

March 9, 2004
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FOR THE RECORD

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Poll finds religious activity outside church walls grew

Ventura, Calif. (RNS)—An annual look at the nation's religious behavior has found an increase in religious practice beyond the sanctuary, while church and Sunday school attendance has remained relatively stable.

The survey by Barna Research Group found increases in Bible study and small groups—excluding Sunday school and other church classes—during the last decade for all Christian churches.

Forty-four percent of adults reported reading from the Bible during the past week, an increase from 37 percent in 1994. Participation in small groups for Bible study, prayer or spiritual fellowship increased from 12 percent of adults to 20 percent.

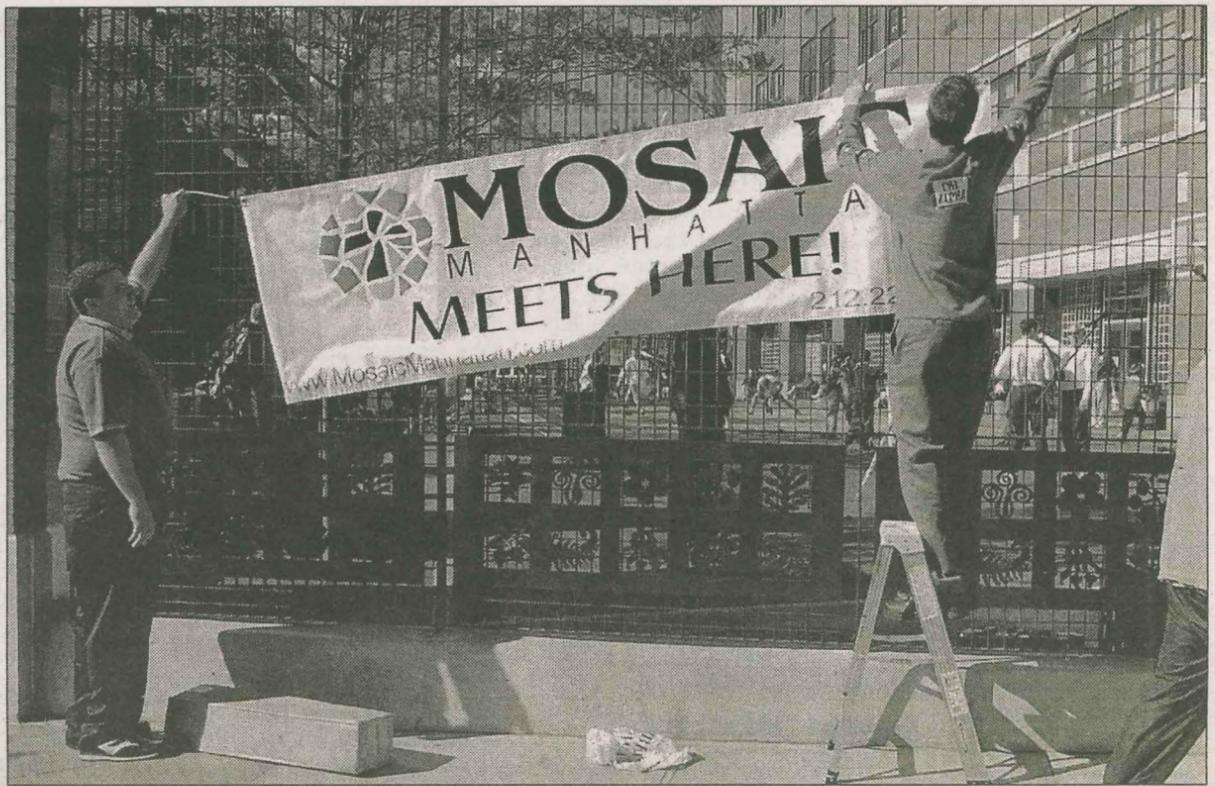
Personal prayer increased from 77 percent of adults to 83 percent in the past five years.

Religious behaviors that remained relatively flat included church attendance, volunteering to help a church, attending Sunday school and sharing one's Christian faith with non-believers.

George Barna, director of the study, said the popularity of the non-church activities is worth noting.

"This may be an early warning sign that we are entering a new era of spiritual experience, one that is more tribal or individualized than congregational in nature," he said in a statement.

Manhattan ministry



SETTING UP Gregg Farah (right), pastor of Mosaic Manhattan, and Dylan Jackson hang a sign in front of the school where the church holds worship services. Farah is among the missionaries whose work is profiled in connection with the 2004 Week of Prayer and the North American Mission Study. (NAMB photo by Ken Touchton)

New Yorker starting church near Ground Zero

By James Dotson
SBC North American Mission Board

New York—It was Sunday morning in Lower Manhattan, and Southern Baptist pastor Gregg Farah decided to kick off the Sunday morning worship service by strapping on a pair of inline skates and attempting to jump over his worship leader.

It was a decidedly different approach to introducing a sermon about taking risks for God, but there's a lot about this church

that's unusual. And the risks Farah and others involved in the church face are far greater than a spill on rollerblades.

This is Mosaic Manhattan, meeting in a school auditorium just two blocks up Manhattan's Westside Highway from Ground Zero, where the World Trade Center skyscrapers stood before they fell in the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

This neighborhood is an area where evangelical churches traditionally have been near the bottom of most priority lists, and new churches particularly are viewed with skepticism until they have passed the test of time.

"For a culture steeped in Catholicism or Judaism, starting a church is not going to make sense to a lot of people," Farah said. □ See *New Yorker starting ... Page 6*

Bowling Green pastor outlines 4 keys to effective evangelism

By David Winfrey
News Director

Bowling Green—Inspiring church members to be active in evangelism is as simple as helping them fall in love with Jesus, Steve Ayers told a workshop audience at the recent Kentucky Baptist Convention Evangelism Conference.

"When you fall in love with something, you don't have to be trained to talk about it," said Ayers, pastor of Hillvue Heights Church in Bowling Green, the host church for the conference.

"Methods are wonderful," but don't lead to changed lives, Ayers said.

"We might need to get back to an old-fashioned Holy Ghost movement," he said during a workshop about reclaiming the passion for evangelism.

Too often in churches, he added, "the last thing that is mentioned is the gospel: the old rug-

ged cross and an empty tomb."

Ayers offered four lessons from the Book of Acts that define how New Testament churches evangelized their communities:

Tap the power source. In Acts, "there was no church until God did something," Ayers said.

"Until you're willing to receive the power of God, you will only have a human organization."

But too many churches are focused on the institution of the church instead of the power of God, he added.

"We look like Wal-Mart a lot more than we do Jesus' community," he said. "Where did Jesus use the metaphor about the church and call it an organization?"

Expect God's provision. Ministry opportunities are not financial situations, he said. "In the provision of God, the provision is always there."

Too many pastors, he added, rely

more on their job security than on the provision of God, unwilling to speak the truth against problems in their own churches.

"Why would being fired from a church bother anybody?" Ayers asked, adding that a church job would be the last place he'd go for financial security.

"If you lost your job today, would you be OK?" he asked. "How many of you introduce yourself as a messenger of Jesus Christ or as the pastor of a church?"

Have God's perspective. Pastors and church leaders who have God's perspective won't be afraid to speak the truth, he said.

"How many of you realize you're a threat?" Ayers asked. "You should be a divine disturbance in your community."

Ayers said Mel Gibson has God's perspective and it's emboldened him to make a move that is creating shock waves throughout the

country and beyond.

"You know the difference between Mel Gibson and you and I? He's not scared to tell the truth, because he's not afraid to lose his job," Ayers said.

Taking God's perspective has to result in evangelism, he added. "God wants you saved. He wants you connected. He wants you in the Kingdom."

Preach Jesus. In Acts 2, Peter had an effective sermon because he talked about Jesus, Ayers said.

"Be driven by the cross and resurrection. That's our message," he said.

"We don't have any other message. That's why people who have limited intelligence like me can preach.

"Jesus is stronger than sin," Ayers added. "Drop the seed in the middle of the wickedness and trust that it is stronger than the weeds."

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, March 10.

SBC official denies booth space to BWA

Nashville—A flurry of charges and countercharges continue to swirl in the wake of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee's proposal to cut ties to the Baptist World Alliance.

Executive Committee members voted 62-10 last month to approve the recommendation of a nine-member study committee to withdraw from BWA membership effective Oct. 1. The proposal will be considered in June by messengers to the SBC annual meeting in Indianapolis.

In the meantime, leaders of the SBC, BWA and other Baptist groups continue to debate the issue.

In one of the latest developments, an SBC official has denied exhibition space to the BWA at the June 15-16 SBC annual meeting—even before the proposal to leave the BWA has been considered by SBC messengers.

BWA officials received a letter informing them of the decision from convention manager Jack Wilkerson, the Executive Committee's vice president for business and finance. In the Feb. 25 letter, Wilkerson said, "Because of the controversy surrounding this issue currently and the pending recommendation of the Executive Committee to the Southern Baptist Convention, it would be inappropriate to exhibit under these circumstances."

Committee "wishes no harm"

Wilkerson's action appears to run counter to a portion of the Executive Committee proposal that calls for continuing SBC's funding of BWA through September, "thus

honoring the commitment for this fiscal year."

Additionally, an interim report released in December by the study committee, noted that "the committee wishes no harm on anyone. ... We wish Heaven's blessings on the BWA and its constituent conventions in every noble work for the Savior."

Alan Stanford, BWA director of promotion and development, said he and other BWA officials were "surprised and disappointed" at Wilkerson's decision. "Our assumption was that we would be allowed to exhibit until the SBC voted to discontinue funding the BWA," he said.

"To us, it seems to be premature for the staff of the Executive Committee to deny messengers to the SBC the opportunity to look at materials and ask questions of the BWA representatives when the messengers are being asked to vote on severing an almost 100-year relationship," Stanford added.

Wilkerson said he made the decision to deny the space, in part because of the BWA's responses to SBC leaders' recommendation that the SBC cut ties. "Let me just say that the comments that have been voiced by the BWA in the press articles and in person—in fact, just the press releases that have been released by the BWA—certainly are not supportive of the Southern Baptist Convention position," he noted.

Wilkerson said an Executive Committee policy allows him to make such exhibitor decisions, and that "it doesn't require convention approval."

According to the policy: "The Executive Committee shall have the responsibility to ensure that each entity granted exhibit space is consistent with the mission statement of the Southern Baptist Convention."

Stanford said BWA still plans to host its annual breakfast during the SBC annual meeting. The breakfast will be held June 15 at the Hyatt Regency hotel in Indianapolis.

In other recent exchanges, SBC Executive Committee President Morris Chapman released a previously private letter from him to Lotz, dated July 17, 2002, that expressed concerns about constitutional and

process issues related to how the BWA membership committee proposed membership for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

The release of Chapman's letter came after BWA membership committee vice chairman Albert Wardin said the BWA committee "is to be seriously faulted" for the way the membership issue was handled.

Membership process debated

Chapman's four-page letter noted that "the process employed by the BWA Membership Committee did not follow the guidelines set forth by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Baptist World Alliance, but rather chose to move full speed ahead to take certain actions regardless of the BWA Constitution and Bylaws."

Among concerns listed by Chapman was the specification in two BWA documents that membership in the alliance involves Baptist groups that are a "union or convention," whereas the CBF is an organization lacking a constitutional relationship with a church constituency and a doctrinal statement.

Lotz told Baptist Press on March 3 that the BWA membership committee made "a very thorough examination" of the CBF membership application. He noted that "it was agreed to by the General Council, ... (which is) the one that decides what is constitutional and not constitutional, not those outside of the General Council."

In another development, Paul Negrut, president of the Romanian Baptist Union, said he believes the SBC proposal to withdraw from BWA is the right decision.

