



March 30, 2004
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Poll: Americans unhappy with moral climate

Princeton, N.J. (RNS)—An annual Gallup Poll found that nearly two-thirds of Americans are dissatisfied with the country's moral and ethical climate, while younger people seem to be less pessimistic.

Gallup's annual Mood of the Nation poll found that 64 percent of Americans are dissatisfied with the country's moral climate, while 35 percent say they are satisfied.

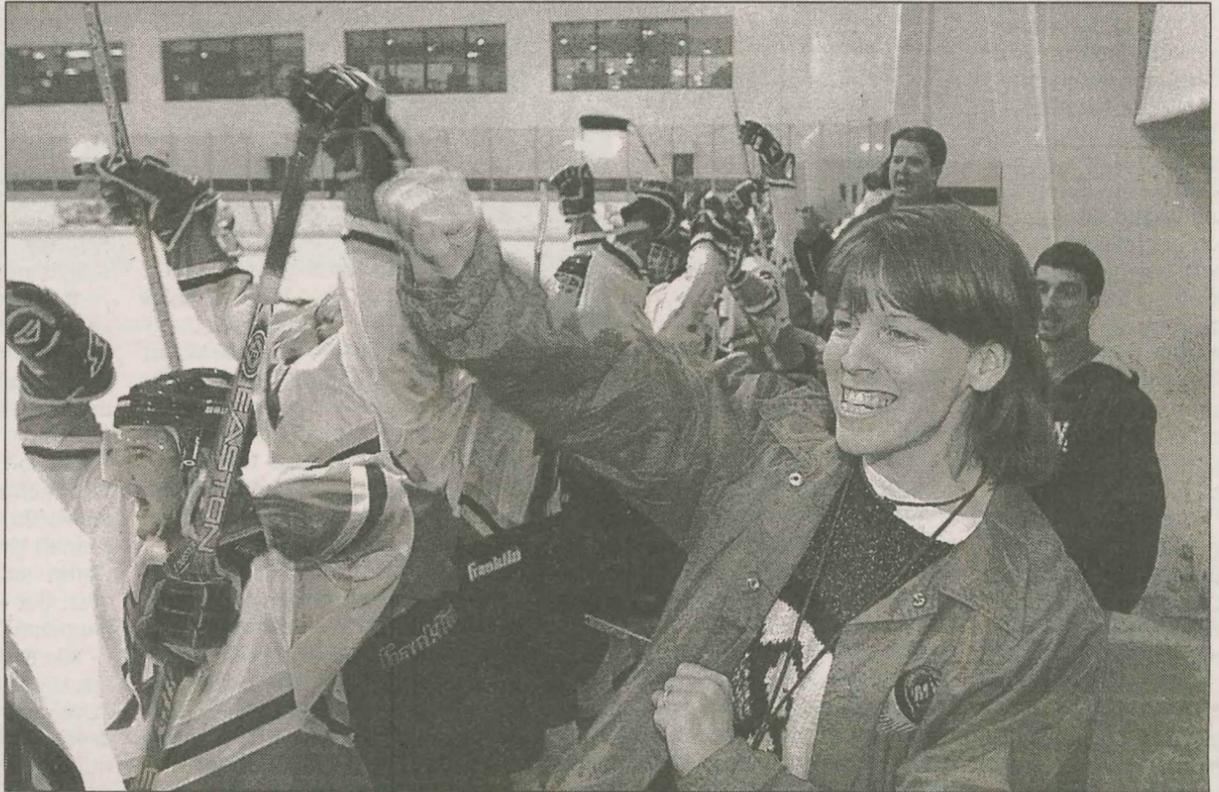
Pollsters say the "fairly dim view" on American morality was likely influenced by corporate scandals involving Enron and Martha Stewart, Janet Jackson's "wardrobe malfunction" at the Super Bowl halftime show and increasing attention paid to gay marriage.

Americans between the ages of 18 and 29 seem more optimistic—in the 2003 and 2004 polls, 53 percent of younger Americans said they are satisfied with the country's morality. Among older adults, the highest level of satisfaction—38 percent—was found among those ages 30 to 49. Among Americans ages 65 and older, only 29 percent were satisfied.

Gallup contributing editor Heather Mason said the generational divide is "a pattern that has existed for several years."

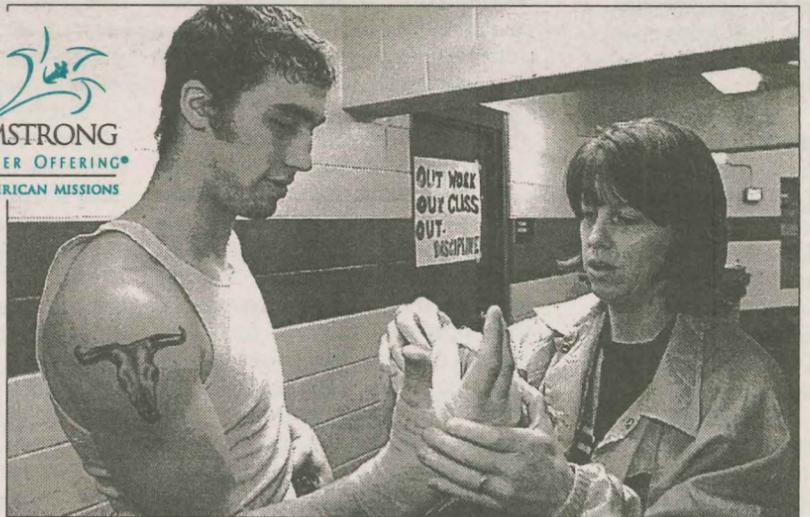
"Adults under the age of 30 grew up in the era of the Internet, music videos and cable television shows that continued to push the moral envelope, and may not remember a time when profanity and sexual content were more taboo," she said.

Miracle on ice



Missionaries Adam and Stephanie Smith founded the Northern Lights hockey team two years ago to take the gospel to the ice hockey community.

Above: Stephanie, who serves as athletic trainer for the team, celebrates a goal. **Right:** Team member Adam Holmgren has his broken finger wrapped by Stephanie before a game. "(God) is trying to get the attention of people in the hockey community, and let them know that He loves them and would like to have a personal relationship with them," she said. "To so many people we've met this is brand-new information." (NAMB photos by Gary Chapman) **Story on page 9.**



Consultant urges more churches to make prayer vital in worship

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

Louisville—Prayer groups are more prevalent in churches today than in recent history, but even more churches should make prayer a vital part of their worship services, according to Eric Allen, the Kentucky Baptist Convention's director of prayer strategies.

Allen said he once read a survey that found evangelical churches rank prayer 13th among 20 leading elements of worship services.

"We have megachurches that we've never had before, and we're making less of an impact than ever before," Allen told those attending the "Great Commission Prayer Conference," March 19-20.

"Our problem in America is we've allowed non-essential things to become essential," he added. "We've got to become houses of prayer."

Jointly sponsored by the KBC, the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, the conference attracted about 175 people to the seminary campus.

In his workshop on incorporating prayer into worship, Allen noted that his office has contact with 550 prayer groups, compared to 125 prayer groups three years ago.

"Prayer awareness is growing, but I don't think we've come to the point where it's as much a key as it needs to be," he said.

Worship and prayer are the most vital elements of a relationship with God, Allen said, but most churches never connect the two.

The benefits of joining prayer and worship are being changed into God's likeness through deeper prayer, an increasing intimacy. **See Prayer conference ... Page 3**



PRAYER CIRCLE Larry Martin (left), leader of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's missions growth team, leads a group in prayer during the Great Commission Prayer Conference, held recently at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. Approximately 175 people attended the meeting, which was co-sponsored by the KBC and the seminary. (Southern Seminary photo by Rob Chambers)

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, March 31.

Slain mission workers honored as Christian martyrs

Shooting survivor recuperating in Dallas hospital

Dallas (BP)—The sole survivor of a March 15 attack on five Southern Baptist aid workers in Iraq—recuperating better than doctors had expected—sent a personal message to be read at graveside services for her husband.

Carrie "Niki" McDonnall underwent surgery March 24 in a Dallas-area hospital for nerve and skin grafts on her left hand and will begin physical therapy for the hand next week, according to family spokesman Van Payne. She lost most of three fingers on that hand during the attack.

Her doctors are "very pleased" with her progress and moved her to a private room that same day, earlier than they had expected, Payne said.

McDonnall and her family said they had been deeply moved by the expressions of support and promises of prayer they have received from people all around the world, he added.

They also wanted the family of her late husband, David, who died in the attack, "to know their hearts are with them" as they attended a graveside service for him in his hometown of Lamar, Colo., the spokesman said.

"Carrie sent a message to them that included Scripture verses and remembrances of her life with David, to be read at the graveside by her sister," he said.

Colleagues cite McDonnall's love of Christ, others

By Mike Creswell
SBC International Mission Board

Lamar, Colo. (BP)—Southern Baptist aid worker David McDonnall died a martyr's death in Iraq, but he was drawn there by his passion to share the good news of God's love, speakers said during a March 20 memorial service at First Baptist Church of Lamar, Colo.

McDonnall and four other humanitarian workers, including his wife, Carrie, were attacked with automatic rifles and rocket-propelled grenades fired by unknown assailants March 15 in Mosul, Iraq. McDonnall died the next day as military medical workers rushed him to a hospital in Baghdad.

Three other workers—Larry Elliott, his wife, Jean, and Karen Watson—were killed in the attack. Carrie McDonnall was severely wounded by bullets and shrapnel in the attack but is in stable condition in a hospital in Dallas.

Several hundred friends, family members and colleagues attended McDonnall's funeral, held at the American Baptist church where his family has been active for almost two decades. In recent years the McDonnalls had become members of Travis Avenue Baptist Church, a Southern Baptist congregation in Fort Worth, Texas.

"God has called us to go"

McDonnall's family took great care to explain his life: Bulletin boards outside the sanctuary presented photos and newsletters he had sent to describe his life and work in Iraq. The service opened with projected pictures from Iraq and his earlier service elsewhere in the region. In a video shown at the start of the service, McDonnall talked about why he and his wife were going to such a dangerous place:

"We both strongly feel that God has called us to go to these people, knowing that the love of God and the power of Christ can change any heart, can break through any bond—and can turn people from violence into carrying the Word of God and piercing the hearts of

people, not with bullets, but with the Word of God."

Dennis Bradley, pastor of First Baptist Church, sometimes spoke through tears as he compared McDonnall's death to that of first-century martyr Stephen, whose stoning is described in Acts 7.

"You and I know that David died as a martyr," he said.

Quoting Psalm 116:15—"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints"—Bradley said: "We have trouble understanding that, because death in our sight is not precious. It is difficult. It is hard. My prayer for us today is for the Holy Spirit of God to help us see things from His perspective."

"It was David's desire to be his Lord's ambassador, to take the love of Jesus to other people and that's what he was doing in Mosul last Monday," said Clyde

Meador, executive vice president of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board. "He was taking the love of Jesus and demonstrating the love of Jesus to people who otherwise might never know."

