abandon this international fellowship of Baptists whose very purpose is to "unite Baptists throughout the world ... to create and express a Baptist world consciousness" (Torbet, "A History of the Baptists," page 168).

Kentucky Baptists—and I am one—must not blindly follow the "errant" path toward discrimination by age, unsubstantiated charges toward fellow Christians and the unnecessary destruction to an organization that cares about the poor in countries where Baptists need help to survive.

No, not all Baptists are the same—never have been, never will be. Let us not allow Christ to be disappointed in our response to support the Baptist World Alliance. They need us, and we need them. Besides, we're "family!"

David K. Hinson  
Frankfort

## What are you thinking?

The Western Recorder considers letters on any subject for publication, provided they don't make a personal attack. The maximum length for a letter is 300 words. Submit by mail, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253; fax, (502) 244-6474; or e-mail, wesrec@earthlink.net.

## Beginning 7th year serving Kentucky Baptists

The past six years have been very gratifying for my wife, Kay, and me in serving for Kentucky Baptists. We consider it a special privilege to serve our Lord by serving Kentucky Baptists.

It has been special because Kentucky Baptists are a missionary people who want to work together. That has been demonstrated by strong support of missions in Kentucky, North America and internationally. Although financial support of Cooperative Program Missions plateaued during the economic downturn, Kentucky Baptists continued to be faithful. I say "thank you" to all Kentucky Baptists on behalf of our Kentucky Baptist Convention institutions and agencies, KBC Mission Board ministries, more than 10,500 North American Mission Board and International Mission Board missionaries, and 13,000 seminary students.

Kentucky Baptists have demonstrated that they want to work together by adopting a very special Baptist Faith and Message report

and by conducting convention business in a Christian spirit. Frequently I hear people say gratefully we are to be in the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Kentucky Baptists have demonstrated their desire to work together by adopting a mission statement that is focused on reaching and developing people. It reads: "The mission of the Kentucky Baptist Convention is to assist KBC churches and ministries and associations in connecting all people to Jesus Christ."

The mission statement is a part of the Mission Study Report adopted last May by the KBC Mission Board. That report has led to the establishment of the Kentucky Baptists Connect emphasis that will be launched at this year's annual meeting.

There are six objectives and some big goals in the Kentucky Baptists Connect emphasis to give the KBC staff direction in working with the associations and churches. I am excited about the future because these objectives and goals are designed

PARTNERS  
IN  
THE MISSION

Bill Mackey

to strengthen the churches. If the churches are not strong and growing, Kentucky Baptists will not be able to support for very long a growing missions strategy locally and around the world as commanded by Jesus Christ.

One of the objectives establishes a strong base for how the KBC institutions and agencies and Kentucky Baptists can connect in mutually effective and fruitful ministries.

I am also grateful that as part of the plan, Kentucky Baptists will have four highly trained church development strategists who will be assisting an associational or church leader every working day.

We are blessed to have such a capable and committed KBC staff with whom to work. The staff has begun the process of developing strategies and organizing into strategic workgroups.

A part of the strategic plans will be a strong five-year emphasis. Please join with me in a concert of prayer for pastors and church members, as well as the KBC staff as we seek to walk by faith into the future that God has designed.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

## STEWARDSHIP

## Consider specific steps to alleviate consumer debt

By Doug Strader

Consumer debt has become a huge problem for many Americans. This is especially true at this time of the year, because many people purchase credit cards during the Christmas season, which results in the bills coming due in January and February.

What is a person to do? Many times we feel trapped into using credit to provide gifts for our family and friends. The advertising world and the credit card companies make it very easy for the American public to go into debt. But they fail to provide a disclaimer that when we go into debt, they expect us to pay for our spending—and it almost always is not as easy to pay the debt as it is to make the debt.

What can you do? There are no easy answers or quick solutions, but there are some steps you can take to help alleviate the situation:

- The first thing to do is to pray and seek God's guidance and direction.

- If you do not already give God a tithe (10 percent) of your income, begin immediately to move toward that goal.

- If you are married, have a family time to talk about the financial situation. Seek to get the entire family on board with a plan to cut spending and be more responsible for all the things God has given you.

- Set up a family budget. It does not need to be elaborate, but it needs to be workable—one that meets the needs of your family. It likely will take you a few months to make it work so rigidly that you become discouraged and scrap it after a few weeks or months. A good budget is not as restrictive as it is liberating. It will feel good to have money to take care of expenses as they come due.

- Work out a plan to pay off all your credit card debts as soon as possible. Contact the credit card companies and let them know of your plans. You can ask if they will be willing to forgive some of your accumulated interest, or to stop charging interest while you pay off the debt.

- Cut up your credit cards and refuse to use them to go into debt again.

The most important thing you can do now is to develop a plan and work the plan as you seek God's guidance.

Doug Strader, retired director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's stewardship department, is pastor of Farmdale Baptist Church in Louisville



## Explore creative possibilities for ministry to senior adults

**Q: Our church is interested in assessing older adult ministry possibilities. What are a few good beginning points to consider?**

There are many ways of introducing models of older adult ministry, and the literature about issues related to aging is growing rapidly. Consider the following framework for developing meaningful ministry to older adults:

**Physical.** The church should be concerned with the connections of body, mind and spirit. It is biblical. One place to begin is with the physical plant of the church. What are the barriers to participation? Take a tour of the church and make a list of booby-traps—poor lighting, unmarked steps, lack of rails, accessible bathrooms, covered entrances, drafts, extreme heat and cold, time of events. These can be physical barriers to participation.

■ **Exercise programs.** Many people who tend to be couch potatoes might benefit greatly from doing an exercise program together. A simple walking program with friends could be offered.

■ **"Handyman" programs.** Enlist volunteers willing to make minor repairs in the homes of older people who need assistance. As we age or experience limitations at any age, installing railings or ramps can be an important addition to a household. A person's ability to function safely and remain confident within the home often depends on safety factors.

■ **Food ministry.** Organize individuals willing to prepare food for people in need. Add delivery service, a smile and a brief visit and the benefits are endless. Find out about any dietary limitations before making and delivering food.

■ **Mental.** Are older adults being challenged to use their minds and be creative? Take stock of the educational opportunities in your church and community. Provide opportunities for meaningful lifelong learning.

■ **Bible study.** Don't assume all senior adults have the same background or skill in studying God's Word. Provide learning opportunities for the beginner as well as for the seasoned student of the Bible.

■ **Current events.** Many older adults are very interested in staying informed about news and other current events. Consider providing opportunities for studying current events in adult education classes. Book clubs also are good for both mental stimulation and social interaction.

■ **Financial savvy.** Many older adults find their income levels change and adjustments to lifestyle need to be made. Enlist a financial guru whose help might make a huge difference to a person's level of confidence in handling financial affairs. Another option is providing help with preparing taxes.

■ **Long-range planning.** Invite your minister, an attorney and a physician to lead a seminar addressing death and dying issues, ethical challenges, legal protection and planning. This can be done in an upbeat way that provides information needed by those who may be placed in a future care-giving role.