"The Romanian Baptist convention is conservative to the marrow of its bones," Negrut said. "For a long time, the Romanian Baptist Convention did not endorse the European Baptist Federation or the Baptist World Alliance doctrines or practices. More precisely, in the 1990s, when the European Baptist Federation appointed a lady pastor from Sweden as its president, the Romanian Baptists pulled out" from the EBF which is affiliated with the BWA.

Based on reporting by Editor Trennis Henderson, Baptist Press and Associated Baptist Press

Moderate leader claims SBC views threaten peace

Nashville (ABP)—Southern Baptist Convention leaders are to blame for sparking "riots in countries around the world, with finger-pointing pronouncements and inflammatory rhetoric about Islam and its founder," said a moderate Baptist leader.

Bruce Prescott, executive director of Mainstream Baptists of Oklahoma, also accused SBC leaders of leading a "neo-conservative political crusade to assert American supremacy" and firing scores of SBC missionaries who refused to sign "an idolatrous and unconscionable creed."

Morris Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee, denied and denounced Prescott's accusations.

"Mr. Prescott's remarks are outlandish, patently false and misleading," Chapman told Associated Baptist Press. "How disingenuous of him to accuse Southern Baptist leaders of using 'inflammatory rhetoric' in the very same speech where he avers 'Southern Baptists are increasingly playing a major role in a cycle of escalating violence that could literally lead to the nuclear incineration of the very people to whom we once felt called to share the good news.' What motivates a person to say something so outrageous?"

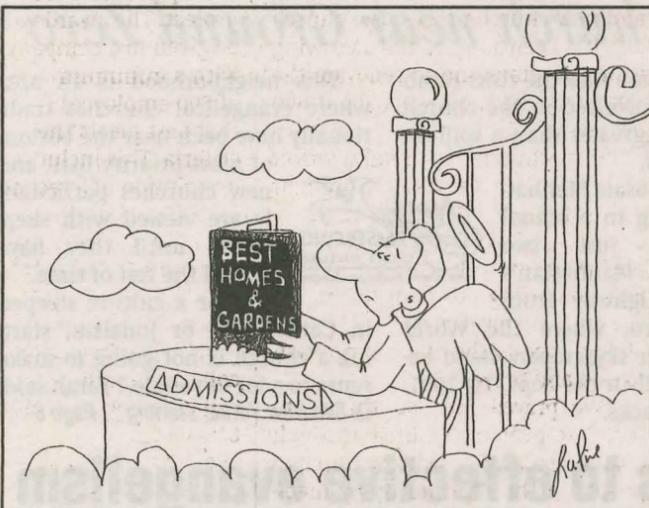
Prescott charged current SBC leaders with first "waging a holy war against moderates within the Baptist family" and then "waging a holy war against Muslims and Hindus and humanists and homosexuals."

"Already, the weapons of war are shifting from ballots and pink slips to bullets. Now people are literally dying," Prescott told participants in the convocation of the Mainstream Baptist Network Feb. 27-28 in Nashville.

Prescott said SBC leaders pose a threat to liberty of conscience, religious liberty and even world peace.

"All of these things have happened in full public view," said Prescott. "Why is there no outcry in our churches? Why do Baptists dutifully fill the coffers of the (SBC) Sunday morning after Sunday morning and thereby underwrite, endorse and perpetuate such evils?"

"Mr. Prescott has slandered millions of faithful, godly Southern Baptists," Chapman responded. "He may call himself 'Mainstream Baptist' but is anything but. I am confident the free and faithful people who populate our Baptist congregations will continue to turn a deaf ear to the shrill, ridiculous, rantings of Mr. Prescott and any of his persuasion and bitterness."



BAPTIST DIGEST

Baylor president "outraged" by editorial. Baylor University President Robert Sloan said he is "justifiably outraged" that the Baptist school's newspaper published an editorial supporting gay marriage. The Baylor Lariat, the newspaper at the largest Baptist university in the world, published the editorial in its Feb. 27 issue to support San Francisco's lawsuit against California for barring gay marriages. Sloan said the editorial position, approved by the paper's editorial board by a vote of 5-2, does not reflect the views of the school's administration or faculty. The Student Publications Board, which oversees the newspaper, issued a statement declaring the editorial in violation of university policy.

IMB associate joins Saddleback staff. Curtis Sergeant, a former Southern Baptist missionary to East Asia, will help Saddleback

Church in Lake Forest, Calif., launch a new world missions initiative. Sergeant, currently associate vice president for global strategies at the Southern Baptist International Mission Board, announced he will join Saddleback's ministry staff to help implement the congregation's "PEACE Plan" designed to plant reproducing churches, Equip servant leaders, Assist the poor, Care for the sick and Educate the next generation.

CBF, ABC explore ecumenical links. Leaders of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and American Baptist Churches in the USA are exploring opportunities for formal dialogue with other U.S. Christians, including Roman Catholics, Orthodox, Protestants, evangelicals and Pentecostals. Both CBF's and ABC's governing bodies are taking steps toward becoming founding members of Christians

Churches Together in the USA. A broader fellowship than the current National Council of Churches, CCT is seeking to embrace the widest range of Christian communities.

Southern hosts musical drama premiere. Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville will host the world premiere of "The Seventh Trumpet," a Scriptural pageant written and directed by Mozelle Clark Sherman. The performances will be March 23, 25-26 at 7:30 p.m., and March 27 at 2 p.m. The March 25 performance will mark the first time in the U.S. that a musical drama has been translated and produced in the Korean language. For free reservations, call (800) 626-5525, ext. 4115, (502) 897-4115 or e-mail chmusic@sbts.edu. Sherman is founding director emeritus of Southern's church music drama theatre.

Beauman urges Kentucky Baptists to oppose casinos

Louisville—Addressing such issues as gambling, alcohol and same-sex marriages, Howard Beauman shared a legislative update March 4 with members of the Kentucky Baptist Convention Public Affairs Committee.

Beauman, executive director of the Kentucky League on Alcohol & Gambling Problems, monitors legislation in the Kentucky General Assembly on behalf of the KBC.

Beauman said Senate Bills 249 and 250, sponsored by Sen. David Boswell, and House Bills 636 and 637, sponsored by Rep. Larry Clark, call for a constitutional amendment to allow the operation of casinos in nine locations across the state.

Noting that gambling industry leaders were involved in drafting the legislation, he added, "I call this the fox designing the chicken coop. ... I cannot begin to comprehend why we would pass a law on casinos written by the gambling industry."

Beauman told committee members the issue could come up for a vote this week if pro-gambling forces determine they have enough votes to gain passage of the measure.

In response to the gambling push, Beauman recently delivered anti-gambling petitions with more than 9,800 signatures from 95 counties to Gov. Ernie Fletcher. The petitions urge government leaders "to reject any attempt to expand gambling in any form," adding that the signers "will look with disfavor upon any legislator who supports or votes for any expansion of gambling in any form."

In a related development, Robert Reeves, director of the KBC communications department, sent a legislative alert to Kentucky Baptist directors of missions. Citing efforts by the gambling industry to push for passage of the casino legislation, Reeves wrote, "If this is an issue you care about, it is important to contact your state legislators and the governor's office right away!"

In other legislative developments, Beauman said:

■ Several alcohol-related bills have been introduced, including efforts to stop beer sales at wineries, allow Sunday sales at wineries and private clubs and allow certain private clubs to waive the one-year waiting period before selling alcohol.

■ The House voted 75-11 to pass a resolution urging the U.S. Congress to "pass an amendment to the Constitution of the United States defining marriage as the union of one man and one woman in marriage." Legislation also has been introduced to amend the Kentucky Constitution to prohibit same-sex marriages.

Seeing God amid tragedy

Church rallies around pastor and ill wife

By Jessica Perkins
Kentucky Baptist Convention

Russellville—In the midst of what many would consider to be a heart-breaking experience, Pastor Ron Wells says God has not only provided but also blessed.

For the past seven years, while Wells has seen Second Baptist Church of Russellville double in size, the 51-year-old pastor also has watched helplessly as his wife suffers with a rare and debilitating disease.

The couple's journey of blessings and suffering began just as Wells was preparing to begin leadership at Second Baptist in 1996.

On the morning of Sept. 9, Marilyn woke abruptly at around 5 a.m. Within 30 minutes, she had lost her memory, her speech, all movement in the left side of her body and all organizational skills.

Ron began packing a bag for Marilyn to take her to the hospital when he heard a noise in the bathroom.

"I ran into the bathroom and Marilyn was sitting there. All she could say was 'don't know, don't know.' She was trying to communicate to me that she couldn't even remember how to take a bath. She couldn't process any information," Wells recalled.

"This is a woman with a Ph.D. in education."

It took doctors six and a half months to diagnose Marilyn with Hashimoto's Encephalopathy. The disease alters the DNA coding that is sent to the autoimmune system and permanently changes the way the body fights disease.

As a result of misinformation to the immune system, the brain is mistaken as an enemy and brain cells are destroyed. There is no known cure. Doctors estimated that she had just two years to live.

Seeing God provide

She saw specialists at the Mayo Clinic in Jacksonville, Fla., for two and a half years after her diagnosis. Even with insurance, the couple paid \$260,000 in medical expenses.

But Wells said God provided. "We never missed a payment," he said.

Now, having outlived the doctors' prognosis by five years, Marilyn still



RON & MARILYN WELLS Since 1996, Ron Wells has ministered at Second Baptist Church of Russellville and cared for his wife, who was diagnosed the same year with Hashimoto's Encephalopathy.

struggles. She takes large doses of a medicine that has caused her to gain 160 pounds. She has gone through occupational therapy to help her recall how to perform such basic tasks as bathing.

She has difficulty walking and requires constant care. She has had a hip replacement, a broken shoulder and a fractured ankle. The doctors continue to search for new medications and treatments, but they have no projections for a dramatic change.

Ron, who now cooks, cleans, shops and checks on Marilyn several times throughout the day, has not been alone.

In addition to his faith, he credits a supportive mother-in-law, two daughters and two prayer partners who pray for him and offer him constant encouragement.

"It's a struggle every day, but God is helping us one day at a time," he said. "God's been great and He'll continue to be."

Church support

Ron's dedication to his family and to his church has made an impression on the members of the church and on the community at large.

"The community sees that Ron believes and trusts in God. He's an exceptional young man," said Oma McIntire, a member of Second Baptist Church.

Church members say Wells makes loving people a priority.

"Brother Ron is always there when you need him. If you need prayer he'll stop right there and do

it, even if it's in the middle of Wal-Mart," said Jimmy Prince, a deacon. "He's there when he's needed, not when it's convenient."

The church has reciprocated Wells' love and care.

Members often bring the couple meals and occasionally clean the house when they are on vacation. Several women in the church stay with Marilyn when Ron is called away. The church sees caring for their pastor and his wife as their calling.

"Jesus helped all and loved everybody and this is what we need to do," McIntire said. "He took His disciples under His wings and that's kind of what Bro. Ron has done with the church. Churches should help their pastors."

Church continues to grow

Despite the Wellises' trials, the church has prospered and seen many prayers answered.

In the last seven years, the congregation has nearly doubled in Sunday school and worship attendance. Ron estimates that about half of the growth in the church has come from new commitments to Christ through baptism.

Since the couple's arrival at Second Baptist, the church has purchased four pieces of property and has begun a three-phase building project that includes a family life center, an educational building and new church offices. The church also has been able to fund a growing youth program and to renovate the sanctuary that now seats about 600 people.

"Our church has really grown since Bro. Ron came. He's brought an awakening for the people here," church secretary Jan Mills said. "People have been very generous. We are just now using our loan to finance the building project."

Ron credits the church's growth to God and prayer.

"We prayed for two things: to win lost people to Christ through outreach and to reach unchurched people in the community by meeting them where they are," he said. "Too many times we settle for what we can do rather than what God can do. I tell the church, 'It's not about you, it's about God.'"