Meador also read part of a message from one of David's colleagues on the field: "We discussed the possible cost for sharing our Lord's gospel. David knew the risks, and he was ready and willing to accept them. It is the blood of the martyrs that grows the Kingdom of God."

Another overseas colleague brought a smile to faces as he described McDonnall's powerful laugh and comical exploits in the Middle East and northern Africa.

But he turned serious as he declared: "David didn't go to Iraq in response to pressure. David went to Iraq in response to a passion in his heart to see people hear the gospel and know about Jesus."

"He went to Iraq to live among a people who needed to know Jesus' story," the co-worker added. "He did not go to Iraq to die. The dying had been done years before, when he gave his life to Jesus Christ and he died to self. He went to Iraq to live."

"I'm sure there are some that have thought, 'What's wrong with those guys? Why would they do that? Why would they go?' He didn't have a death wish! He went with a life wish, a desire and a hope to live out the gospel among Iraqi people, so that they might know eternal life through Jesus."



David McDonnall

Watson valued 'attention of God,' her pastor says

By Bill Bangham
SBC International Mission Board

Bakersfield, Calif. (BP)—Yvonne Lawson's fingertips caressed the crate containing the coffin of her daughter, Karen Watson, oblivious to the crowd collected around her, family and friends who met the plane bearing the body at Kern County's Meadows Field.

"I knew it was Karen the minute I touched that box," Lawson said. "I know it sounds strange, but I could feel her. Her death wasn't real to me until then."

It has been just over a year since mother and daughter said goodbye, a goodbye that would lead Watson, 38, to a heartbreaking death on the other side of the world.

Lawson saw that goodbye coming years before, long before her daughter would, or could, voice it. It was a small thing, something a mother would notice, a look in Watson's eyes that said something deep was happening within this daughter.

She first noticed it when Watson returned from a mission trip to El Salvador with her church, Valley Baptist in Bakersfield, Calif. She was spilling over with stories and bubbling with excitement—and worried about the fate of children she had come to love.

Lawson listened, saw the look and knew someday her daughter would trade her life in California's Central Valley to help people in other parts of the world.

Humanitarian aid coordinator

In 2003, Watson joined the Southern Baptist International Mission Board as a humanitarian aid coordinator for Iraq. Friends say it was the job she was created for. As the United States and Iraq edged into war, she worked in refugee camps in Jordan and Kuwait. When the war wound down, she moved into Iraq, coordinating efforts to distribute 3 million pounds of food, set up water purification systems and help the Iraqi people rebuild their lives.

On March 15, while investigating sites for future humanitarian relief efforts with four other aid workers, she and three of her colleagues died

from a rocket-propelled grenade and gunfire attack while driving through the city of Mosul.

More than a week after Watson's death, family and friends gathered at Bakersfield's Valley Baptist Church for her funeral. More than a thousand people filled the sanctuary.

Among them were six rows of deputies from the Kern County Sheriff's Department. They took turns, two by two, standing guard by her casket throughout the service. Watson served among them for eight years.

"Don't make Karen into a saint," said one of her friends from those days. "She would hate that. She was pretty wild when she was young. But when she became a Christian, she turned around 180 degrees."

"She had one speed, and that was 100 miles per hour," said Lt. Kevin Wright of the sheriff's department and a close friend. "When you were with Karen, you either got on board the train or you were left behind. If she believed passionately about something, she'd let you know about it."

IMB President Jerry Rankin talked about Watson's penchant for shopping. Invariably, it was for someone else, seldom for herself. She would see something someone needed—or knew they would like—and buy it. But she recently bought a small, jeweled ring for herself.

"Colleagues teased her that it was a wedding ring and she wasn't married," Rankin said. "Well, maybe I can wear it because of my love for Jesus Christ," she said."

Another aid worker compared Watson with Tabitha, a woman in the Bible characterized by her deeds of kindness and charity. "I know there are Jordanians and Iraqis today who are weeping," he said. "(Karen) is a woman who is going to be remembered as Iraqis and Jordanians hold up the things she did and say: 'Look what she did for us.'"

Roger Spradlin, co-pastor of Valley Baptist Church, asked the question: "Does it pay to serve God ... (when) kindness is greeted by a hail of bullets?"

"It pays if you value the attention of God more than the approval of men. It pays if you value others more than yourself," he said. "If we were to ask Karen, she would say, 'Oh yes!'"



Karen Watson

Iorg, Northwest Baptist leader, nominated to head Golden Gate

Mill Valley, Calif. (BP)—Jeff Iorg, executive director of the Northwest Baptist Convention, has been recommended as the seventh president of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary.

The decision was announced after a March 25 meeting of the seminary's presidential search committee—including Kentucky trustee Bob Swift of Mayfield—and an advisory board appointed by trustee chairman Gary Black.

Black, who also served as chairman of the presidential search com-

mittee, said Iorg's "administrative background, classroom skill and extensive ministry experience in the West make him uniquely qualified to lead Golden Gate into a very promising future."

The search committee interviewed final prospects who had been chosen through a process facilitated by a professional search firm.

Iorg has served as the Northwest convention's executive director since 1995. He was the founding pastor of Greater Gresham Baptist Church in Gresham, Ore., and has

served as pastor of churches in Missouri and Texas.

Since 1990, he has taught as an adjunct preaching, evangelism and leadership instructor at Golden Gate's Pacific Northwest campus.

Bill Crews, Golden Gate's chancellor and immediate past president, described Iorg as "an extremely capable pastor and denominational leader. I am impressed by his Christian commitment, his creativity and effectiveness in leadership, and his devotion to the vision of Golden Gate in shaping effective leaders for the churches of tomorrow. He is a loyal Southern Baptist whose commitment to the 2000 Baptist Faith

and Message statement is beyond question. I am thrilled with his candidacy."

Iorg is a graduate of Hardin Simmons University in Abilene, Texas; Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo.; and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He has written numerous articles and curriculum materials. He and his wife, Ann, have three children, Casey, Melody and Caleb.

The seminary's board of trustees will meet April 26-27 at the Northern California campus to vote on the search committee's recommendation.



Jeff Iorg

Kentucky WMU honors military, affirms ties to BWA

By Trennis Henderson
Editor

Hopkinsville—Marching through a sea of women dressed in red, white and blue, an honor guard from Fort Campbell's 101st Airborne Division presented the U.S. and Kentucky flags.

After the crowd recited the Pledge of Allegiance and sang the national anthem, retired Army Chaplain David Coram told about "connecting people to Jesus through military chaplaincy."

The setting of the patriotic emphasis was last week's Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union annual meeting at First Baptist Church of Hopkinsville. Holding their 101st annual meeting a few miles from the home of the 101st Airborne, WMU members took time to honor the men and women of the U.S. military.

"Pray for Baptist unity"

In other WMU-related actions, Executive Director Joy Bolton addressed the issue of the Southern Baptist Convention's proposed withdrawal from membership in the Baptist World Alliance. She reported during a March 26 business session that the Kentucky WMU Executive Board voted to join the national WMU board in affirming WMU's historic relationship and support for the BWA Women's Department.

Emphasizing that "we must not abandon the relationships we have with women of the world," Bolton urged state WMU members to "pray for unity in the worldwide Baptist family, pray for a resolution to this situation that will glorify God and strengthen our witness as Baptists."



MISSIONS FOCUS Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union members gathered March 26-27 for their 101st annual meeting. **Top left:** David Coram, a retired Army chaplain, highlighted the ministry of chaplains. **Right:** An honor guard from the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell presented the U.S. and Kentucky flags as part of a tribute to military personnel. **Bottom left:** Sisterhood, a Christian drama group, presented theme interpretations throughout the two-day meeting at First Baptist Church of Hopkinsville. (Photos by Trennis Henderson)

She also encouraged participants to serve as messengers to the June 17-18 SBC annual meeting in Indianapolis—where the proposed SBC withdrawal will be considered—"and vote as God leads you."

Also during the March 26-27 annual meeting, participants elected Cathy Chinn of Hartford to a third term as president, Pat Key of Central City to a second term as vice president and Susan Stinnett of Frankfort to a first term as recording secretary.

During an installation service for officers and board members, Bolton told WMU leaders, "The God of Lottie Moon, Annie Armstrong and Eliza Broadus has called you to serve Him. ... He is the same God who has led women around the

world in response to His call. And now He has called you to a special place of service."

"From Generation to Generation"

Highlighting the theme "From Generation to Generation," the meeting focused on passing along missions education and involvement from one generation to the next around the world through WMU, missionaries, volunteers, children and youth.

Coram, who retired last month after 28 years in the Army, recounted his seven-month deployment to the Middle East as a chaplain for the 101st Airborne during Desert Storm and Desert Shield.

Describing it as "the most awesome ministry anyone could imag-

ine," Coram said, "The closer we got to combat, the more somber the attitude of the soldiers who were there. The old saying that there are no atheists in foxholes became a reality for us."

Noting that more than 2,500 soldiers became Christians during the first Gulf War, Coram added, "Chaplains are doing a great work with our soldiers. ... Chaplains go where the soldiers go and do what the soldiers do, bringing the good news of Jesus Christ."

Other speakers during the two-day meeting included Bill Clark and Ruth Thomas, emeritus missionaries to France; Jeff and Cecelia Wallace, Southern Baptist missionaries to Spain; and Tim Bender, a North American missionary with the deaf.

Prayer conference draws ministry leaders across commonwealth

Continued from page 1

with Him, listening for His voice and an enduring devotion to God, Allen said.

Noting that churches often excel with musical presentations and sound systems, Allen said many church leaders can plan good worship services but not welcome the Holy Spirit.

"I enjoy our music and mechanics, but God doesn't need that to come," he said. "He's instructed us that we're to be houses of prayer."

As for adding prayer to services, Allen said the goal should be providing opportunities for people to connect with God.

Ways to add prayer to worship

Allen advised pastors seeking to introduce more prayer to provide scriptural reasons to the congregation. He also suggested meeting with key spiritual leaders in the church to determine attitudes and ways to lead members into deeper prayer.

One way to add prayer to worship is scheduling set times and enlisting a few members to intercede publicly for such needs as revival, hiring new personnel or vacation Bible school.

Other suggestions include reading a printed prayer together, praying over announcements, inter-



PRAYER CONFERENCE Chuck Lawless, associate dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Church Growth at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, speaks at the conference, co-sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention and the seminary. (Southern Seminary photo by Rob Chambers)

persing prayers between verses in hymns, asking members to pray for each other's requests or breaking into small prayer groups during services.

The conference featured more than a dozen workshops on prayer,

as well as sessions featuring speakers Bill Mackey, KBC executive director; Chuck Lawless, evangelism professor at Southern Seminary; and John Avant, pastor of New Hope Baptist Church in Fayetteville, Ga.

Prayer and revival

Avant is the former pastor of Coggin Avenue Baptist Church in Brownwood, Texas, which became the focal point of a nationwide campus revival in 1995.