■ **Social.** Social interaction is important to individuals' well-being. We are not intended to be independent, but interdependent. This is the community of faith at its best, engaged in corporate worship and fellowship, then serving in the world.

■ **Maintain connections.** Many people move after retirement, but aren't comfortable making new friends. Providing informal events, such as a brunch at an area restaurant can be an effective way to involve people who have participated in other activities.

■ **Provide variety.** Possible social options include establishing fellowship groups; planning senior adult camps, retreats or travel; promoting participation in associational or statewide retreats; hosting a writers' workshop or a golf or tennis outing; or organizing a group to pray for caregivers.—Jon Rainbow

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 Emmanuel 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@sbs.edu.

Send questions for Family Forum to Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253 or e-mail wesrec@earthlink.net.



## Will Kentucky Baptists support BWA?

The Southern Baptist Convention's proposed split with the Baptist World Alliance continues to dominate denominational news these days. Some grassroots Baptists unfamiliar with the work of BWA might wonder what all the fuss is.

The fact is that BWA has been a stellar example of international Baptist cooperation and fellowship for nearly a century. That is particularly significant as BWA officials seek to intervene with government leaders on behalf of Baptists around the world on such vital issues as human rights and religious freedom.

While BWA certainly would be negatively impacted by losing the SBC's financial support and numerical clout, the loss would be even greater for the SBC. As SBC leaders tighten the circle of acceptable ministry partners, Southern Baptists as a whole will lose the joy and blessings of involvement in the global Baptist family.

Those who dismiss the SBC's partnership with BWA as outdated and unnecessary apparently fail to grasp the incredible spiritual benefits of working alongside and learning from fellow Baptists serving in diverse cultural settings.

Despite an ongoing outcry from respected international Baptist leaders, the SBC Executive Committee is expected to take action later this month on the SBC proposal to cut ties to BWA. If the pattern of recent history holds true, whatever the Executive Committee recommends will be overwhelmingly adopted by SBC messengers in June.

Regardless of the SBC's decision, the more important question for Kentucky Baptists is how the state convention and local churches choose to respond. It's important to remember that Southern Baptists' denominational structure is not hierarchical. Each individual Baptist, local church, association and state convention has the right to decide whether to support the ministry of BWA.

The Kentucky Baptist Convention's response to recent SBC actions has been mixed, at best. When the SBC revised its Baptist Faith and Message statement in 2000, Kentucky Baptists opted to authorize their own study of the issue. The result was a 2001 report adopted by KBC messengers that affirmed the Bible

"as the basis of all our faith and practice." The report also acknowledged the value of various faith statements, including the 1925, 1963 and 2000 versions of the Baptist Faith and Message.

Last year, however, when the Southern Baptist International Mission Board dismissed several missionaries who refused to pledge allegiance specifically to the 2000 BF&M, the KBC remained silent.

This time around, it's a matter of deciding whether to stand with the BWA and support its worldwide ministry efforts or follow the SBC's anticipated action and sever ties to BWA.

Woman's Missionary Union leaders already have taken a courageous stand in support of BWA. "As members of the body of Christ, we need ... to stand together in one accord in a strong and bold witness to a lost world," declared national WMU Executive Director Wanda Lee.

Joy Bolton, executive director of Kentucky WMU, said the women's mission organization will continue to cooperate with the BWA women's department "because it is the right thing to do."

What about the KBC as a whole? Will the KBC Mission Board and other convention leaders take an official stand on behalf of BWA—including financial support? As the KBC pursues "connecting all people to Jesus Christ," there are few better ways to do so than in cooperation with BWA member bodies around the world.

In a recent Baptist Forum letter, Joe Phelps, pastor of Highland Baptist Church in Louisville, suggested that the KBC allocate to BWA a half percent of the 36 percent of Cooperative Program gifts the state convention currently forwards to the SBC.

The beauty of Phelps' suggestion is that the KBC could maintain the 64 percent of CP funds used for Kentucky Baptist ministries, forward 35.5 percent to the SBC and still make a significant financial contribution to the work of BWA.

I'm sure there are other creative solutions out there as well. The key is to determine whether Kentucky Baptists are committed to preserving our historic ties to our brothers and sisters in Baptist World Alliance. If so, it's time to put our money where our hearts are.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

## What are you going to do now?

By David Winfrey

Everybody's talking about Janet Jackson and Justin Timberlake's R-rated skin show during Sunday's Super Bowl halftime.

But talk is as cheap as the moment they shared in front of millions of viewers.

The real question is, "What are you going to do about it?"

On a night when advertisers spent \$2.25 million for 30 seconds trying to get you to remember their products, people instead are talking about halftime and whether MTV—which produced the show—or the NFL knew what was coming.

But those questions are misguided.

The fact is MTV's halftime show was nothing more than the logical extension of the videos and programming that company has been beaming into our homes for a long time.

You won't hear me lamenting how this signals the end of the Christian age. I'm not going to ask what's happening to our society.

The MTV halftime show simply punctuates this fact: Sinners sin.

And if you and I let MTV and other such media determine what sets the bounds for acceptable behavior, then they will lead us (and our chil-

dren) in a direction that winks at public indecency and desensitizes us to a variety of other things that don't please God.

At the same time, we must remember that TV executives and even the entertainers in question aren't the enemy. Satan is.

But here's the big question: What are you going to do about it?

Like many of you, I'm tempted to throw up my hands and admit powerlessness against a faceless media conglomerate that appears bent on feeding us a steady diet of inappropriate content.

But let me outline three things I'm going to do and ask that you consider doing the same.

First, let's start with CBS. As carrier of the halftime show, they have ultimate responsibility for what they brought into our living rooms Sunday night.

This week I'm mailing a letter to Leslie Moonves, president and CEO of CBS. His address is:

Leslie Moonves, President & CEO  
CBS Television  
51 West 52nd Street  
New York, NY 10019

In a polite way, I'm going to object to the halftime show, express a hope for better responsibility by CBS in the future and ask what actions



JUSTIN & JANET Their halftime show set viewers abuzz. (RNS/Reuters photo)

CBS will take to prevent this type of incident from happening again.

I could have simply called the company—at (212) 975-5005. But I figure they'll have enough people screaming at them. A toned-down letter asking for a response might make a better impression.

Second, I'm going to pray for Janet and Justin. They need the power of Jesus in their lives as much as you, me. Sometimes we forget that.

Lastly, I'm going to remove MTV (and a few other channels) from my house.

My VCR, and probably yours too, can eliminate channels that I don't want to watch. As I scan the dial, they simply won't be there to distract me. Out of sight, out of mind.

Which is more than I can say for a particular vocalist's body parts.

David Winfrey is news director for the Western Recorder

## Congregations show new models for Kentucky churches



**WAL-MART WORSHIP**  
Richie Snellen, praise and worship leader for New Horizon Church in Danville, plays at the local Wal-Mart during an outreach with the Solid Rock strength team. Pastor Harry Rose said, "We fill a void that isn't being filled."

Continued from page 1

"I'm a big believer in different strokes for different folks," lead pastor Chad Lamb said. "The more hooks you have in the water, the more fish you're going to catch."