BLUEGRASS BURGEO

Campbellsville

University will host a concert April 21 by Christian artist and Dove Award nominee Todd Agnew. Agnew, who recently was named Breakthrough Artist of 2003 by Worship Leader Magazine, will perform in the school's Powell Athletic Center. Advance tickets cost \$5, and admission at the door will be \$8. To order tickets, call (270) 789-5161.

Georgetown College

students will partner with Norstan, Inc. to create the Corporate Ethical Excellence Award as recognition of business organizations with exemplary standards. Students participating in Georgetown's leadership program will judge nominees for the \$10,000 prize. Students also enlisted the help of Georgetown alumni and Toyota Motor Manufacturing and other members of the college's Peer Exchange Network to help promote this project. The award will be given to a company with a minimum of 500 employees that best meets the criteria. This includes a description of a recent ethical challenge and the strategies used to overcome it. For more information about the award, visit http://spider.georgetowncollege.edu/ethics or call Judy Rogers at (502) 863-8007.

WMU's Hopkinsville annual meeting to have patriotic flair

Hopkinsville—The 101st Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union annual meeting will be held in the hometown of the U.S. Army's 101st Airborne Division and include a patriotic emphasis.

Using the theme "From Generation to Generation," the program will focus on ways the missions call is passed from one generation to the next. The meeting will be March 26-27 at First Baptist Church of Hopkinsville.

Featured speakers include Bill Clark and Ruth Thomas, emeritus missionaries to France, and their daughter and son-in-law, Cecelia and Jeff Wallace, missionaries to Spain. Other missionary speakers include Tim Bender, catalytic missionary to the

deaf in Kentucky; David Coram, retired chaplain of the 101st Airborne; and a newly appointed "Last Frontier" missionary who once lived in the Hopkinsville area.

Cathy Chinn, Kentucky WMU president, will lead a panel of volunteers as they share testimonies of their missions involvement through WMU.

Musical guests will include Esther and Yaacov Horesh. Esther, a singer and soloist in the New Israeli Opera for 17 years, and Yaacov, a composer and pianist, are Israeli Messianic believers who share their faith journey through music and testimony.

Participants will have the opportunity to join in a "picnic" lunch and celebration of the work of Girls Auxiliary/Girls in Action

on Friday at noon. The business session of the 101st annual meeting will be on Friday afternoon and will include the election of officers and board members. The Friday evening session will feature a military color guard, military chaplain as the keynote speaker, and an invitation to participate in a special ministry to military families on Saturday. Participants are invited to wear red, white, and blue Friday evening.

Pre-registration is required for preschool child care, interpretation for the deaf, Friday's lunch, and dinners for the Executive Board, Acteens/Youth on Mission and Baptist Nursing Fellowship.

For more information, call Kentucky WMU toll-free at (888) 254-5726.

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

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High points & low points

For the past 33 years I have faithfully attended the Kentucky Baptist Convention Evangelism Conference. I have never failed to be blessed, to grow and to bring home with me valuable spiritual information.

This year was no exception. I was inspired by every speaker. Each seemed to be anointed with a message of God for the hour. I was also happy with the wide assortment of available information in the breakout conferences. And I was especially happy to see more young pastors at the conference than I have ever seen before.

Like sometimes before, there were low points. I was disappointed with the music, not because it was "praise and worship." I am a music person. I like all kinds of music including praise and worship. But the drums and the musical instruments were turned too loud on the PA system, and the only way you could have any idea what the words to the songs were to read them on the screen.

I also was disappointed with some totally unnecessary and un-Christian comments made from the platform. In a conference about

"Building Bridges," it was so unfortunate that remarks were made that hurt and divide.

But again my compliments to Dan Garland and his staff. They dared to try something different. And 90 percent of the program was excellent.



I have some friends who can walk into a room that is spotlessly clean except for a dead gnat lying in a corner and they will see only the gnat. I saw the good in the program. As a farm boy I lodged the saw briars. I was so blessed and challenged by the speakers. If God permits, I am looking forward to being there next year.

Janus Jones
Williamsburg

Different perspective

Concerning the letter, "Erosion of Orthodoxy," in the Feb. 24 issue of the Western Recorder, we, the undersigned, were at the meeting alluded to in the letter and we did not hear it that way.

Daniel Vestal's reference to a "dinosaur" was not to the Cooperative Program but to a hierarchical denominational structure. Vestal

used a drawing of a pyramid with authority designed to flow from the bottom (churches) to the top (Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee), but the flow has been reversed with authority coming from the top.

Second, Vestal did not scoff at Bold, Mission Thrust. He said it has failed, partly because division had caused the SBC to lose its missions focus.

Third, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship did not sever ties with the SBC because it never had any. CBF tried to be a part of the SBC but the SBC refused CBF money, most recently from Missouri.

Fourth, the letter seeks to portray CBF as a tiny minority. True, the number of CBF churches is small, but for 10 years those opposed to the "takeover" received from 42 to 49 percent of the vote in SBC elections. Opponents of the takeover are a large majority in Texas and Virginia and seem to be about even in some other states.

As for "throwing darts," "maligned the enemy" and "attacking," we do not believe Vestal did that and we leave it to God and others to judge who is doing more of those things.

Ken Adkisson, Bill Holbrook, James Huckleberry, Bill T. Moore, Ralph W. Wible
Owensboro

The blessing of true friendship

By Henry Blackaby

Atlanta (BP)—If a person has one or more friends—true friends—in a lifetime, he or she will be very fortunate. Most of us have acquaintances, even very close friends, but not what the Bible calls "friends."

Our culture seeks to redefine almost everything, including what it means to be or have a "friend." Many who say to us, "I want to be your friend," do not really know what this requires. Every person needs a friend and, in turn, to be a friend to others. But what will this look like and be like in such a friendless world?

Above all else, it will mean to truly love another. Of course, the standard for our love is God's love as revealed in His Son, Jesus Christ. 1 John 3:16 perhaps defines it best: "By this we know love (that is, here is how we know what

FIRST PERSON

love is) because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for our brothers."

Proverbs 17:17 tells us "a friend loves at all times." In other words, a true friend loves regardless of the circumstances or cost. Love is never determined by where you are, what is happening or what it may cost you

to remain with another person.

It is incredibly lonely not to have a true friend. Ask God to bring to your life a true friend as you honestly seek to be such a friend to those around you. Remember, "a man who has friends must himself be friendly" (Proverbs 18:24).

Galatians 5:22-23 assures us: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." All these qualities are expressions of pure love—God's love. Ask Him to create a heart in you that He can always express it through.

Henry Blackaby is president of Blackaby Ministries International in Atlanta

Support Annie Armstrong Easter Offering

"Men and means were not forthcoming fast enough for the great work of foreign missions, so God turned the stream this way and sent great masses of the unevangelized to come in contact with Christians."—Annie Armstrong, speaking of the international community in Baltimore in the late 1800s.

The goal for the 2004 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions is \$54 million. This vital offering is the lifeline of support for missionaries who are starting new churches, ministering in the inner cities, and sharing Christ where Southern Baptists may be the only evangelical witness.

Every penny given to the Annie Armstrong Offering goes to pay missionary salaries and benefits, and to support their ministries. I want to encourage you now to strongly participate. Last year's goal of \$53 million was not achieved so it is extremely important that we move forward in our giving this year.

Financial support is essential

for our missionaries to minister effectively. Seventy-five percent of the offering will go directly to missionary support. State conventions and the North American Mission Board jointly fund the majority of the missionaries. The funding includes salaries, health benefits, missionary orientation and ongoing missionary training expenses.

Sixteen percent of the offering goes to church planting support, which includes start-up funds for new churches, such as rental of facilities, materials, equipment and promotional expenses. Here in Kentucky, NAMB provides 40 percent and the Kentucky Baptist Convention provides 60 percent of funding for church planting and personnel.

However, NAMB provides up to 70 percent of funding for some language work in Kentucky. Currently, there are about 60 Hispanic ministry centers across our state.

Nine percent of the Annie Armstrong Offering goes to support evangelism projects that undergird

the work of our missionaries. These projects include sports evangelism, scripture distribution, special evangelism events, Internet evangelism and media campaigns.

It is essential that we support the 5,200 missionaries, 2,400 chaplains and hundreds of thousands of missions volunteers who are seeking to reach the 220 million-plus unbelievers in the United States and Canada. This evangelism work is having an important impact:

■ Church and community ministries reported 29,000 professions of faith last year.

■ The Strategic Focus Cities emphasis in six cities has to date resulted in 34,658 professions of faith, 240 church plants and 28,507 volunteers. Miami and New York City are the current Strategic Focus Cities.

■ Nearly 24,000 youth and adult leaders participated in 89 World Changer projects last year.

■ NAMB supported 431 summer missionaries last year.

■ More than 27,000 people are now remembered in disaster relief work.

Remember to pray for NAMB and all missionaries!

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

GIVING

Charitable gift plan can supplement retirement savings

By Laurie Valentine

Cutbacks in deductible retirement plan and IRA contributions have left many executives and professionals looking for tax relief in their years of highest earnings.

Many of them also are looking for a supplemental retirement savings vehicle that permits tax-free growth of their nest egg.

A "retirement unitrust" may be just the right planning tool for such individuals,

if they are motivated to benefit charitable causes as well as themselves with their plan.

A retirement unitrust is a "flip" unitrust that pays the lesser of the net income generated by the trust assets or the unitrust amount (designated percentage of trust asset value, as revalued each year) until a triggering event designated in the trust agreement converts—or flips—the trust into a standard unitrust paying the designated unitrust amount each year.

The benefits to the donor are an income tax deduction equal to the current value of the charitable remainder interest; deferral of much of the trust income until the donor retires; payment of substantial income to the donor after retirement; and a significant ultimate gift to one or more charitable causes.

Here's an example: Dr. John Brown, age 50, transfers assets worth \$100,000 to a unitrust that will pay him the lesser of the net income or 6 percent annually until 2022 when he will turn 68 (the "triggering event"), at which time the unitrust will flip to a standard unitrust paying him 6 percent each year.

Dr. Brown is entitled to a charitable income tax deduction of \$22,563 in the year he creates the trust. If the trust is invested in growth stocks paying dividends of 1 percent and appreciating 7 percent each year until the triggering event, the trust will grow to \$341,679 by 2022. His income from the unitrust also will take a big jump in 2022 from \$286 per year to \$20,280 per year.

Dr. Brown also can add to the unitrust in future years—think "charitable IRA," but without the ceiling on contributions an IRA has—entitling him to additional income tax deductions equal to the value of the charity's remainder interest in the additions.

Laurie Valentine is trust counsel for the Kentucky Baptist Foundation



How should minister's wife face pornography concerns?

Q: A friend of mine is a pastor's wife and she is sure her husband uses the Internet to view pornography. She is afraid of confronting him about it. What should she do?

Encourage your friend to lovingly confront her husband in the spirit of Matthew 18. She will need to carefully set before him the concrete evidence that has raised her suspicions. Praying about this in advance, and even practicing her conversation with him, will help her speak the truth in love without becoming condemning.

Your friend might need to talk about her fear of confronting her husband. Perhaps she fears that he will confirm that he has indeed broken their trust. Maybe she is afraid that this will lead to other revelations or that he simply will deny that anything has happened.

Perhaps she fears an angry response. As you help her work through her fears, remind her of the truth of 2 Timothy 1:7, "For God did not give us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."

Availability, accessibility and anonymity all contribute to an increase in the use of pornography in the general population as well as among the clergy. Should your friend's husband admit to the use of Internet pornography, I would urge her to talk with him about the following concerns:

- The extent of his involvement with Internet pornography.

- Whether he has used other forms of pornography or sinned against her in other ways that involve sex.

- Concrete ways for him to rebuild trust that involve setting limits on the accessibility and availability of sexually illicit materials.

- Accountability measures that would include a mature Christian man (either a colleague in ministry or a Christian counselor).—*Scott Wigginton*

Q: I don't feel like I know myself. I also fear that if I got to know myself, I might not like myself. Ever since my recent dating relationship ended, I have felt out of place. I know part of this is grief, but there seems to be something more basic than that. How can I start to know myself?