In his keynote address, Avant said conditions are ripe for a spiritual awakening in America.

He listed three elements he said are crucial to spiritual awakening: moral depravity, a key precipitating event—such as the outpouring of interest in "The Passion of The Christ"—and the growth of prayer.

"I believe the pieces of the puzzle are all there now, and at any point God desires He can put right into place and break out in the next great spiritual awakening," Avant said. "I want to be in on that."

But too many people in the United States fail to grasp the power of prayer, he noted. Avant said a missionary told him if he were to discuss the miracles he has seen in China because of prayer, most Americans would dismiss him as a wild-eyed fanatic.

Just as the Apostle Paul prayed for non-believers with a "pierced heart," Avant said Christ's followers should feel sorrow for people who are living without hope.

But after going into one's prayer closet, a believer should go to the mission field, he added.

Although Avant plans to visit Lebanon in May, he said mission activity can be done closer to home.

For example, he has worked in an after-school program south of Atlanta and requires other staff members to be involved in community activities.

"Most of the believers I know have none or very few unchurched friends," Avant said. "We spend out time in church. I just decided ... we are going to engage the world."

Allen said organizers are considering turning this first prayer conference into an annual event. He said it was sparked by increased interest in prayer across the commonwealth.

Many participants drew encouragement from knowing they aren't alone, Allen said, because prayer groups generally don't draw large numbers of participants.

"A lot went back home feeling, 'I'm not alone. I've learned something this weekend that helps me take another step in that direction,'" Allen said.

KBC committee elects 3 ministry consultants

Louisville—The Kentucky Baptist Convention Executive Board's administrative committee approved three part-time consultant positions during its March 25 meeting.

Ministry consultants elected by the committee are:

■ **Guy Futral**, who will retire April 30 as leader of the KBC leadership development team, was named part-time leadership development consultant.

■ **Marilyn Goodwin** was named part-time preschool/children's consultant. She currently directs Campbellsville Baptist Church's child development center. She also has served as a KBC preschool special worker since 1999 and as an adjunct professor at Campbellsville University.

■ **David Gagel** was named part-time youth music consultant. He currently is associate minister of music to youth at Parkland Baptist Church in Louisville and is pursuing a master of church music degree at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Committee members also approved proposals to eliminate a part-time campus minister position at Union College in Barbourville and to reduce the KBC's international student campus minister position from full-time to part-time.

Keith Inman, director of the KBC's collegiate ministry group, explained the changes were needed to shift budget resources to other priorities.

Inman said the campus ministry position at Union will be filled by volunteers. He noted that Wyndee Holbrook, campus minister at Berea College, will coordinate ministry to international students.

WESTERN RECORDER

P.O. Box 43969
Louisville, KY 40253
(USPS 679-380)

TRENNIS HENDERSON
Editor

DAVID WINFREY
News Director

MAURI SMITH
Marketing & Business
Manager

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

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Don't blur lines

One of the appealing things for me about Baptists is the autonomy of the local church. A straight line runs from the local church to the association. A straight line runs from the local church to the state convention. A straight line runs from the local church to the Southern Baptist Convention. A straight line runs from the local church to the Baptist World Alliance. There is no organic union provided for among Baptist bodies.

In a March 9 letter, "Different Perspective," a thoughtful group of Owensboro brethren said, "The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship did not sever ties with the SBC because it never had any." That is correct. Then they were incorrect when they said, "CBF tried to be a part of the SBC but the SBC refused." And for good reason.

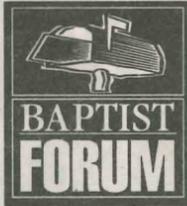
The Constitution of the SBC does not provide for any other Baptist body, be it a church or association or convention, to be a member or affiliate; in order words, to join. The SBC is an independent, autonomous body composed of messengers in any given annual session and it does not

offer membership.

It offers churches three opportunities to participate: Send messengers to the annual meeting. A church may buy literature from LifeWay Christian Resources. A third option is to contribute funds, to a Cooperative Program of missions.

That is the sum and substance of any Baptist body's relationship to the SBC. "Withdrawing" isn't possible. Participation or ceasing to participate is the only choice. Let's keep these lines from being blurred.

John C. Huffman
Louisville



Jesus offers peace

Will Israel's assassination of Hamas leader Sheik Ahmed Yassin make Israel safer and more secure? Will it bring an end to suicide bombings? The answer to both questions is a resounding no. Israel will be less secure and suicide bombings will increase significantly.

The Israeli and Palestinian power structures live by their own golden rule—an eye for an eye—which prevents them from passionately seek-

ing peace. The Creator of all humankind, the passionate Christ, rejects vengeance as a peacemaking tool.

Jesus taught us to love our enemies, return good for evil, turn the other cheek, go the second mile and forgive unconditionally. He lived what He taught. The passion of Christ for peace has never been greater than it is at this particular time in world history.

We have had Jesus' prescription for peace for 2,000 years, but greed, selfishness and lust for power keep us from getting it right. Christians worldwide have been poor role models for people of other religions in following Christ's peace plan. Christlike Mahatma Gandhi once said he could have been a Christian if it weren't for the way Christians acted.

The world needs PEACE education centered on the One who holds the world together, the passionate Christ: Plan Education Around Christ's Example. I place my faith and trust in the Creator of all humankind and believe He is at the heart of peace expectations. God's greatest blessing for each nation of the world is peace.

Paul L. Whiteley Sr.
Louisville

KBC audit work group issues report

The audit work group of the Kentucky Baptist Convention Mission Board's business and finance committee met Feb. 6, 2004, to perform its annual review and evaluation of the financial condition and practices of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's affiliated entities and its Mission Board as reflected in their 2003 audited financial statements.

This annual audit review process is an important way Kentucky Baptists receive an accountability report from the convention and its affiliated entities. Kentucky Baptists can be pleased that this procedure exists whereby the convention and its institutions and agencies can give an accounting of the stewardship of the resources entrusted to them.

These entities include Campbellsville University, Cumberland College, Georgetown College, Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, Oneida Baptist Institute, Kentucky Baptist Assemblies, Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, Baptist Healthcare System, Woman's Missionary Union, Western Recorder, Kentucky Baptist Foundation and the Kentucky Baptist mission programs and subsidy.

Kentucky Baptists also can be pleased and encouraged with the sound financial condition and stability of the institutions and agencies and the level of cooperation demonstrated by them. The work group complimented the board and administrative leadership of the convention and each of its affiliated entities. Kentucky Baptists are en-

couraged to increase their support of these institutions and agencies prayerfully and financially.

Members of the audit work group were: Calvin Perry, chairperson; Charles Beighle, Frankfort; Arnold Caddell, Burlington; Mark Galloway, Henderson; Ray Hayes, Louisville; Rick Robbins, Covington; Ginger Sanders, Union; Harlan Williams, Hardin; Business Manager Lowell Ashby; Accounting Services Director Cathi Roy-Sanders; Executive Associate Steve Thompson; and Executive Director Bill Mackey. In addition, one certified public accountant met with the group.

The work group's report was made to the full business and finance committee on March 26, 2004, and approved.

Calvin Perry, chairperson
KBC audit work group

Guy Futral retires after 20 years at KBC

Guy Futral will have completed 20 years of ministry with the Kentucky Baptist Convention when he retires April 30. His last day in full-time capacity will be March 31. However, Guy will continue to assist with pastoral ministries under a part-time contract.

Guy is from a family of ministers, including his father and brothers. He has served as leader of the KBC leadership development team, has led our work in the area of minister-church relations, and supervised leadership development, family ministry and annuity departments.

Because of a warm and caring spirit, Guy has been a natural for assisting churches and ministers during leadership transitions. Members of the KBC staff, as well as church ministers, have called upon Guy to help in times of need.

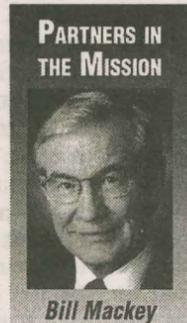
Guy has a gracious and welcoming spirit that has strengthened his

ability to welcome new pastors and their wives to Kentucky, to assist terminated ministers and to enlist and assimilate new staff persons. Guy has done a wonderful job assisting churches and individuals.

Eighty percent of the ministry couples that have participated in the three-day Ministers in Transition conference led by Guy and his team have returned to effective ministry. I have been inspired by some of these testimonies.

Guy has used his extensive training and experience to provide hope and help for ministers and churches. He has developed a statewide counseling network, provided assistance during times of conflict, facilitated counseling ministries and developed a two-day conference for new ministers, "Welcome to Kentucky."

Numerous churches call Guy to request assistance during their search for a pastor. Guy's office



has always been ready to assist by training committees and providing resumes. He has a passion to see church members working together with church staff to solve problems, build relationships, equip the saints and be empowered to fulfill God's mission.

Guy and his wife, Nancy, have four lovely and talented daughters: Rebecca, Cynthia, Valarie and Susan Elizabeth. The pride and joy of his life is his 3-year-old granddaughter Lily. He plans to see her more.

It takes a very unique personality, the grace of God, a resilient spirit and a good sense of humor to deal with problems and challenges in ministry on a daily basis. God empowered Guy for this significant ministry. There are times when all of us need someone to listen, understand, clarify options and offer spiritual support.

Pray for Guy during this time of transition. Pray also for Karl Babb, the new leadership development team leader, and the other members of this excellent team.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

CHURCH

'Seize the Day': effective one-day giving campaign

By Doug Strader

When I was on the Mission Board staff of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, I had the opportunity to recommend several types of stewardship programs to the churches of the convention. I relied on the testimonies of the churches that used some of the programs when I would

recommend a particular program to a church. Now that I am in the pastorate, I have an opportunity to use some of the programs that I previously had recommended to the churches.

Our church needed to raise \$40,000 to do some redecorating work in our sanctuary and in our education building. The church had not had any type of major capital campaign for several years.

The church voted to participate in the "Seize the Day" campaign. This is a one-day campaign in which the people are asked to make a one-time sacrificial gift, or their gift could be given over a three-month period. Even though our people were excited about what was taking place in the church, some were not convinced that we could be successful in such a one-day capital campaign.

A few weeks before our target date, our people were so anxious to give that they already had given more than \$7,000 before the actual date to receive the offering. On the day of the offering, our people gave more than \$34,000 in one day. So we had actually exceeded our one-day goal. And we had \$9,000 more pledged to be given during the next three months!

On the Sunday evening of our big day, we had a great celebration to thank God for the generosity of His people.

Now I know firsthand that some of the programs I have recommended to other churches through the years are good programs and they will work in the churches that are willing to take the risk.

If your church needs to raise money for some special project and you do not know how to do it, why not contact the Kentucky Baptist Convention stewardship office and ask them to send you a "Seize the Day" folder and see if it is a possibility for you? All you need to conduct the program is in the folder. Just follow the directions, trust the Lord and get your people excited about the possibilities.

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



Is fiancé's previous marriage appropriate topic to discuss?