Unlike many new churches that go through a year-long formation, this one only had several weeks of organizational meetings before its first service on May 18, 2003.

Its impetus came from a summer-long revival that sprang up in Mayfield in late spring of 2000.

The revival originated with a joint worship service between Enon Baptist Church, where Lamb was pastor, and Sedalia Baptist Church, led by Tim Allred. Allred is now the other pastor on His House's six-member ministry team.

"It's been burning in my heart and Tim's ever since the crusade," said Lamb, who previously was an associate pastor at Trace Creek Baptist Church for two years. "The power of God fell, and we knew we had to do something.

"Someone asked me what I thought would be the result of the crusade and I said, 'People are going to be hungry for what they found here and they're going to be disappointed,'" he recalled.

Existing churches have laid a good foundation for reaching those who don't Christ, Lamb said. But it takes more, he added, pointing to demographic studies showing two-thirds of the 38,000 people in Graves County don't attend church.

Ironically, surveys of attendees at His House services show nearly two-thirds come from non-church backgrounds.

In addition to contemporary worship, staff members get involved in the community. Youth pastor Paul Murphy is chaplain for the high school football team and Lamb is the basketball team chaplain. Allred occasionally does substitute teaching.

Lamb and Allred also spend time visiting local schools to develop relationships with students.

"We're trying to do things nobody else is doing," Lamb said. "We want to take the gospel out, not just be a 'come and see' type of church."

Although His House obtained a loan last August to purchase a 30-acre site on a new bypass road into Mayfield, finances are still a challenge.

The lead pastor said the fledgling congregation needs more equipment.

The church also looks forward to moving into its own building. Lamb noted that logistics are a problem when operating on someone else's schedule.

### Danville: New Horizon

Space is a problem for another church that held its first worship service last March in a community theater in downtown Danville.

About 20 people showed up for the inaugural service of New Horizon Church. But with steady growth, Pastor Harry Rose said turnouts now average 75 people in a 100-seat facility.

Children's church has to meet in the hallway, while Sunday afternoon and evening small groups meet in homes. So do children's mission groups on Wednesday nights, while its college ministry gathers on the campus of Centre College.

Finances are tight, too. Weekly offerings average just \$300, although Rose's salary and insurance are being paid by the church's sponsor, Hope Community Church in Lawrenceburg.

But the lack of solid finances might be a blessing, Rose noted.

"Several people sent us \$1,000 and one person sent us \$5,000," said Rose, a former associate pastor at Hope Community. "That's kept us floating. The great thing is watching how God provides."

Rose, who completed his degree at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville last December, has learned that starting churches calls for flexibility.

After a year of community surveys and demographic studies, he tried to initiate several home Bible studies. While several people indicated interest, nobody came.

Finally, Rose and the core group prayed. They decided that if the church was going to launch, they had to schedule a service.

Featuring "edgy" music and a pastor who preaches in a polo shirt and blue jeans, the church attracts many young adults and those of modest economic means.

People are responding to the non-traditional services, with 11 converts and nine baptisms during its first 10 months.

Although searching for a larger facility, Rose doesn't envision moving to a traditional setting. He said it is more important to be out in the community, reaching people conventional churches don't.

"This is kind of an option," Rose said. "The type of church we have is

definitely not for everyone. We fill a void that isn't being filled."

### Mount Sterling: Living Water

Making a good impression is the primary task for a church planter in Mount Sterling. Grant Cannoy, a native of Ashland, moved to central Kentucky last July to establish Living Water Community Church.

It currently involves 15 to 20 people meeting on Wednesday nights at McNabb Middle School, where Cannoy's wife, Michelle, is a special education teacher.

To get involved in the community, Cannoy has been a volunteer tutor at an elementary school and plans to start regular visitation to a nursing home and other sites.

"Right now we're trying to get to know the community and let them know we love them," Cannoy said. "The people who seem interested

are excited about (the church) because the people we've been sharing with are not churched."

Cannoy receives partial support from the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board and the Kentucky Baptist Convention. To supplement that income, he serves as missions pastor with his home church, Fairview Baptist in Ashland.

Although that calls for a three-hour commute twice a week, the new pastor said the tasks at Fairview are good training for Living Water.

While the new worship service in mid-December, Cannoy hasn't set a date for starting weekly Sunday services. His previous experience showed him the importance of waiting until everything is in place.

"Right now we're praying hard and know if God doesn't do it, it won't get done," he said.



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### Why don't more people give via bequests?

#### Donations in wills can overcome many concerns

The most common form of legacy giving is a gift by will, with the largest bequests typically coming from the residue of an estate. Recently only 8 percent of probated estates included a provision for a charitable cause. Interestingly enough, 92 percent of those estates were exempt from federal estate tax. Thus, the tax deductibility of their charitable bequests was not the motivation for their charitable giving at death, and none of these decedents had significant wealth.

Like many people, you might be worried about dying too soon. Perhaps you have not made a substantial gift during life for fear you might die without fulfilling your financial responsibilities to yourself and to loved ones. So, why not make that substantial gift via a bequest in your will?

You might be concerned about living too long and outliving your financial resources, especially during these times of low interest rates and fluctuations in the equity markets. By including charitable provisions in your will

for your church and/or other Baptist causes, you can defer that gift until your death, and therefore, have access to all of your financial resources during your lifetime.

You may be anxious about the possibility of an illness or economic emergency. With the cost of healthcare rising, you may feel the need to preserve your funds for a potential illness. Or, you may feel some job insecurity for which you might need funds temporarily. A bequest in your will allows you to retain all of your funds in the event of a temporary illness or an economic emergency, like the loss of a job.

Finally, you might be worried about the possibility of a long-term disability. Once again, a gift by bequest in your will takes into consideration this kind of contingency.

Call Laurie Valentine toll-free for assistance in a plan that assures a gift to your favorite Baptist causes is made only at your death and with appropriate provisions for your loved ones.

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

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Barry Allen



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### Kudzu



Doug Marlette

### For Heaven's Sake



Mike Morgan

### Bible Crosswords

Joyce Handzo

#### Across

- 1 "Take up thy \_\_\_ and walk" (John 5:8)
- 3 "They were \_\_\_ asunder" (Hebrews 11:37)
- 6 "Casting all your \_\_\_ upon him" (1 Peter 5:7)
- 9 "A continual dropping in a very \_\_\_ day and a contentious woman are alike" (Proverbs 27:15)
- 11 Preposition
- 12 Underwriters Laboratories, abbr.
- 13 "Joshua sent men from Jericho to \_\_\_" (Joshua 7:2)
- 15 A wager
- 16 "God made them male and \_\_\_" (Mark 10:6)
- 18 South Dakota, abbr.
- 19 "My foot standeth in an \_\_\_ place" (Psalm 26:12)
- 21 The desert area in southern Israel
- 22 "Thou shalt make a \_\_\_ of pure gold" (Exodus 28:36)
- 24 Associated Press, abbr.
- 26 Ripped
- 27 "Touch the \_\_\_ of his garment" (Matthew 14:36)
- 28 "The \_\_\_ of the land is gone" (Isaiah 24:11)
- 30 Tin, chem. symbol
- 31 "They found a plain in the land of \_\_\_" (Genesis 11:2)
- 34 "The Lord said unto Moses in \_\_\_" (Exodus 4:19)
- 36 A different spelling of Jehovah
- 38 Old covenant writings, abbr.
- 39 To ooze gently
- 41 A stringed musical instrument
- 43 "Will they not say that ye are \_\_\_?" (1 Corinthians 14:23)
- 45 A religious service held in late afternoon