The Bible says you are "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139). That is the beginning point. You are a unique, unrepeatable miracle of God. That is who you are. You are more than what has happened to you. You need to see the reflection of the Heavenly Father within you, His fingerprints on your life, and move forward to His Kingdom. Here are some practical ways to get started in this process:

- **SINGLES** Learn to be still. "Be still and know that I am God" is whispered by God to all of us in this busy and hectic culture. When we are still and quiet, we can hear His loving voice and feel His loving arms embracing us with His unconditional love. Write down His whispers to you in a journal as you read His love letters to you, especially those in the Psalms.

- When you fill in the blank, "I am _____," what comes to mind? Is it really you or is it just a label? Moving beyond identifying yourself with the label to identifying yourself as a person who has a variety of roles in life is a huge step. It might take a dozen or more answers to this question before you discover the core of who you are, rather than the roles you play in life.

- What annoys you about other people? These things might reflect issues that you need to work on in your own life. What advice are you constantly giving to others? That could indicate advice you need yourself.

- Honor the unique person God has made in you. God loves you. God even likes you! Celebrate you today. God certainly does. Apart from all other creations, humans are pronounced by Him to be "very good." Celebrate the creation job He did with you.—*James Stillwell*

Family Forum writers are:

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

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

James Stillwell, minister to singles at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington. E-mail: jamess@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.



Fight casino gambling; pick up the phone

They're baaack! Just when you thought it was safe to turn on your radio or television without being bombarded by pro-gambling ads, the gambling industry is gearing up once again to try to legalize casino gambling in Kentucky.

One missing ingredient in the pro-gambling strategy is the adoption of legislation calling for a constitutional amendment to permit casino gambling. Crucial votes on the issue could come up in the Kentucky General Assembly as early as this week.

It's up to Kentucky Baptists and other citizens concerned about the negative impacts of expanded gambling to encourage legislators to reject efforts to put casino gambling on the ballot this fall.

How? The starting point is to contact your legislators and Gov. Ernie Fletcher's office and let them know of your opposition to expanded gambling. You can leave a message for legislators on the toll-free Legislative Message Line at (800) 372-7181 and contact the governor's office at (502) 564-2611. In fact, feel free to make those calls even before you finish reading this editorial. I'll wait. ...

Welcome back. Doesn't it feel better to take action rather than just sit around, fret and complain? I made those same calls last week with the confidence that every voice can help make a difference in Kentucky's ongoing debate over expanded gambling.

Why bother to get involved? There are a number of good reasons, including Kentucky Baptists' historic opposition to gambling on moral grounds. In addition to opposing gambling's inherent "something for nothing" or "winning at someone else's expense" mentality, numerous studies indicate that gambling is little more than a regressive tax levied against those who typically are least able to afford it.

According to a resolution adopted in November

by Kentucky Baptist Convention messengers, expanded gambling would encourage more gambling addictions, crime, family destruction and personal irresponsibility.

The KBC resolution calls on Kentucky's governor, General Assembly and citizens to find ways to "strengthen our state's economy on sound principles of creative and innovative industrial, educational and technological developments rather than on the false hopes of gambling." The resolution adds that "the current proposals for expanding gambling will ultimately cost our economy far more than they will ever produce."

Howard Beauman, executive director of the Kentucky League on Alcohol & Gambling Problems, noted last week that "the thing that will get action is personal calls to these individuals" in government leadership.

Beauman, who recently presented anti-gambling petitions with more than 9,800 signatures to Gov. Fletcher, added, "Getting the grassroots involved is where the big punch will come in."

Robert Reeves, director of the KBC communications department, cautioned, however, in a mailing to Kentucky Baptist leaders, that "the expanded gambling supporters are counting on those who oppose expanded gambling to be unable or too lazy to respond quickly."

It's up to individual Kentucky Baptists and other concerned citizens to help make sure such a dire scenario doesn't come true.

"Please don't put this off thinking that 'someone else' will do it," Reeves urged. "If this issue is important to you, now is the time to make your voice heard during this legislative session!"

Haven't picked up the phone yet? Go ahead, I'll wait. ...

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

Revisionism takes on 'The Passion'

By Steven Ortiz

New Orleans (BP)—The movie was not out yet and already it had caused a major debate. Why would a movie depicting a story so commonplace within Western culture cause such division? Dozens of movies about Jesus are rerun every Easter. Why would this new one bring out the critics?

The reason is the Jesus depicted in the movie "The Passion of the Christ" is not the Jesus of the 21st century.

Deconstruction and revisionism are the philosophy of our times. These deconstructionist trends are evident in media hoopla of the 1990s concerning the Jesus Seminar. This group of scholars, in their search for the "historical Jesus," deconstructed most of the sayings attributed to Jesus in the New Testament down to less than 20 percent. This watered-down Jesus is more palatable to Western man and the fads of contemporary biblical scholarship.

"The Passion" is a visual depiction of the Jesus of the New Testament. This Jesus is not acceptable these days. I saw the movie the other night. Now I understand why the critics have labeled it as controversial. They do not want a suffering Jesus; they want a Hollywood Jesus. Mel Gibson is taking heat in the Hollywood community because he produced a movie about the wrong Jesus—a Jesus who willingly chose to undergo suffering and die on the cross.

What must the critics do with the Jesus depicted in the Passion

movie? Deconstruct.

If the content of the movie is so powerful, then deconstruct Gibson. Critics have focused on Mel Gibson's father and Gibson's Catholic faith; one critic compared Gibson's production of "Braveheart" with "The Passion" on the themes of violence and gore.

Yes, Gibson has frequently portrayed characters in action movies from "Mad Max" to rogue cops. Do the movie critics actually think "The Passion" is a "Mad Max" movie set to the times of first-century Palestine? Is the depiction of the crucifixion of Jesus just another version of "Braveheart"? Or was Roman crucifixion a gory and violent event?

I think it is a fascinating story of how someone in Hollywood has an authentic faith and is willing to invest millions of his own money to portray the Passion accurately. But I expect movie reviews to be about the content of the movie, not the lifestyle of the producer. Does the movie accurately portray the events recorded in the Gospel accounts? Does the movie portray Mel Gibson's version? What is the movie about? Simply stated, the movie is about the cross.

Our society wants to deconstruct the image of the cross. The cross becomes a hip piece of jewelry for Madonna wannabes. It becomes a symbol of group identification. Contemporary theologians have deconstructed the cross as a symbol of political correctness. It is a symbol of liberation from capitalism. "The Passion" confronts these reinterpre-

tations of the cross and places the crucifixion as a horrendous event experienced by Jesus.

Today's church also is in danger of deconstructing Jesus in its own image.

We have developed a myriad of evangelism programs so that the gospel message sometimes seems to be a sales pitch, and Christianity is seen by a lost world as one of many ways of living. We have become guilty of watering down the gospel and placing Jesus in the midst of our Western fast-food, feel-good, self-centered culture.

"There is no greater love than for a man to lay down his life," the Bible says. But this is not the Jesus who will help you move up the corporate ladder.

"Take up our cross and follow Him." Is this the attitude people will find if they walk into our church?

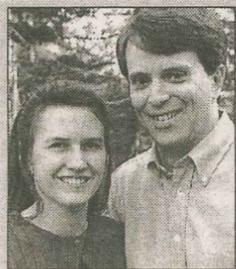
"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." John 3:16 has become a placard to hold up in the end zone of football games. I admit that I also have deconstructed the cross into something casual in my relationship with God. "The Passion of the Christ" has placed the flesh and blood back into this verse.

The question is not what our society should do with Mel Gibson's movie, but what impact the gospel is going to have on our society. Which Jesus is the church going to present? The postmodern Jesus of pop culture or the Jesus Who was preached by the early disciples?

Steven Ortiz is assistant professor of archaeology and biblical studies at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

Meet the missionaries

Here are the other missionaries featured in the March 7-14 Week of Prayer and North American Mission Study. Look for their stories in upcoming editions of the Western Recorder. The Annie Armstrong Easter offering supports the work of nearly 5,200 North American missionaries.

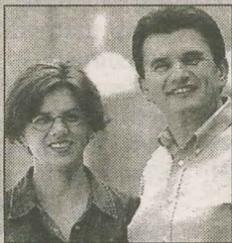


Michael and Michelle Dean Boston

Leaders from around the world find themselves in Boston on a short-term basis for work or study, and Michael and Michelle Dean build relationships with students and other internationals and share Christ with them. **Pray** for the Deans as they find creative ways to minister to and share Christ with internationals. Pray also for more volunteers to come forward to serve.

Mark and Christine Hobafcovich Suwanee, Ga.

Mark Hobafcovich until recently was a church planting missionary helping start churches among more than 100 European, Haitian, Brazilian and Middle Eastern people groups. Now he is on staff at the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board. **Pray** for Hobafcovich to locate, train and mentor pastors for new ethnic churches.



John and Kim Piepmeier Kiana, Alaska

John and Kim Piepmeier serve as Mission Service Corps missionaries in Kiana, Alaska, a remote village of about 400 people just north of the Arctic Circle. **Pray** that the Piepmeiers will be an encouragement and bold witness of Christ to the residents—especially the children.



Stephanie and Ross Smith Bloomington, Minn.

Stephanie Smith is a certified athletic trainer and missionary working with the hockey community in Minnesota—a subculture largely unreached with the gospel. **Pray** for the Smiths as they share the gospel with players. Pray that the players they work with will be drawn to Christ.



Debbie Wohler Tahoe City, Calif.

Debbie Wohler serves as a resort missionary in Lake Tahoe, Calif., "America's Year Round Playground." The area hosts 12 million visitors each year. In the winter, Wohler ministers at six ski areas and in the summer at campgrounds. **Pray** for an increase in volunteers and for residents of the area to realize their greatest need is for Christ.



An and Lienhoa Pham Atlanta

A native of South Korea who helped start churches in prison, An Pham is dedicated to sharing the message of Jesus Christ with the Asian population that is spreading throughout Georgia. **Pray** for an international youth camp he works with, where teenagers grow in their faith.



Michael and Lienhoa Daily Miami

As director of church and community ministries with the Miami Baptist Association for the past 17 years, Michael Daily has helped Miami's nearly 300 Southern Baptist churches minister to thousands of people each year. **Pray** for the upcoming 18-day Dade County Fair, where local Baptists expect to distribute more than 30,000 New Testaments.



New Yorker starting church near Ground Zero

Continued from page 1

"New Yorkers are going to watch us and just wait and see whether we are going to be here long term, and whether our actions match what we're saying."

Farah and his wife, Janine, became Southern Baptist missionaries in 2002, and in the spring of 2003 Mosaic Manhattan launched in the school below their apartment building.

The Farahs are among nearly 5,200 missionaries in the United States and Canada supported by the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions. They are featured during the March 7-14 Week of Prayer and the North American Mission Study, which this year focus on "The World at Our Doorstep."

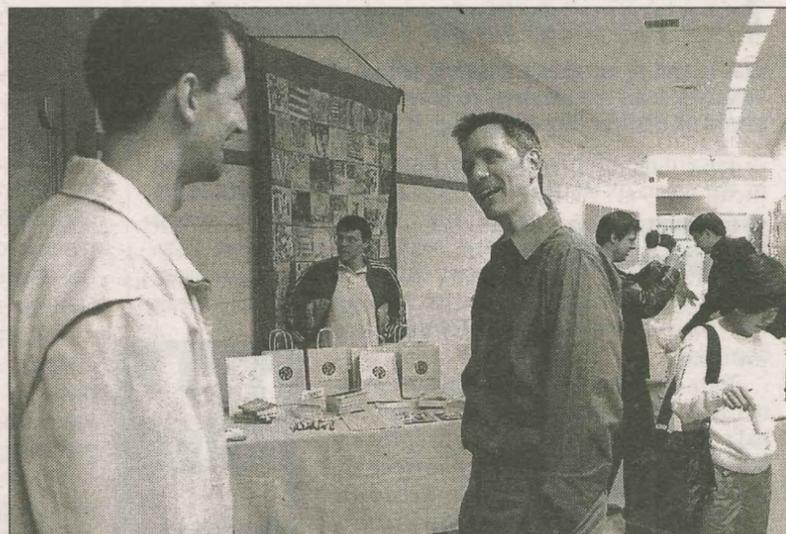
A native New Yorker, Farah had been planning to plant a church in the city in 2001 as part of Southern Baptists New Hope New York emphasis in the city.