Q: My husband died last year and I am contemplating a second marriage to a man who also has been married before. My fiancé is unwilling to discuss his first marriage, including the circumstances around his divorce, except to say that his wife had an affair. Since we are both Christians, is it OK to just let the past be in the past?

The problem with history is that it tends to repeat itself if one doesn't learn its lessons. A wise scribe once wrote, "History repeats itself. Has to. No one listens." I have some concerns about key issues highlighted in your question.

First, I am concerned about your fiancé's unwillingness to discuss his first marriage. What wounds is he still carrying around that surely will come to light later in your relationship? What was his part in the failure of the marriage? While adultery is clearly identified in Scripture as possible grounds for dissolution of a marriage, this does not mean he does not have some responsibility for problems in the marriage. Does he have any conviction of his own sinfulness and areas of his own mind and heart that need to be transformed?

I also am concerned about the loss of your husband and your intention to remarry so soon after his death. Have you taken time to adequately grieve his loss? Is this relationship too much about getting security needs met that would more appropriately be met in Christ?

Daniel 2:22 says, "He reveals the deep and secret things; He knows what is in the darkness and the light dwells with Him!" Take your time with this relationship. Schedule some time with your pastor and also with a Christian counselor. Remember that God has a purpose and hope for your life.—Scott Wigginton

Q: I recently have accepted a position working with single adults. Since I am not single, what books would help me gain a better understanding of the needs of single people?

The list I share is my own, and certainly not exhaustive. But perhaps it will help get you thinking about some of the concerns of single people with whom you plan to work.

1. "The Single Experience" by Keith Miller and Andrea Wells Miller (Word, 1981). This book covers such topics as loneliness, identity, parents, money, friendship, dating, broken relationships and sexual choices.

2. (tie) "Single and Feeling Good" (Abingdon, 1987) and "Reluctantly Single" (Abingdon, 1994) by Harold Ivan Smith. These books offer different perspectives on the same theme: How you feel about your single season is largely up to you.

4. "Single Adult Passages: Uncharted Territories" by Carolyn Koons and Michael J. Anthony (Baker, 1991). The general adult developmental model largely has been based on marriage as a central theme, but for many people in our society, a model needs to be built that deals seriously with a life of singleness. Koons and Anthony do this well.

5. "Single Adults" by George Barna (Issachar, 2002). This study by one of America's top researchers sheds light on how single people see themselves in our culture today.

Reading these books as well as listening to the single people God puts in your path should give you new insights. Spend time with single people and sincerely listen as they pour out their hearts about being single in a married world. The empathy you gain can help you in your ability to connect with them for Christ.

Since some of these titles might be out of print, I suggest that you search for used copies on the Internet.—James Stillwell

Family Forum writers are:

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

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

Scott Wigginton, executive director of LifeCare Counseling at Walnut Street Baptist Church and associate professor/department coordinator of Christian counseling at Boyce College 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.

MARRIAGE



'Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields'

"Kentucky Baptists Connect" is the Kentucky Baptist Convention's ambitious five-year emphasis to implement the mission study plan adopted last year by the KBC Executive Board.

Among the effort's major goals are encouraging each Kentucky Baptist church to increase its baptisms by at least one each year through 2009; gaining 250,000 church members, including 125,000 baptisms (an average of 25,000 baptisms per year); and launching 75 churches and 50 church-type language ministries.

While the emphasis officially will be kicked off during this fall's KBC annual meeting in Louisville, several aspects of the strategy already are under way, including recruiting and funding regional church development strategists to work closely with church leaders throughout the state.

How effective will the state convention be in achieving its lofty ministry goals? One key is how effective individual Christians, churches and associations will be in making a personal, positive impact for the gospel of Christ in communities and cities throughout the commonwealth.

A major measuring stick of the challenges ahead recently was released. The 2003 Annual Church Profile report, a compilation of Kentucky Baptist congregations' ministry statistics for the previous year, clearly indicates that while growth is evident in several significant ministry areas, much work remains.

In the area of missions education and support, Woman's Missionary Union registered a 12.5 percent membership gain and Baptist Men on Mission increased by 7.1 percent. Both increases, however, followed a year of decline the previous year and both organizations remain well below enrollment marks of five years ago.

Other ministry areas have recorded similar patterns. While Sunday school enrollment and discipleship training participation are up from the previous year, they are down from five years ago. However, worship and Sunday school attendance both have registered overall growth in recent years.

One of the most vital—and most challenging—statistics is annual baptisms. That was Kentucky Baptists' only ministry area that experienced a decrease last year, according to the ACP report. Decreasing from 17,527 to 16,543, the 5.6 percent drop doesn't bode well for a convention seeking to reach 25,000 baptisms a year beginning this fall.

Related statistics also paint a challenging picture. During the past five years, Kentucky Baptist churches have averaged 17,337 baptisms. According to the mission study report, 450 churches reported no baptisms during the previous year.

What is the answer? Certainly, if the past year's growth in Sunday school, worship, discipleship training and missions continues, that should have a positive impact on the number of baptisms as well. Additionally, as the state convention, associations and local churches focus their energies on evangelism, church growth and related priorities, we should see Kingdom growth in a number of areas.

The bottom line, however, can be found in the Apostle Paul's declaration in 1 Corinthians 3:6, "I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth." But even as we trust God to provide the growth, it still is up to each of us to plant, water and pray for God's movement.

In the words of Christ, "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (John 4:35). That is our call and our goal as Kentucky Baptists connect for the sake of the gospel.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Tretnis Henderson

'Thank God for Mel Gibson'

By Freddie Gage

Eules, Texas (BP)—In each generation, God breaks through the traditions of men as He did in the first century. The late 20th century witnessed phenomena such as the Jesus Movement of the 1970s and organizations like Campus Crusade for Christ led by visionaries such as Bill Bright.

History is filled with examples of those whom we admire from a distance, but in their era, their methods were either rejected or held in suspicion by the established elite of religion. Billy Graham began under large tents. Dwight L. Moody, with an eighth-grade education, shook both England and North America with the gospel. Billy Sunday was a converted baseball player who had been known as a "boozier." His methods of gospel proclamation were quite unusual. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, preached in open fields because churches rejected him.

But the issue is not method. It is message. Is the gospel of Jesus Christ being proclaimed? These whom we admire from a distance certainly proclaimed the gospel.

The method is non-traditional and outside the four walls of the institutional church. Since the majority of Baptist churches are no longer using evangelists, Mel Gibson might just be their answer to harvest.

Gibson has had a storied career in the movie industry. He has fought many personal battles with his own "demons." People magazine wrote that he is a member of Alcoholics

Anonymous. It is consistent with the character of God to use broken people who admit their struggles and acknowledge their dependence on the Lord Jesus Christ. Gibson appears to be such a person.

I am not a movie buff. But I read where pastors were encouraging people to go, and some laymen were even buying huge blocks of tickets to invite people to see the film. I thought, "Wow, I'm going to see this movie." The last 30 minutes of the movie, I wept. I cried. It felt like I was getting saved again!

I vividly remember my call to preach the gospel. Our pastor had me memorize the Gospels. I had to present them at the ordination service. I had to share the gospel with 30 people in 30 days before I could be ordained. Those 30 people turned into hundreds of people. We were commanded to go outside the walls of the church building to where the sinners were. I remember our pastor saying, "Fish will not swim upon your hook." However, today, we are no longer fishers of men, but keepers of an aquarium. Seventy percent of all of our churches are dead, dying, declining, out of business for the souls of lost men.

Anyone who has a problem with the last 30 minutes of this movie is out of touch with the Holy Spirit. They must have a hardened heart. People who are steeped in religion are often the most difficult for the Holy Spirit to penetrate. Why? It is usually religious people who are depending on their good deeds and

self-righteousness to make them right with God. The blood of Jesus turns them off. They are the reruns of the first-century Pharisees and Sadducees.

It would be great for those theologians who are so critical of the movie, who are so steeped in orthodoxy, to take their unsaved acquaintances to see this movie. Their many others, would be saved. When I go out to fish with a man, if he catches more fish than I do, I don't criticize his bait, I just help him string his fish.

God used a rooster. He used a fish and He used a donkey. God can use a crooked and praise God that's what he has done with Mel Gibson and "The Passion of the Christ."

I recommend it 100 percent.

I only wish all of our seminaries, Bible schools and religious colleges would encourage students to see the movie by a lost friend. It would be a spiritual revolution. Spiritual awakenings are coming to many colleges and high schools. Now is the time to act and share the gospel one-on-one. I pray that Gibson will take his movie to every human being on planet Earth.

Thank God for Mel Gibson and thank God for bringing back the blood of Jesus through Gibson. Thank you, Mel Gibson, for using your talent and God-given ability to help thousands come to know Jesus. Thank you for touching my heart and letting me relive my salvation experience. Thank God for bringing back the Passion!

Freddie Gage, of Eules, Texas, has been a Southern Baptist evangelist for more than 50 years



Spring break blitz

College Kentucky Changers spend week building house in Morehead

By David Winfrey
News Director

Morehead—Forty-six students passed up beaches and swimsuits for mountains and hammers earlier this month when they spent their spring break building a house in Morehead.

Baptist Student Union members from Cumberland College, Hopkinsville Community College, the University of Louisville and Murray State University worked on the "blitz build," coordinated by the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Men on Mission department and the Morehead chapter of Habitat for Humanity, March 10-19.

"It was supposed to go through the 20th, but we got done early," said Larry Koch, associate director for the Men on Mission department.

"When we got there, there was nothing but a foundation and a subfloor," he said.

But when they left, the walls were up, the roof was on and the back deck and front porch were built.

"We didn't get the electric and plumbing installed, but we did drill all the holes for the electrician and installed all the outlets," Koch said.

Poor weather didn't inhibit their enthusiasm, he added. "It was bitterly cold. It rained and it snowed, but these college kids never took a break, never complained."

The 1,050-square-foot house was built for a single mother with two children, Koch noted. "She just cried and said, 'Can you believe what these college kids have done?'"

Joe Ball, Baptist campus minister director at Hopkinsville Community College, said the project helped unite his students.

"Because we're a community college, we have students that come out of eight different churches,"

said Ball, who took 14 students to the project. The work "gave them a sense of (being) a group more than just that hour we meet on Thursdays."

The event was coordinated as a "Kentucky Changers" project, designed to promote missions as a lifestyle instead of a particular event.

Ball said he hopes the project helped encourage his students to be involved in missions later in life. "I'm hoping this will be something they will look to do even when they leave us."

Students slept at First Baptist Church of Morehead, and local churches helped coordinate meals, Koch said. "The college students are ready to come back. They loved it."