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- 47 "One \_\_\_ contained forty baths" (1 Kings 7:38)
- 49 "Go thee one way \_\_\_ other" (Ezekiel 21:16)
- 50 Electrical engineer, abbr.
- 51 The top of a hill or wave
- 52 "Prepare ye the \_\_\_ of the Lord" (Matthew 3:3)
- 53 "With God \_\_\_ things are possible" (Mark 10:27)
- 54 "Till a \_\_\_ strike through his liver" (Proverbs 7:23)

- 14 "An \_\_\_ soul shall suffer hunger" (Proverbs 19:15)
- 17 "They would have repented long \_\_\_" (Matthew 11:21)
- 20 "He went into a city called \_\_\_" (Luke 7:11)
- 23 "I \_\_\_ Alpha and Omega" (Revelation 22:13)
- 25 "We made our \_\_\_ unto our God" (Nehemiah 4:9)
- 28 "Bring me a \_\_\_" (2 Kings 3:15)
- 29 "They set a \_\_\_" (Jeremiah 5:26)
- 31 Exercises to strengthen stomach muscles
- 32 "He saith among the trumpets, \_\_\_" (Job 39:25)
- 33 Compass point, abbr.
- 35 "Give not that which is holy unto the \_\_\_" (Matthew 7:6)
- 37 "Abraham said unto his \_\_\_ servant" (Genesis 24:2)
- 40 A stand for supporting a painting
- 42 That is, Lat. abbr.
- 43 Naomi's new name for herself (Ruth 1:20)
- 44 To declare in a positive manner
- 45 "Let me go and pay my \_\_\_" (2 Samuel 15:7)
- 46 A period of time
- 47 Liquid crystal, diode, abbr.
- 48 Opposite of left, abbr.

#### Last week's solution

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## IMB resources teach about AIDS' impact and ministries

By Manda Roten  
SBC International Mission Board

Lusaka, Zambia (BP)—Death and suffering are everyday occurrences for Southern Baptist missionary Troy Lewis.

Lewis moved to Lusaka, Zambia, last year with his wife, Tracey, and their two young sons to work as an AIDS/HIV program developer.

"You look at the number of these people and reaching them seems an insurmountable task," he says. "We don't have enough missionaries here to reach them. There's just an incredible need."

More than 60 million people have been infected with the AIDS/HIV virus since the epidemic began two decades ago.

In 2002 and 2003, it claimed an estimated 2.7 million to 3 million lives each year. In sub-Saharan Africa, the epidemic is killing more than 6,000 people every day.

Those who are suffering and will never hear about Christ weigh the most on Lewis' heart.

"I hurt for all those people who we haven't reached, the ones who we haven't touched with the love of Christ," he says. "Seeing (the) children is really what drives me. It's what energizes me and pushes me to do more, to pray more and to seek the Lord more."

Baptists have been behind on their response to the AIDS crisis, Lewis says.

"We as Christians talk about the need to start churches," he says, "but if we don't do something about HIV/AIDS, we're not going to

have anyone to go to the churches we start."

"When people accept Christ as their Savior and Christ changes their life, this will change that person and, therefore, their community," says Mike Howard, an IMB worker in Zambia.

The Southern Baptist International Mission Board has developed resources to help educate Christians about the spiritual and physical impacts of the worldwide AIDS crisis and to suggest ways Baptists can make a difference.

**Web site.** A new Web site at [www.imb.org/AIDS](http://www.imb.org/AIDS) is a comprehensive resource on AIDS' global reach and how a church or individual can make a difference.

The site includes ways Southern Baptists can respond to the AIDS pandemic—through prayers, gifts and service.

**Video.** The video "AIDS: Steal, Kill and Destroy" tells a story about combating the AIDS/HIV crisis that people won't hear in the secular media.

Viewers learn how the True Love Waits abstinence program lowered Uganda's infection rate by 25 percent. For more information call, (800) 999-3113.

**Online magazine.** TConline—"theCOMMISSION" magazine online—gives readers an in-depth setting to explore the AIDS issue.

"The urgency of AIDS"—<http://tconline.org/stories/500697.html>—helps readers learn about ministering in crisis, AIDS in Zambia, the life of an AIDS orphan and more.



**MINISTRY** Southern Baptist missionary Troy Lewis visits House of Moses, a facility in Zambia that cares for infants whose parents are infected with AIDS/HIV and abandoned the children. (IMB photo by Warren Johnson)

## Saving 'for a rainy day'

### Widow's well-worn envelopes bring a smile as we remember her generosity

Some time ago I experienced one of God's special blessings. I have thought of that day often, and I smile each time I recount the experience.

For over a century, Oneida has been blessed with a multitude of wonderful friends. Our history is rich with stories of godly men and women who have supported this ministry. Some of the financial gifts have been large and others small.

Several years ago, I wrote about a faithful friend who sends two quarters every Christmas. The first time I signed a letter of appreciation to this dear friend, I was not as thankful as I should have been. I have long since gotten over any emotions about the smaller gifts God provides. Whether the gift is 50 cents or \$50,000, God has given me a grateful heart.

One day I received a call from a dear friend of this ministry. For many years she had sent a monthly gift that was extremely generous considering her financial background. She was the widow of a coal miner from Harlan County. My friend asked if I would be in my office on a certain date. Not being able to make the four-hour drive to our campus, she depends on two daughters and their husbands to drive her.

When they arrived, her severely stooped, nearly 90-year-old body was concealed behind a large smile. She immediately placed her purse on my desk and pulled out an assortment of old, faded envelopes. She told me that she and her now deceased husband had been putting a little money aside from time to time "for a rainy day"

beginning back in the '60s.

Smiling, she said, "You know, I have never had a rainy day and I am getting too old to have one now. So I would like to give this to the school." It appeared that there may have been a dozen or so well-worn envelopes bound by a rubber band.

She said as she often had before, "You know I love these children and I did not have a mom and dad growing up. I want you to use this to help some of the boys and girls here at Oneida." I put the envelopes in my drawer and spent the next two hours with her and her family. After they left I took the envelopes to the business office.

Later that day I was asked by one of our business office staff if I knew how much money was in the envelopes. I replied, "No." With a smile she said, "Can you believe \$31,000!"

This dear saint had given our school other large gifts but nothing like this. Money that she and her husband had been saving over a lifetime "for a rainy day" was now being entrusted to our stewardship.

I keep that stack of envelopes in my office where I see it every day. Years after I cease to serve as the president of this school, I will be blessed each time I see these envelopes and remember the wonderful people—some I have met and some I never will meet—who make our work possible.