After the terrorist attack three years ago, those plans began to accelerate. That December, he was asked to consider leading a new congregation in the Battery Park neighborhood most directly affected by the attack, funded largely through contributions to Southern Baptist entities for long-term relief efforts.

He and his wife moved to the city in April 2002, and began public worship services about a year later. Servant evangelism has been one of their principle outreach tools.

"We wanted to meet practical needs, and have fun doing it," Gregg Farah said. "So we do (evangelistic) surveys, but we also hand out Krispy Kreme donuts. In the summer we hand out bottles of water, and in the winter cups of Starbucks coffee.

"Often those types of interac-



SUNDAY MORNING MEETING Gregg Farah (center) talks with a first-time guest at Mosaic Manhattan, which meets at a public school a few blocks from Ground Zero of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. (NAMB photo by Ken Touchton.)

tions stir up questions like "Why are you doing this?" and "What's the catch?" Farah added. "Those questions lead to great conversations."

Redefining church

Mosaic Manhattan is modeled after the original Mosaic, a Los Angeles congregation that has grown to thousands of members with its emphasis on experiencing God through the arts and welcoming all segments of a culturally diverse society.

Farah also has been influenced by Saddleback Church in Orange County, Calif., which teaches the importance of leading a church and Christian life according to the biblical purposes.

Mosaic Manhattan's slogan, "help us redefine church," also has helped members attract people who haven't found in the traditional church what they are seeking.

"It's not that we want to come up with a new way of doing church, but we want to redefine in people's

minds what church is, what the church can be," he said, "what God originally intended."

Farah is realistic about how long it will take to develop the church—maybe five years, maybe 10. But he also has a bold vision for what it could become if they keep following God's lead.

It's all about multiplication, with new churches being started that eventually will multiply themselves. Two staff members already are being groomed to take on future church plants in the New York area.

"Our vision is to provide a church home for the 21 million people of metro New York," he said. "That's going to take thousands of churches, and we want to be a part of a movement of church planting that seeks that goal," he said.

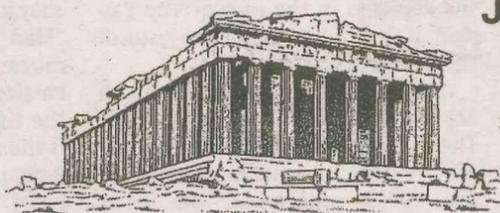
For more about the Farahs and their ministry, visit www.MosaicManhattan.com. For information about volunteer work with church planting and work in New York, visit www.newhopenewyork.com.



JOURNEYS OF PAUL AND JOHN

Historical Study of Turkey and Greece
September 9 - 22, 2004

Sponsored by Severns Valley Baptist Church



The Parthenon, Athens

Escorted by Dr. Billy Compton - Sr. Pastor,
Roger McCurry - Minister of Senior Adults/Activities,
and Dr. Peter Hintzoglou - Bible Study Leader

Turkey and Greece will leave you breathless with wonder. Turkey has played an extensive role in the development of human civilization and the Jewish, Christian and Muslim religions. Greece, known as the birthplace of democracy and drama, is a destination like no other. You are invited to join Roger McCurry and Dr. Billy Compton for a once in a lifetime tour of Turkey and Greece. The tour will include daily teaching on Paul's letters as we travel and learn about the influence he had in this part of the world.

Dr. Peter Hintzoglou, a good friend of Dr. Compton's and professor in New Testament at Fuller Seminary, will be teaching. Peter was born in Athens, Greece, and his knowledge of Greek and the biblical world will have a tremendous impact on your experience. The group will also have the unique opportunity to worship, fellowship and serve a local church in Athens by providing mission support to their congregation.

Call Severns Valley Baptist Church for a complete itinerary or additional information.

Information Meeting and Breakfast Saturday, March 20 - 9:00 a.m.

Severns Valley Baptist Church Christian Life Center

Dr. Compton, Dr. Hintzoglou, Roger McCurry, and a representative from Dehoney Travel will be present to answer any questions you may have. For breakfast reservations, please call (270) 769-5738 or (270) 765-7822.

Watching a blessed union

Staffer's wedding affirms God's plan for marriage

Lately it seems as if every time marriage is mentioned, the context falls far from the biblical picture of God's plan for the union of husband and wife. On Feb. 28, I witnessed the opposite.

I saw a wedding that was modeled after God's plan, and on that day all my frustrated thoughts with our society were erased as we worshiped God during this special event.

A great privilege of our ministry is that we see a large number of college- and seminary-age students serve each summer as Son Team members at Cedarmore and program staff at Jonathan Creek. They are the ones whom we, as a staff, get to know on a personal basis, and I am blessed to see how God works in their lives while serving in our ministry and beyond. One such staff member is Heather Castlen. Heather has worked with our ministry during the past two summers at Jonathan Creek. She has an amazing passion for God.

Last weekend, Heather married Jack Riddle. The wedding ceremony took place in Broadus

Chapel at Southern Seminary in Louisville. The ceremony was filled with Scripture reading, preaching, music and an energetic worship.

The ceremony stood for many truths that day. First the ceremony represented Heather and Jack's commitment to each other, but even more powerful was to witness their commitment to live for Christ in all they do. Their path will take them to a final frontier area of missionary service one day.

A short article cannot begin to contain all my thoughts from that day, but I know everyone there felt very close to Christ as we witnessed Him at work in marriage. His way. I could not help but look forward to the day that my children will get married. I pray for Christian spouses for each of them, and a wedding that demonstrates first and foremost their commitment to Christ. One song from the wedding that perhaps best captures the mood I felt that day was "In Christ Alone." If all we do is founded in that simple phrase, how different would each day be?

David Melber is president of Kentucky Baptist Assemblies. Contact him at 3043 Beal Road, Hardin, KY 42048; phone (270) 354-8355.

KENTUCKY BAPTIST ASSEMBLIES



David Melber

Kudzu

Doug Marlette



For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



Bible Crosswords

Carol Stengel

- Across**
- 1 "With the ___ angels" (Mark 8:38)
 - 3 "The Holy ___ shall teach you" (Luke 12:12)
 - 7 "They went ... from ___ ... into Canaan" (Genesis 11:31)
 - 8 A short laugh
 - 9 Moses and ___ went before Pharaoh (Exodus 5:1)
 - 10 "___ is the way, which leadeth unto life" (Matthew 7:14)
 - 12 Des Moines' state, abbr.
 - 14 One of the twelve tribes (Numbers 1:38)
 - 15 David reigned there (2 Samuel 2:1)
 - 16 Substantive, abbr.
 - 18 "The ___ of thy life shall be many" (Proverbs 4:10)
 - 20 Northeastern area of the U. S., abbr.
 - 21 Earned runs, abbr.
 - 23 "Mine ___ is as nothing before thee" (Psalms 39:5)
 - 24 "Our ___ is grown up" (Ezra 9:6)
 - 29 Graduate degree, abbr.
 - 31 A poem
 - 32 Some were clay and some iron (Daniel 2:42)
 - 34 "These are the ___ covenants" (Galatians 4:24)
 - 36 "Being reviled, ___ bless" (1 Corinthians 4:12)
 - 38 "God saw that ___ was good" (Genesis 1:10)
 - 39 An unclean thing (Leviticus 11:29)
 - 41 Santa Fe's state, abbr.
 - 42 A city belonging to the tribe of Naphtali (Joshua 19:38-39)
 - 44 A mongrel
 - 47 "By faith they passed through the ___ sea" (Hebrews 11:29)
 - 49 Warrant officer, abbr.
 - 50 News agency, abbr.

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37		38			39				40		
								41			
42			43		44	45		46		47	48
			49		50						

- Down**
- 1 "With his ___ spread up to heaven" (1 Kings 8:54)
 - 2 "Confess that Jesus Christ is ___" (Philippians 2:11)
 - 3 Guaranteed annual wage, abbr.
 - 4 "Perform unto the Lord thine ___" (Matthew 5:33)
 - 5 Salvation Army, abbr.
 - 6 "Deliver me out of all ___" (1 Samuel 26:24)
 - 7 The joining of two or more things into one
 - 8 "Provide things ___ in the sight of all men" (Romans 12:17)
 - 11 Man's name, for short
 - 13 Over again
 - 17 "Abraham ___ Isaac" (Genesis 25:19)
 - 19 "A bruised ___ shall he not break" (Matthew 12:20)
 - 22 Do, ___, mi
 - 23 I ___. God's name given to Moses
 - 25 "I am the ___ and the offspring of David" (Revelation 22:16)
 - 26 "He revealeth his ___ unto his servants" (Amos 3:7)
 - 27 "___ I opened my mouth" (Ezekiel 3:2)
 - 28 Stitches
 - 30 "One ___ or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law" (Matthew 5:18)
 - 33 "When we shall ___ him" (Isaiah 53:2)
 - 35 "If any ___ have children" (1 Timothy 5:4)
 - 37 "The noise of a ___, and the noise of the rattling of the wheels" (Nahum 3:2)
 - 40 Zaccur's father (Nehemiah 3:2)
 - 43 "To be sin for us, who knew ___ sin" (2 Corinthians 5:21)
 - 44 Pa's wife
 - 45 "He was taken ___, and a cloud received him out of their sight" (Acts 1:9)
 - 46 "Given ___ hospitality" (Romans 12:13)
 - 48 "Without me ye can ___ nothing" (John 15:5)

Last week's solution

1	H	E	I	R	S	3	M	A	R	8	B	L	E
10	E	A	Y	O	K	E	12	F	A	A	D		
18	L	F	E	L	L	O	W	16	H	A	I		
23	P	A	N	D	M	O	R	A	22	D	C		
27	R	Y	R	E	29	K	G	I	S				
31	S	O	R	K	32	E	G	O	34	C	E		
36	L	O	U	37	G	R	E	W	I	L			
39	L	A	U	G	H	41	S	D	42	P	D		
43	A	L	H	A	44	S	A	46	I	S	L	E	
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57	R	C	I	T	I	Z	E	N	B				

Share the Good News.

You can help Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children share the gospel with the youth in our care. We are in need of donations to purchase Bibles.

If you feel led to help, please make checks payable to KBHC and mail to:

KBHC 10200 Linn Station Road Suite 200 Louisville, KY 40223

LifeWay Church Buses

1-800-370-6180
www.carpenterbus.com

NATIONAL NOTES

'Souper Bowl' Collects \$4 Million. Churches nationwide raised more than \$4 million for thousands of charities as part of the "Souper Bowl for Caring." The Souper Bowl for Caring is a faith-based group that coordinates charity donation drives at churches across the country every year on Super Bowl Sunday. This year, more than 12,000 churches participated in the drive. Since its beginning with one South Carolina church in 1990, the Souper Bowl for Caring has raised more than \$24 million for charities throughout the United States.

House panel increases FCC indecency penalty again. The House Energy and Commerce Committee voted 49-1 for a measure increasing the maximum penalty the Federal Communications Commission may impose for indecency on television and radio. The House Telecommunications and the Internet Subcommittee approved Feb. 12 a version of the Broadcast Decency Enforcement Act, H.R. 3717, which increased the FCC penalty tenfold from the current \$27,500 maximum to \$275,000. By the time the full committee considered the measure, support had mounted to push the maximum fine to \$500,000 for each violation.