More than 700 high school and college students will take part in three more Kentucky Changers projects this summer in:

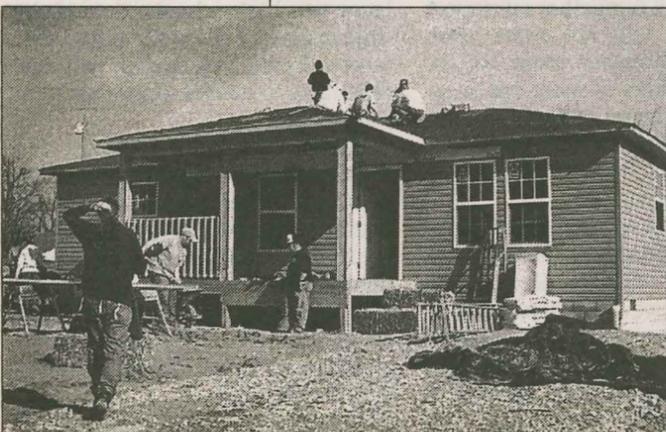
- Maysville, June 5-12.
- Calloway County, June 19-26.
- Frankfort, July 3-10

Openings still exist for the week in Frankfort, when students will work on building two homes, Koch said. For more information, call the KBC Men on Mission department toll-free at (888) 254-5720.



HANGING SIDING
Students hang vinyl siding on the Habitat house they helped build during spring break. Forty-six students from four Kentucky college Baptist Student Unions helped build the house during spring break. (Photos by Larry Koch)

NEW HOME Kentucky Changers got this house framed in earlier this month, with electrical and plumbing work remaining to be done. The receiving family expects to move into the 1,050-square-foot house by May.



Okay men,
Here's your chance to play
"LET'S MAKE a DEAL!"

Pay attention. Here's how it works.

You take her to this "marriage thing"

on April 16 & 17 at Crestwood Baptist Church.

She is so touched you took the initiative, she lets you have the next weekend off (no hassles, no honey-do's).

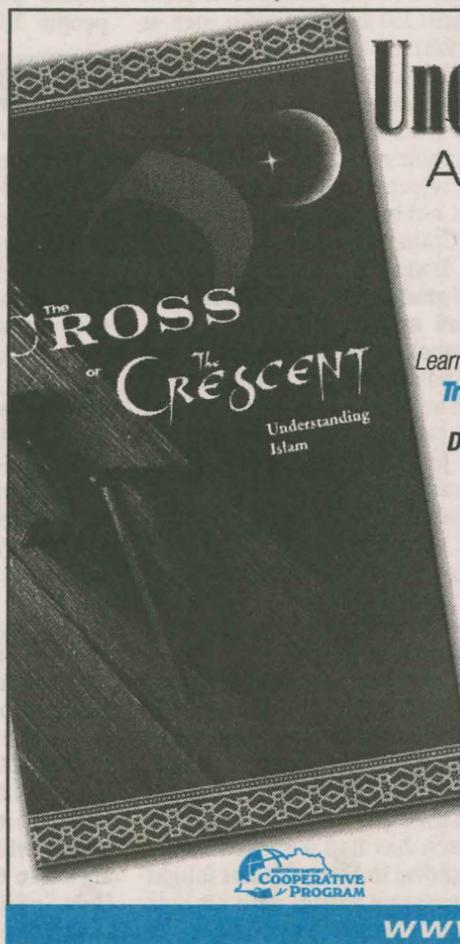
She's happy. You're happy. What a deal.

(She doesn't have to know this *isn't* one of those "touchy-feely, group hug" marriage conferences! This is like watching "Tool Time," but scoring brownie points while you do it!)

The *Marriage*
Tune Up conference

with nationally known leaders: Jeff and Debby McElroy
www.foreverfamilies.com

Hosted by: Crestwood Baptist Church, Crestwood, Ky
Friday: 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm Saturday: 8:00 am to 12:45 pm.
For info or register: 502-241-8534 or www.crestwoodbaptist.org
\$30 per person if paid by April 15, \$35 p/p day of event



Understanding Other Beliefs

Associates Training Workshop

April 22, 2004, Kentucky Baptist Building

- Casting Light on the Occult
- Understanding Islam

Learn to teach about other belief systems at the **Interfaith Evangelism Associates Training Workshops** at the Kentucky Baptist Convention building in Louisville.

Dr. Bill Gordan, NAMB Interfaith Evangelism National Missionary, will examine the influence of the occult in North America and the Christian response.

Dr. Joshua del Risco, NAMB Interfaith Evangelism National Missionary, will lead the conference on Islam.

The workshop will begin at 8:30 a.m. and end at 4:30 p.m. EDT.

Cost is \$15 for individuals or \$20 for married couples.

This includes training materials and lunch. Registration deadline is April 19, 2004. For information or to pre-register call **Jenny Byrd** at 502-254-4737 or toll free 888-254-5722 or e-mail her at jenny.byrd@kybaptist.org



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

www.kybaptist.org/beliefsconference

Leadership and character development

Campbellsville preparing students for 21st century

One of the privileges I have is participating in meetings of Campbellsville University's board of trustees. I appreciate each invitation I receive from President Mike Carter, and I always leave with an enriched understanding and an enhanced appreciation of this wonderful ministry and its leaders.

Dr. Carter recently announced a new initiative to begin in 2005. It will be unique and a terrific enhancement to the Christian education experience of each student. It's another example of how Campbellsville not only teaches students how to make a living in this world, but also equips them in the ways of faith so they can better live their faith through their vocations.

The focus of this "Leadership and Character Development" program is to prepare all students for a life of Christian servant leadership, character development and financial responsibility as they engage the 21st century world for Jesus Christ. Every first-year student will be required to participate in a specialized curriculum and organized servant leadership

experiences that will enhance the individual student for a life of Christian leadership.

If you are interested in developing the next generation of leaders of our communities and churches, this is a project worthy of your prayerful consideration. The initial three-year initiative will cost \$330,000. For more information about the project and how you can support it financially, call Dr. Alan Medders, vice president for development of Campbellsville University, toll-free at (800) 264-6014.

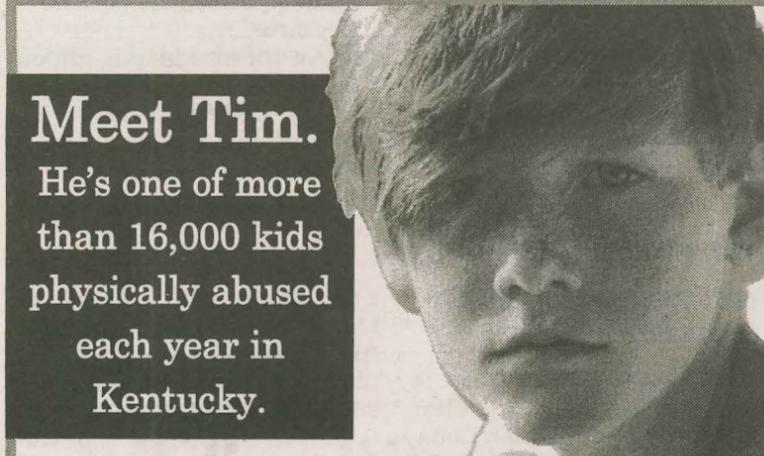
There is a need for a Christian higher education experience that instills basic values, leadership skills, financial responsibility, servant orientation, Christ-centered worldview and academic quality. How fortunate we are that our own Campbellsville University is leading the way in fulfilling this need. Let's demonstrate our gratitude with a financial contribution. Send your gift in care of Dr. Medders at 1 University Drive, Campbellsville, KY 42718.

Barry Allen is president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, PO Box 436389, Louisville, KY 40253; (888) 254-5701; www.kybaptistfoundation.org

KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION



Barry Allen



Meet Tim. He's one of more than 16,000 kids physically abused each year in Kentucky.

That's not all.

Nearly 35,000 children suffer from neglect each year, according to the most recent reports. More than 5,000 of Kentucky's children are sexually abused, and 1,700 suffer emotional abuse, according to the Kentucky Department for Community Based Services.

At Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, we talk a lot about child abuse, its effects and how we might prevent it. What we really do, though, is help kids overcome it. Call us to find out how you can help.



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Kudzu



Doug Marlette

For Heaven's Sake



Mike Morgan

Bible Crosswords

Rebecca Souder

Across

- 1 "Let the earth bring forth ... and creeping thing, and beast of the earth" Genesis 1:24
- 8 Southern continent, abbr.
- 10 Precipitates
- 11 "The earth was without ..." (Genesis 1:2)
- 13 Judah's son (Genesis 38:3)
- 14 When you're going to leave, more or less, abbr.
- 15 Anger
- 16 "___ there be light" (Genesis 1:3)
- 17 Christ's followers, abbr.
- 19 "God ___ the heaven" (Genesis 1:1)
- 21 Seventh note of the musical scale
- 22 "Divide the waters ___ the waters" (Genesis 1:6)
- 23 Ruthenium, chem. symbol
- 24 Fiddler crab genus
- 26 "Let the ___ under the heaven be gathered together" (Genesis 1:9)
- 29 War of the ___
- 31 "The evening and the ___ were the third day" (Genesis 1:13)
- 34 Extraterrestrial, abbr.
- 35 "Where ___ you?" (Genesis 3:9 NIV)
- 37 "Breathed ___ his nostrils the breath of life" (Genesis 2:7)
- 38 "In the ___ God" (Genesis 1:1)
- 41 "The waters called he ___" (Genesis 1:10)
- 42 Common preposition
- 43 "He did ___ it under his raiment" (Judges 3:16)
- 45 "There shall come a ___ out of Jacob" (Numbers 24:17)
- 47 Touchdown, abbr.
- 49 Negative

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Down

- 1 "Every living ___ that moveth" (Genesis 1:21)
- 2 Support organization for alcoholics, abbr.
- 3 Binds
- 4 Explosive, abbr.
- 5 Illegal drug referred to as acid, abbr.
- 6 "According to the ___ - knowledge of God" (1 Peter 1:2)
- 7 God's name for Himself: I ___ (Exodus 3:14)
- 8 "Whose ___ is in itself" (Genesis 1:11)
- 9 "For dust thou ___" (Genesis 3:19)
- 11 "God called the ___ Heaven" (Genesis 1:8)
- 12 One who raises
- 16 French article
- 18 Decorative loop on ribbon
- 19 "The ___ and the bear shall feed" (Isaiah 11:7)
- 20 "Neither shadow of ___" (James 1:17)
- 25 "Ye shall be ___ gods" (Genesis 3:5)
- 27 Preposition
- 28 "Declare his works with ___" (Psalms 107:22 asv)
- 30 Droops
- 32 Part of Scripture that contains the new covenant, abbr.
- 33 "And God saw that it was ___" (Genesis 1:10)
- 36 Smallest state, abbr.
- 38 "God made the ___ of the earth" (Genesis 1:25)
- 39 "Let the ___ bring forth grass" (Genesis 1:11)
- 40 "Thou shalt ___ eat of it" (Genesis 2:17)
- 41 Man's name, for short
- 44 "Under the shadow of my ___" (Genesis 19:8)
- 45 "God ___ every thing that he had made" (Genesis 1:31)
- 46 "Fools, shall not ___ therein" (Isaiah 35:8)
- 48 "On the seventh ___ God ended his work" (Genesis 2:2)
- 51 East Indies, abbr.
- 52 Education, abbr.
- 54 Eastern seacoast state, abbr.