W.F. Underwood is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, Box 67, Oneida, KY 40972; [www.oneidaschool.org](http://www.oneidaschool.org); e-mail: [president@oneidaschool.org](mailto:president@oneidaschool.org)



W.F. Underwood

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## Valentine Dinner

with Harold Ivan Smith  
February 14

You are invited to Immanuel Baptist Church on Saturday, February 14, at 6:30pm for a Valentine dinner (doors open at 6pm).

Harold Ivan Smith will present "One Is A Whole Number."

**Dinner will be held in Fellowship Hall.**

**Tickets** are \$15 each and can be purchased at the door.

**Dress** is coat and tie.

**Questions?** Contact James Stillwell at 859-266-3174.

Immanuel Baptist Church, 3100 Tates Creek Road, Lexington, KY 40502  
859-266-3174 / [www.ibr-lex.org](http://www.ibr-lex.org)

## Mitchell missions endowment established

### The Lord enabled her and she made the decision

On Jan. 14 one of Clear Creek's best friends, Claudia Mitchell, gained victory over death.

Her husband, Billy, retired in 1978 as director of the interfaith witness department of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. Prior to that, they served churches in Indiana and Illinois. Rev. Mitchell died in 1994.

When I was pastor at First Baptist Church of Murray, Mrs. Mitchell was the featured speaker for a home missions week emphasis. I still remember her sensitivity to people who didn't think a woman should speak on Sunday morning from the pulpit. She insisted on a speaker's stand and spoke from the side.

For 15 years Mrs. Mitchell taught children at Glorieta and Ridgecrest Assembly mission weeks. Each year she invited President D.M. Aldridge to speak about Clear Creek.

After her husband's death, Mrs. Mitchell moved to Louisville and joined Beechwood Baptist Church. In 1998, she gave \$50,000 in bonds to establish a life annuity, with the proceeds to fund the William B. and Claudia Mitchell Home Missions Endowment.

Since 1998 she received a guaranteed 8 percent from the annuity—an excellent return during a time when certificates dropped below 1 percent. At her death the market value of the fund was \$43,000; that principal will now grow.

The Mitchell Home Missions Endowment will help students, faculty and staff go on short-term mission trips, support faculty who teach missions, underwrite campus mission fairs, provide missionary speakers and missions literature.

Mrs. Mitchell, an honorary chair of the Beyond 2001 Friends Campaign, was born in Horse Cave and was a graduate of Western Kentucky University. Billy Mitchell was born in Louisville. My visits with her were always a spiritual encouragement. "Billy would be pleased about this endowment; he loved Clear Creek," she said in 1998. "I'm so thankful the Lord enables me to help and hope others will support the school."

Billy and Claudia Mitchell's heart for home missions will help us until Jesus comes.

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

### CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

# Astronaut widows' grief

*Duo describe how faith got them through first year*

By Bonnie Pritchett  
Baptist Press

Houston (BP)—It has been the most horrific year of their lives, and yet, they say they have not grieved as ones who have no hope.

Theirs has been a public grief after the tragedy that took the lives of their husbands on Feb. 1, 2003, and left a mark on millions of people around the world.

The loss of the Space Shuttle Columbia—just 16 minutes from touchdown in Florida after a 16-day mission in space—gave Evelyn Husband and Sandy Anderson a global platform for spreading the gospel.

It is not a platform they ascended voluntarily. But they said they are determined to honor the memories of their husbands and set an example for their children by proclaiming the faith in Jesus Christ their husbands shared.

During a tribute Jan. 25 to the lives and testimonies of Columbia Shuttle Commander Rick Husband and Payload Commander Mike Anderson, the wives of the two astronauts testified of God's provision during the past year.

Grace Community Church, where the Husband and Anderson families attend, hosted the memorial concert featuring musician Steve Green and the church choir.

"It has been such a blessing to celebrate Mike's and Rick's lives," Husband told the crowd. "We have grieved so horribly, but not without hope."

"It's (God's) strength that gives us the power to stand," Anderson added. "He gives us a future and a hope."

Anderson said she was so proud



**GIVING TESTIMONY** Evelyn Husband (left) and Sandy Anderson spoke recently about how God has provided for them during the past year. They lost their husbands when the Space Shuttle Columbia broke apart Feb. 1, 2003. (BP photo by Bonnie Pritchett)

that both men were Christians, that they had answered life's deepest question of who Jesus is. Noting the uncertainty of life and its end, she said, "It doesn't matter how many days we have. It's the content of our days."

## Meeting the media

During a news conference prior to the concert, Anderson and Husband injected their faith into questions they answered for the Houston media.

When asked how they have dealt with their losses, Husband said, "It's been the most difficult year I've ever been through, ... (but) in the midst of absolute anguish you can have joy" because of faith in Jesus.

What has been painful, Husband said, is thinking of "all of the lasts"—the last prayers with Rick or the last time he came through the door of their home.

Anderson said time helps in the healing process, but ultimately, "What helps the most is my relationship with my Lord Jesus Christ." Anderson added she appreciated the

support and prayers from the community.

Asked about their children (Laura, 13, and Matthew Husband, 8, and Kaycee, 10, and Sydney Anderson, 12), Husband laughed and said she believes the kids are dealing with the situation better than the two mothers.

Anderson laughed when asked if she and Husband saw their spouses as "larger than life" as the world does with heroes. "He was just a real person. ... He was a very kind man. He was a good dad, a good husband. I miss talking to him."

Anderson said she misses all the things about him as a husband.

## Praying to be a witness

It was Anderson's husband, Mike, who, less than two weeks before the launch, had a specific prayer request for his church family. Husband recorded the statement in her book, "High Calling," released Jan. 13.

"Rick and I have prayed for a successful mission," Mike Anderson said, "but also that somehow God would allow everyone to see our faith in Him. We'd like to ask for your prayers as we get ready to go on this 16-day mission. And not only prayers for a safe flight but also that in some small way we can use this platform to really let people know what we believe and let God's message get out there."

Both husbands earlier had instructed that their funerals include references to Jesus.

"I do believe," she said, "that God has had His hand in this. God did not have an off day" on Feb. 1, 2003.

Husband said she could talk for hours and still not tell of all the ways God has worked in the lives of people since the Columbia disaster.

Whenever she feels the urge for a pity party, Husband said, "I'm encouraged by a life that has been touched."

Lives continued to be touched during the Sunday evening memorial concert. During a video showing Rick Husband singing at a church Easter production, the live choir on stage joined their voices with their former choir member as he sang, "Were It Not for Grace."

Husband told vocalist Steve Green, an acquaintance of Rick Husband, that her husband astronaut had listened to Green's music while on the Columbia mission. Among

## Losing 'politeness with God'

HOUSTON (BP)—As the one-year anniversary of the Space Shuttle Columbia disaster approaches, Evelyn Husband, wife of shuttle commander Rick Husband, has written a book about the astronaut's faith in God.

Titled "High Calling," the book was released by Thomas Nelson Jan. 13.