Ousted Alabama justice argues for reinstatement. Attorneys for Alabama's former chief justice have asked for his reinstatement by claiming Roy Moore did not commit an ethical violation when he defied a federal court's order last year to remove a Ten Commandments monument from the courthouse. Moore's attorneys said he was bound by his oath of office not to follow the federal court's order. Alabama Assistant Attorney General Charles Campbell countered: "This case is about three things: a judge, a court order and a judge's decision to intentionally violate the law."

South Dakota legislature passes abortion ban. South Dakota's legislature has passed and sent to the governor a bill that would ban almost all abortions. Gov. Mike Rounds is pro-life, but has not said whether he would sign it. He has until March 12 to decide. The bill, which states that life begins at conception, includes an exception for terminating pregnancies that endanger the life of the mother. Some abortion opponents oppose the bill, saying it would almost certainly be struck down in court, reinforcing the 1973 Roe v. Wade ruling.

Passage of Unborn Victims Act draws praise, criticism

Washington (RNS)—The House of Representatives' passage of the Unborn Victims of Violence Act late last month brought praise and criticism from organizations generally on opposite sides of the abortion debate.

By a vote of 254-163, the House approved the bill, which was named after Laci Peterson and her unborn child Conner, victims of highly publicized murders in California. It gives a fetus separate victim's rights when a pregnant woman is attacked.

Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, R-Tenn., said he hoped to take up the measure soon, the Associated Press reported.

President Bush, a representative of the nation's Catholic bishops and leaders of evangelical Christian groups hailed the House action.

"Pregnant women who have been harmed by violence, and their families, know that there are two victims—the mother and the unborn child—and both victims should be protected by federal law," the president said in a statement. "I urge the Senate to pass this bill so that I can sign it into law."

Groups expressing disappointment in the vote ranged from Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, to the National Organization for Women.

"The legislation would be yet another step in limiting reproductive rights," said June Walker, national president of the New York-based Hadassah. "This legislation could potentially pit the rights of a fetus against the rights of its mother."

Coming In March!

Understanding Jehovah's Witness

Sharing the Biblical Jesus with People of Other Beliefs

Tuesday, March 23, 2004

7:00-9:00 p.m.

Swiss Colony Baptist Church
London, Kentucky

A Special Note to Acteen Leaders:

This may fulfill a MissionsQuest requirement for your Acteens.

Kentucky Baptists will be learning about the belief systems of the Jehovah's Witness at this conference offered by the Kentucky Baptist Convention. All sessions are led by certified North American Mission Boards, Interfaith Coordinator, Tal Davis.

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

— Dan Garland,

KBC Church Development and Evangelism Team leader

For directions and further information, call
Laurel River Baptist Association at 606-864-9441



Church Development and
Evangelism Team

10701 Shelbyville Rd., Louisville, KY 40243

502-254-4737 or

Toll Free 888-254-5722

This is a **FREE** conference.
No pre-registration required.
Funded in part by
**Eliza Broadus State
Missions Offering and
the Cooperative Program.**

For further information on this
conference go online to:
www.kybaptist.org
(Church Development and
Evangelism Team)

'Oh my gosh, I miss Oneida so much!'

Recent graduate's e-mail shows she understands Oneida's impact on her life

Frequently I receive letters, phone calls or e-mails from former students. Most of those students made the best use of their time here at Oneida Baptist Institute and have fond memories of their Oneida days. The reality is that at some point in time all students must leave in order to continue their journeys to adulthood. Some students regain their priorities and can return home with a better attitude and outlook on life after a year or two at Oneida. For others, graduation is often the final chapter in their Oneida journey.

Many of our students, past and present, come from broken or single-parent families. Typically that translates to lower household incomes, which means many of those students must receive substantial financial aid. It is often difficult for teenagers to fully understand or appreciate the material blessings they have, including their Oneida scholarships. A nice room to sleep in, a good car in which to travel, designer clothing and three meals a day are often considered their entitlements. So they think! We try to prepare our students for the reality of their post-Oneida days. Normally, after being on their own for a few months, they begin to realize they had no realistic understanding of everyday expenses and problems.

A recent graduate sent me an e-mail yesterday that began with, "Oh my gosh, I miss Oneida so much!" I remembered that she had spent four years with us. Her father saw her for the last time when she was six months old. When she enrolled at OBI, her single-parent

mother was having a difficult time raising three children.

"Irene" (not her real name) was not having any substantial problems at home, but her grades were not the best and her mother thought a Christian boarding school environment would be good for her. The household income was very limited. Irene's mother offered \$25 per month room and board. We agreed and Irene came to Oneida. She struggled academically, but gradually her grades improved. By her senior year she was on the honor roll.

We were happy for Irene when she entered a university here in Kentucky after graduation. Things at home have become even more difficult because of her mother's illness. Irene now is struggling with the added pressure of needing to help her mother but wanting desperately to stay in school.

Like many other students, Irene realizes that though she made great progress here, she did not take advantage of every opportunity. She wrote, "I wish I could just come back to Oneida and start all over."

We know that most students simply do not understand how complicated things can be after graduation. While at Oneida, this young lady was sheltered from the financial burdens of life. Even though she knew she was receiving a substantial scholarship, the value of that scholarship was not fully understood. Hopefully the training she received at Oneida will help her make the right decisions concerning her mother's needs as well as her own educational needs.

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

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

Jesus still touches the blind

N.C. student continues to prepare for future ministry

Computer PowerPoint class presentations by professors don't help North Carolina student Kenneth Rape. Born legally blind, his hereditary problem worsened until he was totally without sight at age 14.

"I have good childhood memories of colors and seasonal changes," Kenneth said. "I think that helps me adapt to situations better than someone who has never seen."

While attending the School for the Blind in Raleigh, N.C., he rode with other residents on a bus to attend Bible study and worship at a Baptist church in Garner and was saved at age 13. He left school at age 16 and spiraled downward for two years with drinking and drugs. In 1974 Kenneth returned to Raleigh for additional rehab training. He met Louise, who was helping her brother operate the boarding house for 38 blind men. "I came as a client," Kenneth said. "And we married three months later. She and the Lord helped me get back on the right track."

They lived 14 years in Durham, N.C., where Kenneth operated a paper-cutting press at Lions Club Industries. He attended business

classes at night. "I wasn't getting much sleep and decided it wasn't worth it," he said. "We sold everything and went to South Carolina and cared for my grandmother until she died." They became active in church again. In 2001 he accepted the call to ministry; Louise wasn't surprised.

After two years at Fruitland (N.C.) Baptist Bible Institute, the Rapes moved to Clear Creek in January. They brought Aspen, a yellow lab work dog. "Aspen is my fourth dog, and each had a unique personality," Kenneth said. "Aspen loves to play and likes water."

Scanners read his textbooks. "I didn't know anything about computers until two years ago," he said. "I don't know how blind people coped before the technology like we now have." With his computer, Kenneth prepares the bulletin for Wolf Creek Church in Williamsburg.

"The fellowship at Clear Creek is good," Kenneth said. "We like living in a house instead of a dormitory. Everyone is willing to help."

CLEAR CREEK
CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

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

Adrian Rogers' latest explores Revelation's encouragement

Memphis (BP)—Author and pastor Adrian Rogers states in his new book that today's evil and dangerous time signals the last days.

But the Book of Revelation gives Christians the encouragement and understanding they need to live bold, hope-filled lives, writes Rogers, senior pastor of the 27,000-member Bellevue Baptist Church near Memphis.

Revelation "offers every believer a dramatic and hope-filled overview of what the end of the age will be like," said Rogers, author of "Unveiling the End Times in Our Time."

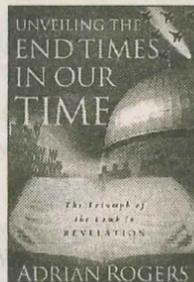
"The Book of Revelation tells us that the future is in God's hands and the best is yet to come," he said. "It gives us a proper understanding of where history is headed and empowers us to live boldly in eager expectation of the return of King Jesus."

Revelation has fascinated believers for nearly 2,000 years with its dragons, beasts and plagues.

Rogers said Revelation's symbolic imagery—and the way it often is abused—causes many Christians to shy away from the

book altogether.

"When they do that, they miss incredible encouragement and penetrating insight, not only into the future but for today," he said. "That's sad."



ADRIAN ROGERS

Rogers' 28 short chapters are designed for Bible teachers or preachers to be able to adapt them for everyday ministry.

God meant the book for blessing, not confusion or controversy, Rogers said.

"The Book of Revelation is a great treasure, but it can be a source of fanaticism and foolishness to the careless or carnal reader," he said. "The book was given to engender faith, not fanaticism or foolishness."

"Revelation should be read and studied with an extra measure of humility," he added. "I am a convinced pretribulation premillennialist (someone who believes the earth will experience a seven-year tribulation period, followed by a 1,000-year reign of Christ on earth), but many who come from that same basic approach will still disagree with me at various points."

A Robertson Worship Endowment Event

Dr. Robert Webber

"Ancient Future Evangelism"



Dr. Robert Webber

Dr. Robert "Bob" Webber is recognized by pastors, denominational leaders, scholars and lay people as one of the foremost authorities on worship renewal. He regularly conducts workshops for almost every major denomination in North America through the Institute in Worship Studies, which he founded in 1995.

Over 30,000 people have attended his workshops. He has authored over 40 books on worship and the Church, including *The Complete Library of Christian Worship and Renew Your Worship!* and a complete audio and video series based on his *Renew Your Worship* workshops. He is also a regular contributor to numerous magazines, journals and newspapers.

April 15-16, 2004

Thursday, April 15, 7 p.m. EST
at Campbellsville Baptist Church

Free Admission

Friday, April 16, 12 Noon EST
Luncheon at the Technology Training Center Room 203

\$15.00 Registration Lunch

1:30 p.m. EST "Dialogue with Pastors and Music/Worship Leaders"

Campbellsville
UNIVERSITY

Contact
Office of Church and External Relations
270.789.5520
jchowning@campbellsville.edu
Registration Required for April 16 Lunch

360 Degree Preaching: Hearing, Speaking and Living the Word. Michael Quicke. Baker Academic, 2003. 233 pages, \$16.99. ♦♦♦♦♦ (out of five)

If I were to be asked to teach a class on preaching, this is one of the books I would give serious consideration as a textbook.

The primary reason is not that it covers the basics well, which it does. Nor is it that the book is appealing because it is immensely practical, which it is. The book stands out because it presents a couple of original ideas that actually help the preacher or the student get a better handle on the preaching task. That's not a common outcome of many preaching texts.

The first of these ideas is the model of preaching, which gives the book its name. This model is not a neat and orderly approach to defining the preaching task. Rather, there are multiple points of entry to the preaching task and multiple places in which spirituality takes over from process. Jesus Christ is central and touches all aspects of the task.

The second idea is the image that preaching is like swimming. It is here that Quicke seems the most passionate about the preaching task. The image of swimming conjures up many useful comparisons that the author covers well. Quicke develops this idea of the preaching swim into a profile that has distinct phases: immerse, interpret, design, deliver and experience.

Quicke's book needs time to sink in and will probably be more valuable to me as time goes on. Despite the idea among some Christians that preaching has served its time in the church, Quicke's effort shows that preaching is still important in the church and in the sharing of the gospel story. Wayne Hager

Questions of Faith: A Skeptical Affirmation of Christianity. Peter Berger. Blackwell Publishing, 2004. 187 pages. \$24.95. ♦♦♦

Peter Berger's general thesis could be summarized as follows: "Christianity must be true, because it is the only world religion that even comes close to addressing the problem of evil and suffering. However, Christianity's content and expressing need a dramatic overhaul to be acceptable to me."