Last week's solution

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NATIONAL NOTES

Bush hails "Unborn Victims" act. President Bush and religious conservatives cheered the Senate's March 25 passage of the Unborn Victims of Violence Act. The Senate passed the bill known as "Laci and Conner's Law" by a vote of 61-38. It is named for 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. The House passed similar legislation in a 254-163 vote on Feb. 26. "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 should be protected by federal law," Bush said in a statement.

High court hears "under God" pledge case. A California atheist and lawyers supporting the public school district where his daughter says "under God" each school day made opposing arguments March 24 as the U.S. Supreme Court considered whether the phrase in the Pledge of Allegiance is constitutional. Michael Newdow argued that every time his daughter stands and recites the pledge, the government is making her "say that her father is wrong." Solicitor General Theodore Olson argued the court has stated more than a dozen times that there is a difference between religious exercise such as a prayer and solemn ceremonies such as the pledge. A decision is expected by June.

"Minor" changes unveiled in marriage amendment. Proponents of a federal constitutional amendment to ban gay marriage unveiled new language last week that they say will grant states more freedom to allow civil unions. Sen. Wayne Allard and Rep. Marilyn Musgrave, both Colorado Republicans, deleted references to "state or federal law" that critics said tied the hands of state legislatures. The new language still defines marriage as between one man and one woman. Supporters, who described the changes as "technical" and "minor," said the amendment would allow states to establish civil unions through legislative action, but not through decisions by "activist judges."

30 black clergy oppose linking civil, gay rights. Thirty black clergy rallied with their supporters at an Atlanta-area church March 22 where they signed a declaration that separates the civil rights movement from efforts to advance gay rights. "To equate a lifestyle choice to racism demeans the work of the entire civil rights movement," the statement reads.

Survey: Churches becoming more contemporary

Phoenix (RNS)—Protestant churches are tending to become more contemporary, with the use of electronic media like PowerPoint presentations growing more popular, a survey shows.

The survey by Ellison Research, a Phoenix-based marketing research company, asked clergy whether the overall style of worship in their congregation had changed in the last five years.

Fifteen percent said their worship had become much more contemporary while another 36 percent said it had become a bit more contemporary. Forty-four percent said there had not been any significant change and 5 percent said worship had become more traditional over that period.

The greatest change in specific worship elements was in the use of electronic media.

Just 5 percent of Protestant churches used computer graphics presentations such as PowerPoint at least once a month five years ago. Today, such displays are used in 36 percent of churches. Likewise, the use of video clips—such as those from movies, music videos and popular speakers—increased from 4 percent to 29 percent.

Several other worship elements increased significantly in that time period.

The use of praise and worship choruses during worship rose from 38 percent in 1999 to 74 percent today. Christian rock, pop or country music has become a part of 25 percent of churches, compared to 9 percent five years ago. And the use of drama skits or sketches has grown from 23 percent to 42 percent.

Younger pastors driving changes

Ventura, Calif. (RNS)—The number of young Protestant senior pastors has doubled in the last two years, from 22,000 to more than 45,000, a recent study has concluded.

The Barna Research Group found that younger pastors, ages 20 to 38, also are choosing to shape the ministry of their congregations in ways that differ from their older colleagues.

For instance, 32 percent of the younger pastors use drama and 30 percent show movies, videos and DVDs as they preach. Among older pastors, 21 percent said they use such techniques.

Forty-six percent of pastors born between 1965 and 1983 currently have a seminary degree, compared to 62 percent of those born from 1946 to 1964.

While both the younger and older groups of pastors are equally likely to prioritize preaching and teaching, evangelism and worship, the younger pastors are more focused on families and spiritual growth. Forty-six percent of the younger pastors prioritize ministry to families, youth

and children, compared to 30 percent of the older generation. And 37 percent of them focus on spiritual growth, discipleship and Bible study, compared to 27 percent of the older pastors.

David Kinnaman, vice president of Barna Research, directed the study of "Baby Buster" pastors who were born between the years of 1965 and 1983.

"Young pastors are basically cutting and pasting from fresh ideas as well as from established wisdom to form a new, era-appropriate portrait of church leadership," he said.

"A handful of the young leaders are making huge changes in their ministry approaches when compared to older pastors, but most Buster pastors are simply tinkering with the style—not the substance—of ministry."

The report was based on a national sample of 3,005 senior pastors of churches conducted between 2001 and 2003. The overall margin of error is plus or minus 1.8 percent, but the study of 338 Buster pastors has a margin of error of plus or minus 5.8 percent.

Ron Sellers, president of Ellison Research, said the study shows that worship styles have grown more diverse in the last five years.

"Even traditional elements such as hymns, altar calls and communion celebrations have become more common as churches diversify what they offer to worshippers," he said in a statement.

The survey of 659 senior pastors of Protestant churches across the nation has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.7 percentage points.

The survey results were first released in the March/April edition of Facts & Trends, which is published by LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The Oneida Players of Oneida Baptist Institute cordially invite you to...



Rubies

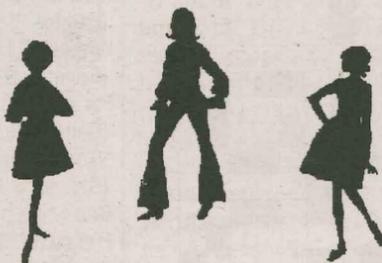
By Billy St. John

April 8, 9, 10

7:00 each evening
Admission is FREE

Saturday, April 10, we invite you to join us at 5:30 P.M. for our complementary "Alumni & Friends Dinner" before the play. Reservations are not required, but if you have any questions you may call Mrs. Myrtle Cooke: (606) 847-4111, ext. 216. Church groups are welcome.

Dr. W. F. Underwood, president
Oneida Baptist Institute
PO Box 67
Oneida, Kentucky 40972
(606) 847-4111
www.oneidaschool.org
president@oneidaschool.org



The joy of forgiveness

Counseling ministry awaits Lincoln County student

Amy Graham, one of our 14 single women students at Clear Creek, grew up in Lincoln County. Her parents divorced when she was a child.

"Growing up with an alcoholic stepfather, it was hard to hear God's voice," Amy said. "The only light I saw was through my grandparents. They were always a Christian influence."

Amy moved from home after high school graduation in 2003. "I was going with the wrong crowd and sensed an emptiness in my life," she said.

She hadn't forgotten her conversion at age 9. "It was at Calvary Hill Baptist in Stanford. I had to hobble to the altar because I was on crutches with a broken leg. I thought God might not forgive me because I couldn't kneel at the altar."

As a teenager, Amy joined New Salem Baptist Church where her grandfather was a deacon and her grandmother was youth Bible teacher. "I wondered why God allowed an awful stepfather to mistreat us kids; I felt God had turned His back on me," she said. "I let the foolishness continue for

a few months until I knew I had to get my life together. A close friend invited me to church, and that night I practically ran to the altar to rededicate my life."

Amy likes to tell the male students she came to Clear Creek to be a preacher. "That always gets them going," Amy said. "God did call me here to prepare for work as a Christian counselor."

She is grateful for the guidance of Associate Professor Stephen Deaver. His training is in pastoral care with a thesis on forgiveness. She looks forward to securing a master's degree at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Realizing her own forgiveness from Christ, Amy has forgiven those who have wronged her. Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me," has become her life scripture.

"I want to assure those I will counsel that God is always present," she stated. "He'll always be there for you."



Bill Whittaker

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

Hockey sticks, gauze & Bibles

Missionary finds sports medicine helps introduce athletes to Christ

By Lee Weeks

Bloomington, Minn.—Professional athletic trainer Stephanie Smith never imagined working the sidelines of a hockey game.

"I grew up in Missouri where hockey wasn't that popular, and I developed a negative view of the game and those who were involved in it," recalled Smith, who also serves as an emergency medical technician.

"I had only attended two games. A fight broke out in the stands at one, and I had beer spilled on me at the other. I mistakenly assumed that most hockey players had made an intentional choice that they didn't want to follow God, not that they just don't know Him."

But her perspective changed after a late-night emergency room encounter in 1993. While filling in for a friend who worked

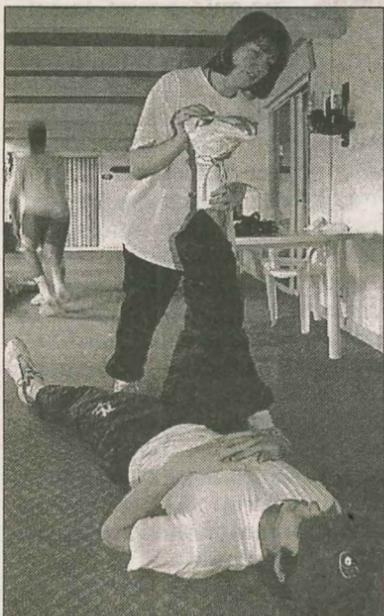
with an amateur hockey team, she found herself dealing with both a serious head injury and a waiting-room brawl between opposing players. She not only broke up the fight, but also led the roomful of angry players in prayer for their injured colleague.

"After everyone settled down, people began asking me about what they described in me as a 'quiet strength,'" she recounted. "I shared with them the hope that I have in knowing that God is in control."

"That ... night, I discovered my medical training and my faith, naturally work together and are a perfect fit for working in the hockey community."

Sports medicine & the gospel

Since then, Smith has used her platform to foster a growing Christian influence in the amateur hockey community. Most recently, she and her husband, Ross, started the Twin Cities Northern Lights junior league hockey team—a team founded on distinctly Christian principles that last year defied all expectations to win a state championship



STRETCHING OUT Smith helps Northern Lights hockey team player Chris Herdegen with exercises.

and place fifth in the USA Hockey national tournament.

Through their youth evangelism role with the Minnesota-Wisconsin Southern Baptist Convention, the Smiths also are among nearly 5,200 missionaries in the United States and Canada supported by the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions.

Smith's role as a hockey trainer involves working with both a private high school team and a junior hockey team. Unlike most seasonal sports, hockey is a way of life in Minnesota with the junior hockey season lasting from August through May, followed by a summer league and other camps and tryouts.



She also helps local churches learn how they can reach out to youth in their own communities.

She is respected throughout the amateur and professional hockey community as the consummate professional who cares about the well-being of hockey players on and off the ice. Her painstaking research into the causes of hockey-related head injuries, an all-too-often occurrence, has led to the implementation of new national rules designed to prevent such injuries on the amateur level.

And when people need trusted advice about life outside of hockey, they turn to the Smiths as well. "It's astonishing how frequently players or coaches will bring up spiritual issues and ask us to show them what the Bible says about it," Stephanie said.

"It's amazing to me that God has allowed us to be a part of what He is obviously orchestrating. He is trying to get the attention of people in the hockey community, and let them know that He loves them and would like to have a personal relationship with them. To so many people we've met this is brand-new information."