### Why did you write High Calling?

When I was first asked to write High Calling, my reaction was that I would never write a book. But, after further thought and prayer, I realized what a wonderful gift this could be to my children—a permanent record of who their father was, not only as an astronaut, but as a godly man who had his priorities straight and who loved his family dearly. It also gave me an opportunity to share publicly what God has taught me and my family privately—that you can have hope in the midst of deep despair. People have asked me if writing the book has been therapeutic and my answer is, "No, it has not helped me through the grieving process. It has been a very difficult thing to do." However, as He promised, God has been with me every step of the way.

### What do you hope people learn from your story and message?

I hope people will find numerous truths in High Calling, including the truth that God is ready, willing and able to walk us through any crises that life may present publicly or privately. I also hope men will be encouraged to set priorities as Rick did, placing God first, family second and career third. Rick made these choices, and we will benefit from that for the rest of our lives.

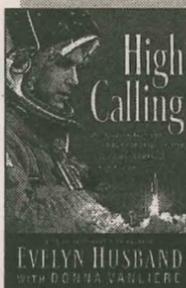
God showed Rick how to be a spiritual leader, a wonderful father and terrific husband. Rick was not perfect; no one is. But God takes us, if we are willing and pliable, and can make a marriage a joyous experience and a home a blessed place to be.

### In the book, you write that you have "lost all politeness with God." What do you mean by that?

I have had many moments of intense crying and gut-wrenching grieving. Without question, this has been the most intense emotional experience I have ever been through and continue to walk through. In my grief and anger, I have not been polite with God. I have screamed at Him for allowing my children to grow up without their wonderful dad and for me to be a single parent and to lose my very best friend. In response, He has given me wonderful, unconditional love and understanding. Jesus is a man of sorrows acquainted with my grief. I think being honest and open with Him and telling Him exactly how I feel has greatly deepened the intimacy of relationship with (Him).

### In the days after the Columbia tragedy, you were on national television demonstrating an extraordinary peace. How are you able to maintain such peace in the midst of such tragedy?

I knew that my only hope for survival and strength would flow from God, and I relied on Him. Every step, every breath, I sought and cried out to Him for supernatural strength and, just as He promises in the Bible, He met me with that peace that surpasses understanding. It has been amazing to feel His presence and love and encouragement at the lowest moments of my life.



the few personal effects of Rick's found and returned to his wife was Green's CD.

"All the other CDs were fragments," she said while presenting the CD to an obviously moved Green. "Yours wasn't."

Husband and Anderson said they know more emotional turmoil awaits, especially while commemorating the one-year anniversary of the Columbia tragedy, including the dedication of a Columbia monument in Washington.

But Husband said she has learned to deal, in part, with her grief simply by worshiping God. "(When I) get into the intimacy of worship, the grieving goes away," she said. "I don't know how, but He does."



**ASTRONAUTS** Mission Commander Rick Husband (bottom) and Payload Commander Michael Anderson (top, right) strike a "flying pose" with the rest of the crew for Space Shuttle Columbia mission STS-107. Other astronauts pictured are (from left) Kalpana Chawla, David Brown, William McCool, Laurel Clark and Ilan Ramon. On February 1, 2003, the seven crewmembers were lost with Columbia over North Texas. This picture was on a roll of unprocessed film later recovered by searchers from the debris. (NASA photo)

## How to Become a Christian

By Guy Futral

I was in very intense conversation with the girl who had asked about "joining the church" and "getting baptized."

She seemed to clearly understand the need for getting things right in her young life and realized she couldn't do it herself. The love of Jesus was real to her. Forgiveness of sin and starting life anew was something she wanted.

I asked if she was ready to pray for forgiveness of her sin and ask Jesus to have control of her life. She thought deeply then said, "No, not now."

My heart was flooded with emotion. I was disappointed that she did not make a positive decision. I was instantly in a deep state of prayer, because this was my daughter and I had no idea when she would be receptive to the gospel again.

I was brought face to face once again with the fact that believers can only share, preach, and witness to the good news but it is up to the hearer to make the decision for Christ. Nothing but the love of God through Christ can persuade the seeker to make a commitment to follow Him.

What is the seeking person to make of this? Here are some things to consider:

■ There really is a decision to be made, not merely facts to understand.

■ God is patient and persistent in His love for us. He doesn't give up (John 3:16).

■ Our sinful condition cannot be changed just by a little extra effort (Romans 3:23).

■ Forgiveness is real. We can be restored to a healthy relationship with God.

■ A new life is the gift God wants to give us—a life overflowing with joy (John 10:10).

The ball is in the court of the seeker in this game of life. I am grateful my daughter later made that decision to follow Jesus. It has made all the difference.

Guy Futral is leader of the Kentucky Baptist Convention leadership development team

## MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **BOWLING GREEN**—Living Hope Church will host a Prime Timers' Valentine party Feb. 10, 11:30 a.m.

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Friendship Church recently called **William Henderson** as pastor. He previously was pastor of Countryside Church, Morganfield.

■ **FRANKFORT**—Crestwood Church will host a Faith Celebration Banquet Feb. 4. **Wallace Kent** is pastor.

■ **HARLAN**—Harlan Church will host a student ministries Valentine Banquet Feb. 13, 7 p.m. For information, call (606) 573-4904. **John Ditty** is pastor.

■ **JEFFERSONTOWN**—Jeffersontown Church will observe Baptist Men's Day Feb. 25. **Sanford Hill** is pastor.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Grace Church will hold winter Bible study Feb. 20-21, led by **Paul Redditt**. For information, call (859) 252-1119. **Terrence**

**Freeman** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Lyndon Church youth will host a Leap Year variety show and church fellowship Feb. 29, 12:30 p.m. **Jim Holladay** is pastor.

Valley View Church recently ordained **Robert Paul Brown, Todd Brimm, Brad Bruns, Phil Cronin, DeWayne Drake, Matt Singleton** and **Joshua Sherwood** to the gospel ministry. **Kevin Hamm** is pastor.

■ **MOUNT WASHINGTON**—Kings Church recently called **Larry Purcell** as interim pastor.

■ **OWENSBORO**—First Church will host a Valentine banquet Feb. 13, 6 p.m., at RiverPark Center with entertainment by the **Annie Moses Band**. For more information, call (270) 683-3505.

Hall Street Church will host the **Journeymen Quartet** in concert Feb. 8, 6 p.m.

## TV journalist urges young adults to carry faith into culture

By James Dotson

SBC North American Mission Board

Dallas (BP)—Television journalist Peggy Wehmeyer encouraged young adults to consider whether God might be calling them to careers of high influence in secular culture.

"If what God has told us over and over again is true, that we were created to reflect His glory, then putting my gifts to use in a dark world so that people can see what God is like is the ultimate in self-fulfillment," said Wehmeyer, who spent seven years as a religion reporter for ABC News and 13 years in local television.

She spoke about her own calling out of the safety of Christian ministry into the high-stakes world

of television news during the Jan. 22-24 Elevate 2004 conference at Prestonwood Baptist Church in suburban Dallas, the first of two conferences sponsored by the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board to help young adults integrate their faith and career. A second Elevate conference is scheduled Feb. 19-21 at the Charlotte (N.C.) Convention Center.