His "argument is skeptical in that it does not presuppose faith, does not feel bound by any of the traditional authorities in matters of faith ... and takes seriously the historical contingencies that shape all religious traditions. Nevertheless, (it) eventuates in an affirmation of Christian faith."

The Apostles' Creed forms the outline of Berger's exploration and affirmation of Christianity. Using phrases from the creed as chapter titles, he poses questions about their meaning and seeks to develop a response that will sustain belief by a modern, skeptical mind.

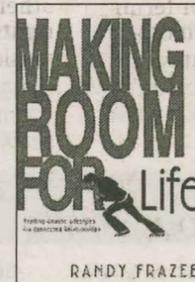
In developing his affirmation, Berger leans heavily on the theologi-

cal insights of Paul Tillich, Rudolph Bultmann, Adolf von Harnack, and John Hick. While applying their various insights to his reformation of the Christian faith, Berger, in seeking to develop a consistently acceptable view of Christianity, nevertheless falls prey to various inconsistencies. For example, he rejects the Docetic view of Christ (the heretical idea that Jesus only appeared to have a body), while wholeheartedly accepting Bultmann's demythologized view of the resurrection; a view that skates awfully close to the Docetic abyss.

Berger confesses to being uncomfortable with Paul's apparent juridical view of sin and salvation, and finds John's picture more appealing. Rather than dealing with the tension, he seems to believe that Paul can be dismissed and John affirmed.

These criticisms aside, "Questions of Faith" is a valuable contribution to understanding the message of Christianity in our world. Berger asks insightful, tough questions. He provides helpful (but limited) insight into the development of Christian theology. Not all of his insights into the Christian faith can be, nor should be, questioned or dismissed. Jim Holladay

Making Room for Life: Trading Chaotic Lifestyles for Connected Relationships. Randy Frazee. Zondervan, 2003. \$17.99. ♦♦



Three-quarters of the way through this book, Randy Frazee had my attention and imagination.

But somewhere in the middle of the last section, his insights turned from being a liberating challenge to another program to be managed.

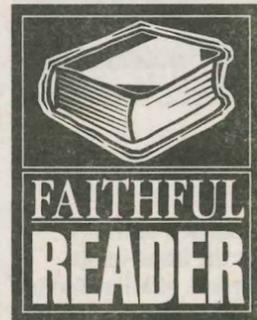
Frazee joins the chorus of voices who contend that our modern (and perhaps urban) lifestyles are squeezing the life out of life.

In the first part of the book, he introduces his concept of "crowded loneliness." His diagnosis of our contemporary situation is that we live in a web of disconnected, linear relationships. The only common connection among these relational patterns is us.

Like many others before him, Frazee suggests that the way out of our dilemma is to create connectedness by "restructuring relationships and time." His proposal for restructuring time is the adoption of the "Hebrew Day Planner." By this he means adopting a pattern of living that, six days per week, sets aside 12 hours per day for work, four hours for family/relational time, and eight hours for sleep. The seventh day is a day of Sabbath rest.

While this pattern speaks of a need for boundaries in our living, Frazee tends to idealize a bucolic, pastoral pattern of living that was normative in an agrarian, nomadic culture.

Many of us need to hear Frazee's challenge to restructure the frenetic pace of our lives, and to re-evaluate our relational patterns. I wish he had explored how this Hebrew time pattern had worked itself out in Jerusalem. Jim Holladay



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

PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following ministries throughout Kentucky:

■ **Christ's Outreach for the Blind in Mt. Vernon.** Mission Service Corps missionaries Mike and Lori Gates direct this 800-acre Christian camp for blind and disabled children. Mike, who is blind himself, felt led of God to provide a place where children could experience the love of Christ while participating in such activities as fishing, archery, swimming and horseback riding. Pray that they will pass all state inspections as they prepare to open this year. Pray also that through this ministry, many children will come to experience a personal relationship with Christ.

■ **Red River Association's new partnership.** Little Bethel and Christian County associations of Western Kentucky have formed a three-to-five-year partnership with Red River Baptist Association of Eastern Kentucky. Directors of missions Larry Baker, Bob Morrison and Jack Fletcher request prayer as they work together in evangelism, church planting, construction, vacation Bible schools and simultaneous revivals.

■ **Marriage Ministry of Crestwood Baptist Church in Crestwood.** David and Penny Hudson lead this ministry and are working to develop a community-wide network that will help seriously dating couples and engaged couples as they prepare for marriage. Pray for them as they strengthen marriages by leading and encouraging couples on their journey.

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **CADIZ**—Cadiz Church will celebrate the 100th anniversary of its old sanctuary March 21. Pastor Emeritus **Norman Ellis** will teach a combined adult Sunday school class. **Bill Clark Thomas** will preach in the evening service

■ **CORBIN**—Bethlehem Church recently called **Kyle Knight** as pastor. ■ **EDDYVILLE**—First Church recently honored **Nub and June Simpkins** on their 50th wedding anniversary. **Tim Perdue** is pastor.

■ **ELIZABETHTOWN**—Severns Valley Church will host **Peter Hintzoglou** as guest speaker March 21, 8:30, 9:45 and 11 a.m. The church will host the **Crossman Quartet** March 21, 7:15 p.m. **Billy Compton** is pastor.

■ **ERLANGER**—Erlanger Church will host a women's conference March 13, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., with **Kim Bolton** as guest speaker. For information call (859) 727-2588.

■ **EUBANK**—Floyd Switch Church recently called **Daniel Smith** as minister of youth.

■ **FAUBUSH**—Mount Pisgah Church recently called **Scott Neal** as pastor.

■ **FLORENCE**—Kento-Boo Church recently honored **Stan Cole** on his 20th anniversary as pastor.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Boone's Creek Church recently ordained **Tom Rawlins** as a deacon.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Clifton Church recently called **David Dykes** as minister to children.

Cloverleaf Church will host the **Rick Webb Trio** in concert March 20, 7 p.m. For information, call (502) 367-0218. **Geoffrey Lacefield** is pastor.

Deer Park Church recently called **Becky Mosher** as minister of children. **Ron Turner** is serving as interim minister of music.

Hurstbourne Church recently ordained **Will Ailstock** as a deacon. **Jon Bishop** is pastor.

Walnut Street Church recently ordained **Dennis Brown, Jason Hunsucker, Harry Orton, Kyle Shepherd, Kathy Simonis** and **Darin Young** as deacons.

■ **MARION**—Second Church recently ordained **Danny Starrick** to the gospel ministry.

■ **NANCY**—Bethlehem Church recently called **Jamey Epperson** as pastor.

Lakeside Baptist Mission called **David King** as pastor.

■ **OWENSBORO**—Hall Street Church will hold revival services March 14, 10:45 a.m., and 6 p.m., and March 15-17, 7 p.m., with **Hollie Miller** as evangelist.

Lewis Lane Church will host **Dwight Ashley** in a service of music March 14. For information, call (270) 684-4266.

Pleasant Grove Church will hold revival service March 14-16 with **Fred Luter** as evangelist and March 17 with **Jerry Falwell** as evangelist. **Eric Allen**, Kentucky Baptist Convention Mission Service Corps consultant, will be the music evangelist. **Kenneth Stone** is pastor.

Third Street Church will host the **Southern Sound Gospel Quartet** in concert March 14, 6:30 p.m. **Charles Douglas** is minister of music. For information, call (270) 683-0269.

■ **PARIS**—Spears Mill Church will



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March

12-13 Creative Ministries Festival-East, Immanuel Baptist Church, Lexington.

12-13 Mission Service Corps Basic Training, KBC Building, Louisville.

13 All-State Youth Choir & Orchestra auditions, First Baptist Church, Hopkinsville.

10-20 Kentucky Changers, collegiate, Morehead.

19-20 Great Commission Prayer Conference, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

19-20 Youth Bible Drill & Speakers Tournament, Cedarmore.

20 All-State Youth Choir & Orchestra auditions, First Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

20 Regional Keyboard Festival, Eastwood Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

20 Youth Bible Drill & Speakers Tournament, Jonathan Creek.

22 Sunday School Director/Pastor Workshop, Trace Creek Baptist Church, Mayfield.

22-23 Welcome to Kentucky, KBC Building, Louisville.

23 Sunday School Director/Pastor Workshop, First Baptist Church, Princeton.

26-27 Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union annual meeting, First Baptist Church, Hopkinsville.

27 Girls in Action/Children in Action missions event, First Baptist Church, Hopkinsville.

29 Sunday School Director/Pastor Workshop, First Baptist Church, Morgantown.

30 Sunday School Director/Pastor Workshop, Immanuel Baptist Temple, Henderson.

April

31-April 02 Soak-A-City youth evangelism conference, First Baptist Church, Mt. Washington.

15-16 Quarterly prayer meeting for spiritual awakening, Gasper River Association, Morgantown.

16-18 All-state children's choir—East, Cedarmore.

16-17 EXALT state Acteens conference, Campbellsville Baptist Church.

18 Cooperative Program Sunday.

18-24 MissionsFEST, Prestonsburg.

For more information, call (888) 266-6477 or click www.kybaptist.org

hold revival services March 28-31 with **Bob Norman** as evangelist.

■ **ROCKHOLDS**—Faber Church recently ordained **Chip Marlow** as a deacon.

■ **SALYERSVILLE**—Licking River Church recently ordained **Joe Hundley** as a deacon. The church will hold revival services March 21-24 with **Carl Mullins** as evangelist.

■ **SOMERSET**—Immanuel Church recently called **Adam Owens** as minister of music.

■ **TOMAHAWK**—Tomahawk Missionary Church will hold revival services April 25-29 with **Carl Mullins** as evangelist. **Jack Ward** is pastor.

■ **WALTON**—New Banklick Church recently called **Phil Quinn** as minister of music.

CLASSIFIED ADS

AVAILABLE: 30-year-old experienced senior pastor seeks full-time church in the greater Louisville area. For resumé: Mike Sanders, (205) 680-6562.

AVAILABLE: Bivocational pastor, experienced with degree. Seeking to do supply work or possible interim. References available. (606) 271-1647.

AVAILABLE: Older minister seeking pastorate. For resumé: Ted Nicholson, 321 Fox Lane, Jamestown, KY 42629, or (270) 343-3497.

FOR RENT: Two-bedroom/two-bath condo in Destin, Fla. Available March-August. (850) 837-8832 or 538-6769.

FOR SALE: 1989 Ford 15-passenger church van. \$2,800. (270) 358-4500.

SEEKING: Full-time associate minister of youth and families. Salary related to education and experience. Prior church youth ministry experience required; seminary degree preferred. Send resumé before March 31 to: Personnel Committee, Woodburn Baptist Church, PO Box 38, Woodburn, KY 42170.

SEEKING: Part-time youth minister (paid position; grades 6-12) for Mexico Baptist Church in rural western Kentucky. Average Sunday school attendance: 135. Send resumé to MBC Youth Council, 175 Mexico Road, Marion, KY 42064, Attn: Brent Highfil, or call (270) 965-2149. turnerchandler@hotmail.com.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor. Send resumé to: Brookside Baptist Church, 1351 Wilmore Road, Nicholasville, KY 40356. Attn: Search Committee.

SEEKING: Music director for Hustonville Baptist Church. Job description available upon request. If interested, call (606) 346-4931.

SEEKING: Beacon Hill Baptist Church in Somerset, Ky., is presently seeking a discipleship and evangelism pastor. Beacon Hill is a purpose-driven church with an average worship attendance of 600 and Sunday school of 525. You may visit our Web site at www.beaconhillbaptist.com for more information. If interested, please send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Beacon Hill Baptist Church, 274 Old Monticello Road, Somerset, KY 42503.

SEEKING: Minister of adult missions and spiritual maturity. King's Cross Church is an exciting seven-year-old congregation located in Tullahoma, Tenn. The worship style is purposely contemporary to create a non-threatening environment for the unchurched. Membership has grown from 80 to 400 and we have recently moved to a new facility. We are seeking an individual with a theological education and experience in ministry who can lead adults in local and global missions and toward spiritual maturity. King's Cross Church is affiliated with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. For more information about us, visit www.kingscrosschurch.org. Send resumé to: Chairperson of the Search Team, King's Cross Church, 222 Turkey Creek Road, Tullahoma, TN 37388.