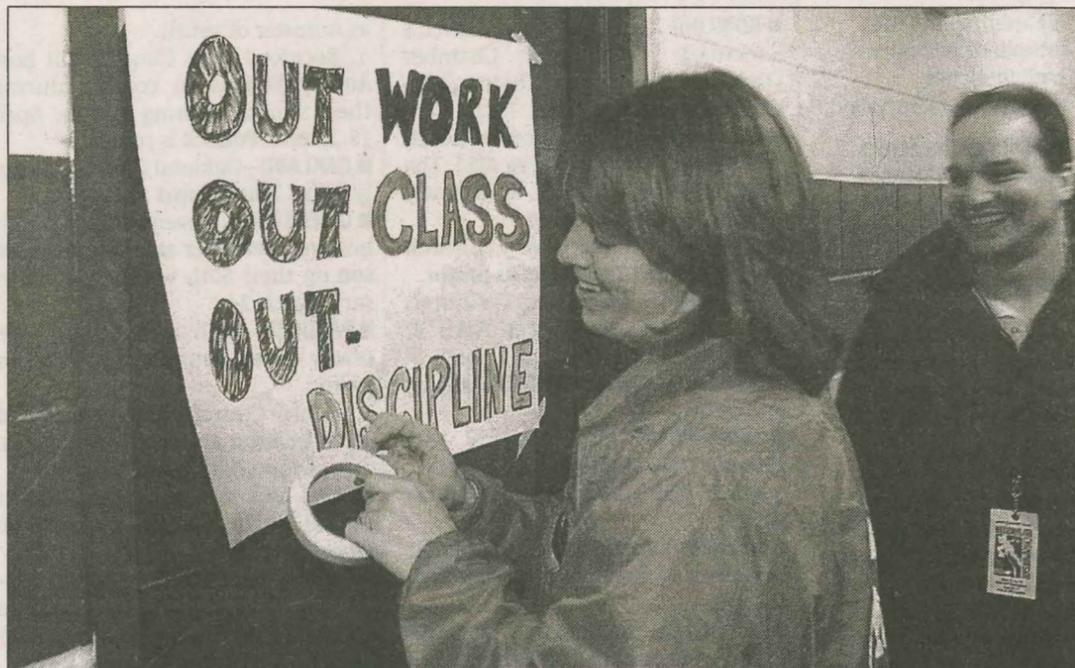
Contagious Christianity

The formation of the Northern Lights team in 2002 was another example of a God-given opportunity. While a part of the Minnesota Junior Hockey League—a developmental league that prepares players to advance from high school competition to the collegiate level—the Smiths determined from the outset that it would be founded on Christian principles. Players must abstain from tobacco, drugs and alcohol, and are required to complete 100 hours of community service each year. They aren't required to be Christians, but it often becomes contagious.

"Our team is a bridge where people can see there is a place for God in hockey," Stephanie said.

And that's important in Minnesota, where one in nine residents has some connection to the sport.

"They are a people group," she said. "It's kind of a subculture of the regular population here and across the country. It's reported that more



Minnesotans watch the high school hockey tournament than watch the Super Bowl. This is a driving force of our culture."

With hectic travel schedules and hockey games nearly every night of the week, including Sunday, the Smiths are on mission seemingly around the clock. While some in the medical field might consider Stephanie's professional interaction with athletes a bit unorthodox, no one is complaining about the results.

"I know that prayer is not a normal course of approved treatment, nor is quoting Scripture, or giving godly encouragement," she said. "But I know that God places each of us where He wills so that we can help show others what a relationship with Jesus is about, and He placed me here for this time. I have never been turned down when I offered to pray."

Ross, a native Minnesotan who has a degree in business management and marketing, serves as general manager and president of the board of directors for the Northern Lights, a non-profit youth organization.

Teaching players for success

"Being the only Christian hockey team at this elite level, we do things differently," he said. "We want to teach the players that what they do on the ice is just one part of their identity and purpose in life. We want to prepare them to be men who will be successful in college, their careers and their family lives. Our code of conduct is biblically based, and our staff have committed to living their faith in front of the team."

In the midst of their busy schedules, the Smiths are ever mindful about turning conversations to the topic of God. While Ross builds relationships with parents, fans and league officials, Stephanie focuses on reaching the players, officials and other teams' staff. Their game plan is working. At one summer hockey camp, staffed by the Smiths, nearly 200 children and teenagers made public professions of faith in Christ.

"It's amazing how people can grow up in the United States and not hear about Jesus and God's grace," Stephanie said. "We've just

discovered time and time again how many people, especially in the hockey community, believe they are too bad for God to forgive them and love them. Often, all they've heard of Jesus is as a swear word or what they've seen in the media."

That's why Stephanie doesn't go anywhere without a backpack full of New Testaments highlighted with the Gospel presentation.

"Hockey is a sport known for violence, anger, lack of self-control and just acting out of who you are," she said. "Christianity is about God transforming us, giving us control and meekness—power under control. Once people notice the difference, they want to know more. They find that we have a different personality, ethic and different way of looking at things. Then they want to know what makes us tick, and that gives us the opportunity to talk about a relationship with God."

None of this would be possible, the Smiths add, without the prayers of Baptists and their financial support through the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions.

"Every dollar makes an incredible impact on what we can do to reach this people group," Ross said.

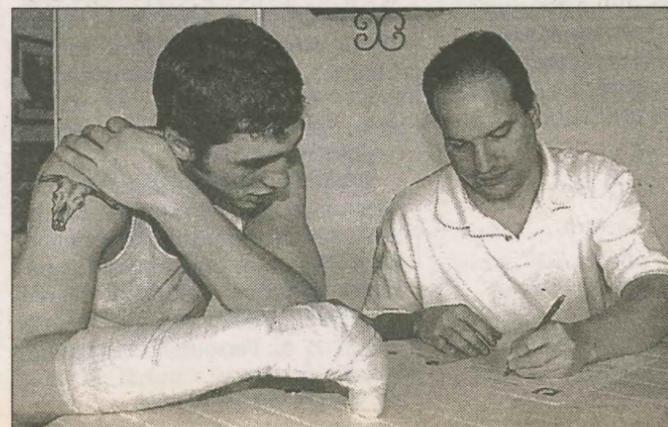
Although Stephanie has yet to become acclimated to Minnesota's bone-chilling winters, she remains convinced that God has a special place in His heart for the state's unchurched hockey community.

After all, she said, "When God created 'the land of 10,000 lakes,' He made a way for water to freeze."

For the latest information on the Northern Lights hockey team, visit www.northernlightshockey.com.

INSPIRATION Southern Baptist missionaries Stephanie and Ross Smith put an inspirational sign on the Twin Cities Northern Lights' locker room door. The Smiths started the team last year with close ties to local churches as a way of bringing a distinctly Christian influence to the hockey community. (NAMB photos by Gary Chapman)

NORTHERN LIGHTS Ross Smith (right) helps Northern Lights hockey player Adam Holmgren—who has a broken finger—fill out a medical release form. The team has strict guidelines for members, including requirements for annual community service.



PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following ministries and churches throughout Kentucky:

■ **Turfway Racetrack Ministry in Florence.** Mission Service Corps missionary Pat Pope ministers to the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of employees at the track. During "blitzes," cards with a simple gospel message printed in English and Spanish are distributed with cans of soft drink to more than 100 dorm rooms. Pray that these "seeds" will fall on good soil and that people will come to understand that Christ loves them and wants to make a difference in their lives.

■ **Strategy planning for West Union Association in Paducah.** Director of Missions Jim Bryant is leading a major strategy planning emphasis that will help the association understand its community, consider new approaches to reaching non-Christians and evaluate the association's existing structure and strategy. Pray that they will discover resources and needs, refocus their vision and work together to minister to the needs of Ballard and McCracken counties.

■ **Jefferson Street Baptist Mission.** The Louisville-based ministry will soon open its newly built and dedicated "permanent supportive housing facility." This housing will be the home for dually diagnosed homeless (those with an addiction and a mental disorder). Please pray for Director Rick Brenny and others as they begin the process of interviewing candidates who will live in the housing facility and for the workers as they address the spiritual needs of the residents.

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **BOWLING GREEN**—First Church's Sanctuary Choir and Chamber Orchestra will present "Betrayal Beneath the Cross" April 9, 7 p.m.

■ **BURLINGTON**—Burlington Church will present "Experiencing God: The Musical" April 4, 10 a.m., in its newly renovated worship center.

■ **DRAKESBORO**—Ebenezer Church recently called **Travis Fox** as pastor.

■ **GREENVILLE**—Macedonia Church will hold revival services April 4, 10:45 a.m. and 6 p.m. and April 5-8, 7 p.m., with **Roger Skipworth** as evangelist.

■ **HODGENVILLE**—First Church will present "The Shadow of the Cross," April 8, 7:30 p.m. **George Smith** is pastor.

■ **LIBERTY**—**John Routh** has resigned as pastor of Faith Church effective April 11.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Melbourne Heights Church recently called **Katie Trusty**

as minister of youth.

Rockford Lane Church will host **Aubrey Bowlus** in concert during their Sunday evening service, April 18. **Randal Pollock** is pastor.

■ **OAKLAND**—Oakland Church recently called **Tim Colovos** as pastor.

■ **OWENSBORO**—Seven Hills Church honored **Beauther and Verlene Johnson** on their 50th wedding anniversary March 24.

■ **PADUCAH**—Highview Church recently called **Danny Cox** as interim pastor.

Trinity Church recently ordained **Brian Dickson** and **Roy Parks** as deacons. **Kenneth Brown** is pastor.

■ **PAINT LICK**—Mount Tabor Church has called **Tim Robbins** as pastor effective April 11.

■ **RUSSELLVILLE**—First Church recently honored **Claude and Christine Ashby** and **Joe and Carolyn Fuqua** on their 50th wedding anniversaries.

Satterley served Cedarmore 40 years

Bagdad—Sam Satterley, longtime maintenance director at Cedarmore Baptist Assembly, died March 24 after a brief battle with cancer. He was 61.

Satterley had served on the Cedarmore staff 40 years, noted David Melber, president of Kentucky Baptist Assemblies.

"Sam basically knew everything about the whole place," he said. "He was an amazing witness to anybody who was ever there."

"He had a really sweet and humorous personality that pretty much touched anybody he was ever around," Melber added. "He was greatly loved and will be greatly missed."

Survivors include Satterley's wife, Delores; two sons, Owen Satterley of Defoe and Doug Satterley of Waddy; and his mother, Elizabeth Satterley Walker of Frankfort. His funeral service was held March 27 at Indian Fork Baptist Church in Bagdad.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March

31-April 2 Soak-A-City youth evangelism conference, First Baptist Church, Mt. Washington.

April

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.

21 Kentucky Baptist men's chorale concert, Clifton Baptist Church, Louisville.

22 Kentucky Baptist men's chorale concert, Southern Baptist Seminary chapel, Louisville.

22 Kentucky Baptist men's chorale, women's chorale and orchestra combined concert, St. Matthews Baptist Church, Louisville.