Wehmeyer told how she had overcome a difficult childhood and finally met Christ as a college sophomore in Texas. With a passion for serving God, she began working in a Christian ministry. "I thought that was more spiritual," she noted. "I thought I could accomplish more for God."

But it wasn't long before the



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### February

6-7 Deacon/pastor/spouse retreat, Cave City Convention Center.

6-7 Summer mission selections, Ballardsville Baptist Church.

9 Small Church Growth Tour, Berean Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.

10 Small Church Growth Tour, Warren Baptist Association, Bowling Green.

16 Regional Annuity Conference, First Baptist Church, Hopkinsville.

16 Small Church Growth Tour, Rosebower Baptist Church, Paducah.

17 Regional Annuity Conference, Elizabethtown Baptist Church.

17 Small Church Growth Tour, Second Baptist Church, Madisonville.

17 Regional Annuity Conference, Buena Vista Baptist Church, Somerset.

18 Regional Annuity Conference, First Baptist Church, Prestonsburg.

19 Regional Annuity Conference, Immanuel Baptist Church, Frankfort.

21 All-State youth choir & orchestra auditions, Victory Baptist Church, Lexington.

21 Love 101 (True Love Waits), Living Hope Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

23-24 Evangelism Conference, Hillvue Heights Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

23 Youth leaders' dinner, Hillvue Heights Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

28 All-State youth choir & orchestra auditions, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

28 Regional Keyboard Festival, First Baptist Church, Murray.

For more information, call (888) 266-6477 or click [www.kybaptist.org](http://www.kybaptist.org)

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**FOR SALE:** Shaved ice machine: \$850; freezer: \$150; nacho machine: \$100; serving cart: \$100; 5'x8' utility trailer: \$1,000. Please call Michael or Netta, (270) 360-1372.

**FOR SALE:** Gano Avenue Baptist Church at 519 Gano Ave., Georgetown, Ky., is selling its present facility and building new. The facility has approx. 9,000 square feet and seats 250 (with ample parking). In has great potential with many updates. Please call (502) 863-3454 between 9:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. to see the facilities and make an offer.

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

**SEEKING:** People who love to sing for a new community choir being launched by Lakeside Baptist Church. An informational meeting will take place on Monday, Feb. 16, at 7 p.m. at the church, 11412 Taylorsville Road in Jeffersontown. For more information, contact Craig Crawley at (502) 267-4446 or by e-mail at [craig@lakesidebaptist.us](mailto:craig@lakesidebaptist.us), or log on to our Web site ([www.lakesidebaptist.us](http://www.lakesidebaptist.us)) and click on the "Community Choir" link on the menu.

**SEEKING:** Northside Baptist, a steadily-growing church, is seeking an interim part-time minister of worship (salary) and a full-time minister of worship (salary and benefits package available). If interested, please send resumé to: Northside Baptist Church, 1800 Pear Orchard Road, Elizabethtown, KY 42701.

**SEEKING:** Administrative assistant: mission-oriented individual to help serve residents in the Portland community through Neighborhood House, a nonprofit community center. Position includes assisting executive director and other staff, clerical, basic financial and HR duties. Strong skills needed in writing, communication, dealing with the public, organization and computer use. Full-time, flexible hours. Send resumé to: HR Neighborhood House, 201 North 25th Street, Louisville, KY 40212.

**SEEKING:** Church secretary. Needed: proficient computer skills; ability to perform administrative tasks; people skills and confidentiality is a must. Office hours: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday. Send resumé to: Broadway Baptist Church, 4000 Brownsboro Road, Louisville, KY 40207, Attn: Roger Lamb.

**SEEKING:** Part-time music minister for White Sulphur Baptist Church. Send resumé to church at 5300 Ironworks Pike, Georgetown, KY 40324, Attn: Roger Davis.

**SEEKING:** Administrator to oversee multiple business aspects of large, multi-ministry church in Lexington. Send queries or resumé to PO Box 22022, Lexington, KY 40522-2022.

**SEEKING:** Full-time youth/education minister for Immanuel Baptist (Danville). Send resumé to: Search Committee, Immanuel Baptist Church, 1280 Faulkner Lane, Danville, KY 40422.

**SEEKING:** Pianist and part-time music minister (separate positions). New Bethel Baptist Church, PO Box 100, Verona, KY 41092. Send resumé to church or call Pete MacAdams, (859) 485-7845.

**SEEKING:** Secretary/administrative assistant for Green Acres BC in Louisville. Skills required: receptionist, file/financial clerk, computer experience (desktop publishing, MS Office, QuickBooks2003). Pay and benefits negotiable. Send resumé or application to GABC, 5189 Poplar Level Road, Louisville, KY 40219; e-mail: [dpowell198@aol.com](mailto:dpowell198@aol.com). For more information, call (502) 964-8165.

**SEEKING:** Part-time youth minister for Bethany Baptist, Louisville. Will consider bivocational candidate. Submit resumé to Bethany Baptist, 2319 Taylorsville Road, Louisville, KY 40205.

**SEEKING:** Valley View Baptist Church in Vine Grove is seeking a minister of music (seminary and some experience preferred). For more information, visit [www.valleyview-ky.org](http://www.valleyview-ky.org). Please send resumé to 501 Valley View Drive, Vine Grove, KY 40175, Attn: Music Committee, or e-mail to [chris@valleyview-ky.org](mailto:chris@valleyview-ky.org).

**SEEKING:** Full-time youth minister for Campbellsville Baptist Church. Send resumé to: Youth Minister Search Committee, Campbellsville Baptist Church, PO Box 530, Campbellsville, KY 42719. Priority resumé due by Feb. 20, 2004.

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

**SERVICE:** America's fastest-growing Christian long distance company. 3.9 cents/minute; no monthly fees; no codes or restrictions; 6 second billing; 250,000 happy customers. Toll-free: (866) 587-8346 or [www.covenantphoneservice.com](http://www.covenantphoneservice.com). Home agents needed.

## Poll: Parents want abstinence to be main focus for school sex ed

Colorado Springs, Colo. (RNS)—Most parents responding to a poll commissioned by Focus on the Family said they want high school sex education classes to focus on abstinence.

Ninety-six percent of parents of children younger than 18 said they agreed strongly or somewhat that such classes should teach that "abstinence from sexual activity is best for teens."

A slightly smaller percentage—91 percent—agreed that high schoolers should be taught that it is best for sexual intercourse to be linked to love, commitment and intimacy, qualities that "are most likely to occur in a faithful marriage."

Forty-seven percent of parents said the best message for sex education programs to send is that young people should not be involved in sexual intercourse until marriage.

Thirty-two percent said they should be taught not to have sex until, at least, they have completed high school and are in a relationship with someone they want to marry.

"This poll illustrates that the people most concerned about the health and emotional well-being of America's children—their moms and dads—recognize that abstinence is the only sure-fire way to protect their kids," said Linda Klepacki, manager of the abstinence department at Focus on the Family, a Christian organization founded by James Dobson.