SEEKING: Full-time worship minister for First Baptist, Mayfield, Ky. Average attendance: 500+. Blended worship style with praise team-led worship. Position will give leadership to 65-member sanctuary choir, praise team and worship planning. Send resumé to: Pastor Bob Swift, First Baptist Church, 118 W South St., Mayfield, KY 42066.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor. Send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, Grapevine Missionary Baptist Church, 85 Sandcut Road, Madisonville, KY 42431.

SEEKING: Part-time secretary, Administrative Services department. Position requires secretarial, computer, spreadsheet and word processing experience. Competitive hourly wage, no benefits. Contact: Administrative Services department, Kentucky Baptist Convention, PO Box 43433, Louisville, KY 40253-0433, or (502) 244-6468.

SEEKING: Experienced associate minister to students for Southern Baptist church in East Tennessee. The qualified candidate will possess proven capability in supporting and implementing an established comprehensive student ministry program. Must have experience in developing one-on-one relationships with students; planning camps, conferences and retreats; working with volunteers; and have a strong passion for discipleship and missions. Interested candidates should e-mail resumé to: sfultz@fbconcord.org.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor. Send resumé to: Pulpit Committee, Cumberland Missionary Baptist Church, 408 Spring St., Cumberland, KY 40823.

SEEKING: Farmdale Baptist Church prayerfully seeks part-time youth minister. If interested, please send resumé to: Farmdale Baptist Church, 5610 U.S. Highway 127 South, Frankfort, KY 40601, Attn: Personnel department.

SEEKING: Tenor vocalist for Southern Gospel quartet. Professional group is ministry-minded, travels nationally and has an immediate opening. Seeking a committed young man with talent and desire for ministry. For more information, please call (502) 930-0116. Serious inquiries only.

SEEKING: Experienced minister of children for Southern Baptist church in East Tennessee. The qualified candidate will possess proven experience in planning, supporting and implementing a comprehensive children's ministry program. Must have experience in administering and directing a strong Sunday school ministry; developing strong relationships with parents and children; organizing and promoting an effective outreach program; planning camps; enlisting and training volunteers; and working with church committees and members in carrying out the children's ministry. Interested candidates should e-mail resumé to: sfultz@fbconcord.org.

Prayer warrior mothers



PRAYER CIRCLE A Moms in Touch group prays at Oakdale Park Christian Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Mich. Moms in Touch International, which encourages Christian mothers to gather weekly and pray for their children and their schools, marks its 20th anniversary this year. (RNS photos by TJ Hamilton)

Moms in Touch inspires women worldwide

By Mary Jacobs
Religion News Service

Dallas (RNS)—Women carrying flags from around the world—Nigeria, Guatemala, New Zealand and other nations—paraded through the cavernous ballroom. An audience of 1,600 women looked on, singing, eyes glistening, arms raised.

They had traveled here from 50 states and 38 countries for this gathering. And they had one simple thing in common—all were Christian mothers who meet weekly, for one hour, to pray for their children and their schools.

"For such a time as this, we have been summoned here by God," Fern Nichols said from the podium. "This is a family reunion."

The gathering was the 20th anniversary celebration of Moms in Touch International. Nichols started the organization at her home in Poway, Calif., in 1984. Worried about her oldest son, who was starting junior high school, she invited a few other moms to join her for prayer.

Today, 20,000 groups meet in 95 countries, following the same basic pattern of prayer that Nichols used at her kitchen table with that first group. The organization estimates that 150,000 women participate worldwide.

"God is working, one mom at a time," Nichols said. "And one day we want to have a Moms in Touch group praying for every child in every school in every nation."

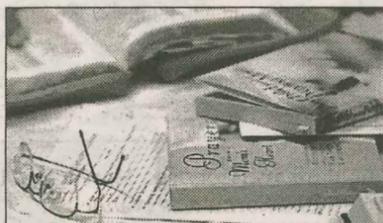
"The greatest thing you can do"

Nichols recently finished a book tour for "Every Child Needs a Praying Mom," which she co-wrote with Janet Kobobel Grant, telling of the organization's humble beginnings and rapid growth.

"People ask me, 'That's all you do—is pray?' But we think that's the greatest thing you can do," Nichols said.

With her children grown, Nichols now attends a weekly "Grandmas in Touch" group and devotes her time to developing the worldwide organization.

Moms in Touch has expanded



PRAYER GUIDES Religious books lay on a table with an open Bible during a Moms in Touch meeting.

to include incarcerated mothers, moms who homeschool and groups that pray specifically for special needs children, preschoolers, adopted children or "prodigals," children struggling with problems such as addiction, depression or rebellion.

Marlae Gritter, the organization's national director, is one of the moms who prayed for a prodigal. Joining Moms in Touch in 1991, she asked God for healing for her daughter, Michelle, who was angry, depressed and, at one point, suicidal. Gritter said that her prayer—that her daughter "see herself as God sees her"—was answered and Michelle, now 21, has begun turning her life around.

Other moms shared stories of children restored from life-threatening illness or from drug and alcohol addiction and of schools "renewed" to be more accepting of Christian prayer and biblical values. Conference participants learned about leading and organizing local groups; Nichols taught the four-step method of prayer used in every Moms in Touch meeting: praise, thanksgiving, confession and intercession.

Evelyn Christenson, 82, a veteran leader of prayer seminars, delivered the conference's keynote address. Her 1968 book, "What Happens When Women Pray," inspired Nichols' approach.

Participant Maragaret Bategeka-Ssekide traveled from Kampala, Uganda, for the conference. After organizing 50 Moms in Touch groups in Uganda, she said she sees a difference in the children, who follow the example of their moth-

ers. "Children are like high priests," she said. "They pray so beautifully for their fellow students."

Martha Nichols of Cordova, Alaska, said she believes her prayers were answered, even though her son, Josh, age 13, was killed last November in a hunting accident. "My prayer was that he would see other people through Jesus' eyes, and love them no matter what," she said.

At Josh's funeral, she said, dozens of people shared stories of how Josh had been a friend to the friendless, befriending a disabled boy and an unpopular girl. Many used the exact words she had used in her prayers to describe Josh.

Beyond middle-class white suburbs

With many participants coming from Africa, Latin America and Asia, the group was fairly diverse. Most Moms in Touch in the United States, however, are white. Leaders say they are working and praying to make the organization more inviting to African-American and Hispanic women.

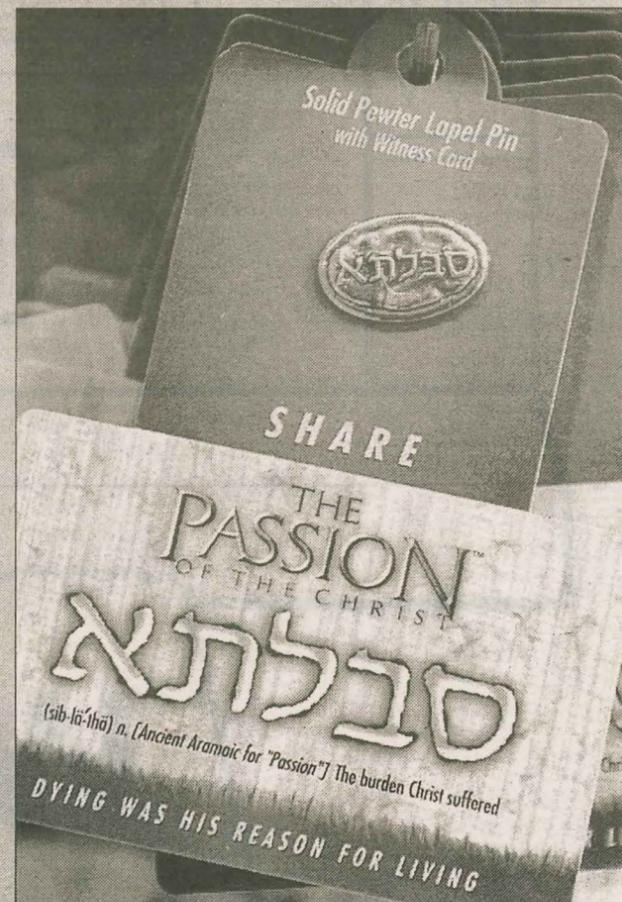
Lisa Taylor of Denton, Texas, who is African-American, spoke at the conference about arriving at her first meeting with Moms in Touch and seeing "a room full of pretty white women."

She felt uncomfortable but eventually linked up with a group that clicked. She now leads a Moms in Touch group and told how the group's prayers and support helped her persevere through a crisis with her youngest daughter.

Some Moms in Touch groups combine prayer with "Words and Deeds," offering encouragement to teachers and schools through homemade goodies and messages of support. Although members talk about bringing "biblical values" into the public schools, the group doesn't lobby or advocate. Prayer, members believe, is their best weapon against secular values, negative peer pressure or sexual experimentation.

Nichols said: "We are going right in front of every school, and we are saying, 'Satan, you cannot have them.'"

'Passion' merchandise



TRINKET A pewter lapel pin that reads "Passion" in Aramaic is among the merchandise inspired by Mel Gibson's film "The Passion of the Christ." (RNS photo by Gus Chan)

Will related T-shirts & trinkets water down movie's message?

By Leila Atassi
Religion News Service

Maple Heights, Ohio (RNS)—A line of merchandise to accompany the release of Mel Gibson's movie "The Passion of the Christ," which depicts the horrific last hours of Jesus' earthly life, has Christian bookstores scrambling to keep displays stocked.

In addition to T-shirts, the Rainbow Family Book Center in Maple Heights, Ohio, for example, offers a coffee-table picture book with scenes from the movie, pewter pocket reminders and prayer cards inspired by the film.

They also have the official "The Passion of the Christ" jewelry line, marketed by Bob Siemon, who previously created "What Would Jesus Do?" jewelry. It includes bracelets, lapel pins and necklaces, the most popular of which has been a 2-inch-long pewter nail pendant, meant to be a replica of nails used in the Crucifixion.

An estimated 75,000 nail pendants, which come harnessed to leather cords, have been shipped to vendors across the country, according to Associated Press.

The new iconography of the nail might serve to sensitize Christians to the gruesomeness of the Crucifixion and, more generally, the violence suffered globally on a daily basis, said Doris Donnelly, professor of religious studies at John Carroll University.

"The crucifix was once embedded with jewels and emphasized the beauty of the Resurrection, because in the Middle Ages, seeing the suffering of Jesus was not an effective evangelical instrument to inspire people to become Christian," she said.

"The crucifix alone does not emphasize the sense of horror that accompanies the act of Crucifixion."

But Donnelly said she worries that the fundamental meaning of the nail might be shuffled in with the kitschy accouterments affiliated with Gibson and his contributions to pop culture.

But young shoppers such as Nicole Ramseur and LaTonya Walker, both of whom have tattoos of a cross or the likeness of Jesus on their backs, agree that the nail pendant has breathed new life into the expression of sympathy for Jesus' suffering.

"The symbolism of the cross is so watered down now," Ramseur said. "Everyone wears the cross, even those who don't go to church. We needed something that speaks louder than the cross. And the nail is what was used to put Him there."

The Kentucky League

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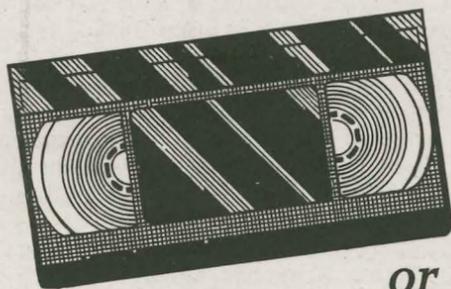
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