The poll, released last week, found more divided opinions over how abstinence and contraception should be taught.

About 40 percent said teens should be encouraged to be abstinent and to use contraceptives in the same class while about 35 percent said the topics should be taught in separate classes. A smaller percentage—21.7 percent—said sex education classes should not teach about how to obtain and use condoms.

The poll of 1,004 parents, with a margin of error of plus or minus 3.2 percentage points, was taken in December, the month before President Bush announced in his State of the Union address that he would like to see a doubling of funding of sexual abstinence programs.

While abstinence proponents hailed Bush's proposal, his plan was criticized by Planned Parenthood, which said increased funding of comprehensive sex education programs will reduce sexually transmitted diseases, unintended pregnancies and abortion.

## Laughter and her Lord

### Saturday Night Live alum Victoria Jackson not shy about sharing faith

By James Dotson  
SBC North American Mission Board

Dallas (BP)—The scene from "Saturday Night Live" was vintage Victoria Jackson.

While holding a perfect handstand on the Weekend Update desk with a Christmas tree on top of her, she recited one of the simple little poems that helped lead her to comedy stardom during the 1980s.

"I wrote something about the Christmas tree as a symbol at Christmas, even though it's a pagan symbol and really shouldn't be, because the meaning of Christmas is Jesus coming to the earth to be our Savior," she told the audience at Elevate, a conference sponsored by the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board earlier this month.

"But nobody really heard (me) because I was upside down, people were laughing," she said.

"But I thought, 'You know, even if no one hears it, God knows that I'm talking about Him on Saturday Night Live.'" People did notice, including one man who brought it up 15 years later.

Jackson, speaking with the trademark squeaky voice that continues to captivate audiences, discussed how she has sought to balance her faith and career.

While her Christianity was never a secret, it has only been in recent years that she has begun addressing that area of her life more publicly.

#### Moving west, marrying "Satan"

Jackson moved from Miami to Hollywood in 1981, well-grounded in her faith if still somewhat naive about show business.

A gymnast, high school cheerleader and homecoming queen, she had become a Christian at age 6, attended Bible college and was an active witness for her faith.

In Hollywood, she combined her knack for gymnastics and poetry by doing handstands while reciting poetry or singing songs with a ukulele, a quirky mix that land-

ed her 22 appearances on "The Tonight Show."

She was a cast member on Saturday Night Live from 1986-91.

But Jackson admitted she tried to rationalize away one of the verses that kept coming back from childhood: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers, for what fellowship hath light with darkness."

Instead, she spent years in a failed marriage, eventually returning to Miami in 1991 to marry her former high-school sweetheart.

Breaking into part of her stand-up comedy routine, she said she likes to call her ex-husband Satan. "I don't think there's anything in the Bible that says you can't take the devil's name in vain," she said, adding that she has toned that down since he has threatened to sue her. "Now I just call him the artist formerly known as Satan. ... But I'm still praying for him to be born again."

Jackson said she has learned in the past 12 years to rely on God more than ever, as her move to Miami coincided with a slump in calls for TV and film roles.

"In my 30s my life verse was, 'Delight thyself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart,' because suddenly I went from Saturday Night Live in the fast lane to nothing."

But now, she says she is fulfilling her original career dream of being "the best airhead in a sitcom," playing the ditzy nanny on Nickelodeon's new series, "Romeo!"

#### A Bible for Carson

Discussing her Christian faith is always a sensitive issue, Jackson said, recalling several encounters she had with fellow Saturday Night Live cast members and others in the industry.

The Christmas tree incident was one of the times she was able to get her message across in a humorous way.

One method she's used effective-



#### NO SECRETS

Victoria Jackson, a former "Saturday Night Live" star currently on Nickelodeon's new series, "Romeo!" shares her testimony during Elevate 2004. (BP photo by James Dotson)

ly is simply sending people a Bible as a gift, including one she sent to Johnny Carson with a note thanking him for launching her career.

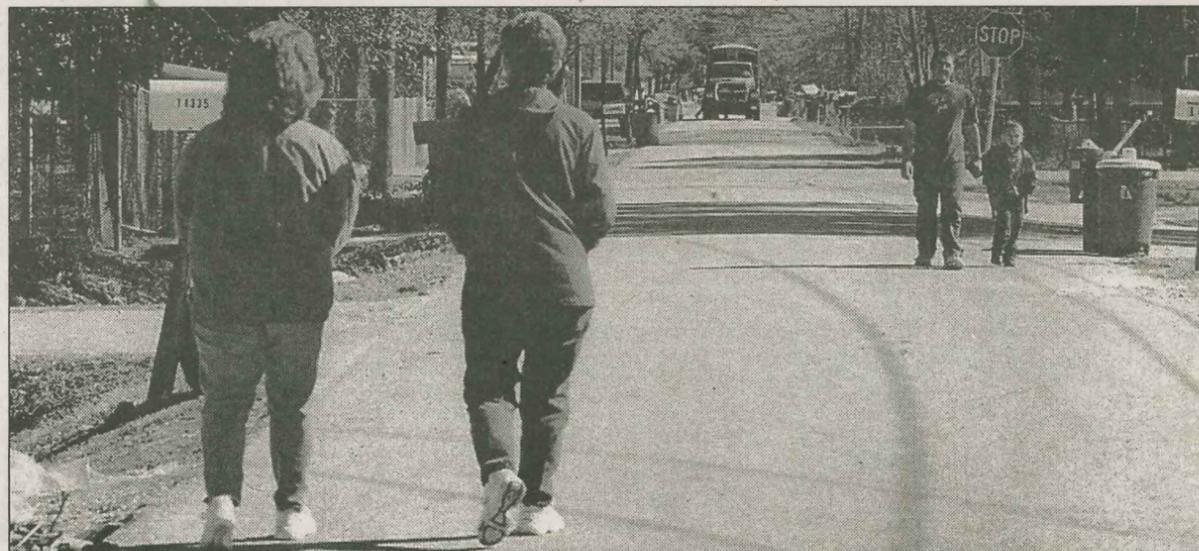
"Going to the store to get the Bible was hilarious," she said. "It was like, 'What name would you like engraved on it? And I said, 'Johnny Carson.' And she said, 'What?' And I said, 'Well he needs the Bible too.'"

She also gave every cast member on Saturday Night Live a Bible on cassette tape one Christmas, thinking they could listen in their cars.

"That's my mission field," she said. "Mostly I just try to love them, and then it just comes out of my heart at the right moment. And I can't even help it, because I talk all the time."

NAMB's Elevate 2004 conferences are designed to help young adults ages 18-29 integrate their faith into all areas of life. The second of two conferences will be in Charlotte, N.C. Feb. 19-21, featuring Jackson as well as other leaders in entertainment, politics, law and business.

## Prayer walking in Houston



Cloresa Shumaker (left) and Kathy Anderson, members of Ironbridge Baptist Church in Virginia, prayerwalk in a Houston community preparing for evangelistic efforts in conjunction with the Super Bowl. Baptists traveled to the game's host city to engage in a variety of outreach programs before the big game. (BP photo by Bonnie Pritchett)



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