23 State Children's Bible Drill, First Baptist Church, Russell.

23 State Children's Bible Drill, Calvary Baptist Church, Lexington.

23-25 All-State Children's Choir—West, Jonathan Creek.

23 Kentucky Baptist men's chorale concert, First Baptist Church, Barbourville.

24 Regional Keyboard Festival, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

24 State Children's Bible Drill, St. Matthews Baptist Church, Louisville.

24 Kentucky Baptist men's chorale concert, First Baptist Church, Frankfort.

25 Kentucky Baptist men's chorale concert, First Baptist Church, Shelbyville.

26-27 Church Secretaries Conference, KBC building, Louisville.

27 Senior Adult Celebration, Third Baptist Church, Owensboro.

29 Senior Adult Celebration, Edgewood Baptist Church, Nicholasville.

30 State Children's Bible Drill, Lone Oak First Baptist Church, Paducah.

30 State Children's Bible Drill, Beacon Hill Baptist Church, Somerset.

May

1-2 Baptist Men on Mission equestrian trail ride, Mammoth Cave National Park.

1 State Children's Bible Drill, Greenwood Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

1 State Children's Bible Drill, First Baptist Church, Madisonville.

6 Start-A-Class Tour, Crittenden Baptist Church, Crittenden.

11 Senior Adult Celebration, Scottsville Baptist Church.

13 Senior Adult Celebration, Central Baptist Church, Corbin.

15 Regional Keyboard Festival, Calvary Baptist Church, Lexington.

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

CLASSIFIED ADS

AVAILABLE: Young, NAMB-approved missionary couple seeking opportunity for evangelism/missions/outreach ministry. For resumé: Kris and Kimberly Eldridge, (502) 412-1907.

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

FOR RENT: Christian-owned beachfront condo west of Panama City, Fla. (Pinnacle Port). Sleeps four; family games and videos. Call (800) 874-8823 and ask for unit B2-308.

FOR SALE: Used theological books bought and sold. Contact Brent Cloyd, 25100 Indian Ridge Road, Sterling, IL 61081. (815) 622-7899, Cloyd@essex1.com. List sent e-mail only. Will buy pastors' libraries.

SEEKING: Forest Park Baptist Church is in search of a full-time minister of music/youth; seminary education and/or prior experience preferred. Interested applicants may send a resumé to: Minister of Music/Youth Search, Forest Park Baptist Church, 520 Old Morgantown Road, Bowling Green, KY 42101, Attn: David Morrow; or e-mail: ForPrkBapt@aol.com.

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: Full-time music/education minister. Submit resumé to: Elkton Baptist Church, PO Box 547, Elkton, KY 42220, or e-mail elktonbaptist@kih.net.

SEEKING: Established, growing church seeks minister of worship for blended services as well as all-out contemporary worship. 20 hrs/week. Brad Chase, Crestwood Baptist Church, Frankfort, Ky. (502) 695-2088.

SEEKING: Clear Creek Baptist Bible College announces a position on the faculty for an instructor in Christian Ministry. This individual must have an earned doctorate in Christian Education or have finished course work toward the terminal degree and complete the degree within one year. This position requires five years full-time ministry experience in a Southern Baptist-related ministry. Publishing record and/or college level teaching experience would be helpful. Experience and educational background will determine rank and salary. The New Hampshire Confession of Faith is the faith statement followed by the college. Send a resumé, including a statement of faith and educational philosophy, to the Academic Dean, Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, 300 Clear Creek Road, Pineville, KY 40977. E-mail may be sent to: mhester@ccbcc.edu. Clear Creek Baptist Bible College is an agency of the Kentucky Baptist Convention with a mission to provide education to adults called into Christian service.

SEEKING: Part-time youth minister for Union City Baptist Church. Send resumé to Search Committee, 2502 Doylesville Road, Richmond, KY 40475.

SEEKING: Part-time (1/2 to 3/4 time) youth minister for Immanuel Baptist, Henderson, Ky. Send resumé to: Personnel Committee, 540 2nd St., Henderson, KY 42420.

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

SEEKING: Youth minister for Valley Station Baptist. Twenty hours per week; annual salary: \$12,480. Contact Jerry Gifford, 5415 Valley Station Road, Louisville, KY 40272. Phone: (502) 937-1730.

SEEKING: Part-time director of children's ministry. Responsible for all aspects of providing ministry to children, elementary grades 1-5. Bachelor's degree in education preferred and/or combination of college degree and experience of three or more years leading children's programs. Ability to build and maintain effective working relationships and rapport with children, parents and staff is required. Compensation includes salary, vacation and pro-rated benefits. Position might be upgraded to full-time in the future. Send cover letter, resumé, salary history and available starting date to: Richard Landers, FBC, PO Box 697, Richmond, KY 40476-0697; or via e-mail to: richard.landlers@firstbaptistnet.com.

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: Administrative assistant, Kentucky Baptist Foundation, Louisville: to provide administrative support for the president and trust counsel in these areas: will/trust administration, correspondence, trust/endowment management agreements, board/committee preparation/logistics, financial/general records maintenance and client/donor service. High School graduate; CPS desired; 5-8 years experience; skilled in Microsoft Word, Excel, Publisher, PowerPoint; thorough knowledge of general office practice/procedures; acceptable business English and math skills. For information/application, contact Laurie Valentine at (502) 244-6466 or laurie.valentine@kybaptist.org. Application period ends April 19.

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

WANTED: Church looking for hand chimes or handbells to borrow or purchase if reasonable—for adult or children's ministries. Call (859) 299-8445.

Some scholars take new look at high priest Caiaphas

By Kevin Eckstrom
Religion News Service

Washington (RNS)—With his long black robes and entourage of underlings, he has the aura of a first-century Darth Vader, scheming and conspiring against the story's hero. His jewel-encrusted headdress adds an air of imperial self-importance.

Throughout Mel Gibson's graphic blockbuster "The Passion of the Christ," the Jewish high priest, Caiaphas, seems keenly interested—and complicit—in the scourging and death of Jesus Christ.

But some scholars say Gibson has it all wrong. Caiaphas is presented as a one-dimensional caricature—a sort of malevolent foil to the suffering Christ. Such a depiction is too simplistic, they say, and dangerous.

Unfortunately for Caiaphas, it's nothing new. In most depictions, "Caiaphas is, at best, a representative of the lowest side of religion," writes Helen Bond, a New Testament lecturer at the University of Edinburgh, in her new book, "Caiaphas: Friend of Rome and Judge of Jesus?"

"At worst, a representative of evil, a symbol of the depths to which humanity can sink when pitted against its God."

Who was Caiaphas?

But just who was this religious leader who handed Jesus over to the Romans for crucifixion? Was he as ruthless, as sinister as Gibson's interpretation of the Gospels suggest, or was he an over-burdened diplomat intent on preserving his people's cherished link to God?

In her book, Bond paints an almost sympathetic view of Caiaphas



CAIAPHAS The high priest, played by Mattia Sbragia, interrogates Jesus (Jim Caviezel) in a scene from Mel Gibson's "The Passion of the Christ." Some scholars say Caiaphas has been misunderstood over history. (Photo by Philippe Antonello, © 2004 Icon Distribution, Inc., from the book "The Passion." Used by permission.)

as a man dedicated to protecting the Jerusalem Temple from both Jesus' messianic interference and Roman influence.

"Caiaphas probably genuinely believed that in doing away with Jesus, he was acting for the good of the nation," she writes.

Bond and others scholars say if indeed Caiaphas wanted Jesus dead, it wasn't because he claimed to be the Messiah. Rather, it was a turf battle sparked by Jesus' dramatic cleansing of the Temple.

What little is known of Caiaphas' life comes not from the Bible, but from Flavius Josephus, a first-century historian who chronicled Jewish life for the Romans.

As high priest, Caiaphas would have been an aristocrat who commanded automatic respect. His father-in-law, Ananus, was high

priest between 6 and 15 A.D., and Caiaphas was appointed to the post in 18 A.D. by a Roman official.

His 18-year-year reign—he was deposed by Rome in 37 A.D.—was the longest of any high priest from the first century.

As high priest, Caiaphas would have overseen Temple affairs, especially animal sacrifices. He alone could enter the Temple's Holy of Holies on the most sacred day of the year to beg forgiveness from God for the sins of the people.

"He was the commander-in-chief of a very large corps of priests," said Rabbi Ismar Schorsch, chancellor of New York's Jewish Theological Seminary. In an interview, Bond described him as a sort of "suped-up pope."

It was his position as head of the Sanhedrin—the chief Jewish tribu-

nal—that brought the priest and prophet together after Jesus' uprising in the Temple. It was a fateful encounter for both men.

Was Temple cleansing last straw?

The Gospel accounts emphasize that Jesus entered the Temple and overturned the tables of the money-changers and animal vendors. He lambasted the authorities for turning the sacred site into a "den of robbers."

The Gospel of Matthew says Jewish leaders were "indignant" at Jesus' disruption. Later, after he was arrested, Jesus was brought before the Sanhedrin and questioned about the uprising, his claims to be the Messiah and predictions that the Temple would be destroyed.

Caiaphas, overwhelmed, pronounced Jesus guilty of the ultimate sin. "Why do we need any more witnesses?" he asked in the Gospel of Mark. "You have heard the blasphemy."

Both the Jews and Romans were on watch for any signs of trouble during the crowded Passover pilgrimage. Scholars say the priests especially would have wanted to maintain calm. Jesus' outspoken followers didn't help matters.

Bruce Chilton, executive director of the Institute for Advanced Theology at Bard College, said it was Jesus' organized disturbance, not His claims as the Messiah or His miracles, that raised the ire of Caiaphas.

"For the authorities, this is a riot," said Chilton, an Episcopal priest. "Whatever it is, it has to be put down. And if you can find the instigator, you'd be well-advised to execute him to put down this kind of activity all together."

"Caiaphas probably genuinely believed that in doing away with Jesus, he was acting for the good of the nation."

Helen Bond, author of "Caiaphas: Friend of Rome and Judge of Jesus?"

Small & rural churches seek creative ways to celebrate Easter

By Adelle Banks
Religion News Service

Rolla, Mo. (RNS)—There's something new this Easter season at the front of the sanctuary of Ozark Highlands Christian Church, a rural Missouri congregation of 50 worshippers.

To mark Lent and Easter, the pastor and a member with carpentry skills fashioned a 6 1/2-foot rugged cross from an oak tree, placed it in a Christmas tree stand and covered its base with a brown quilt to represent the earth.

Each Sunday, elders carry forward symbols to recall Jesus' Passion—a crown fashioned from a member's thorn tree, a sign reading "King of the Jews" in four languages, and a whip made from a leather belt.

On Easter Sunday, these stark symbols will be replaced with a brighter one: lilies placed on the cross to celebrate Christ's Resurrection.

"It has brought the crucifixion and the Lenten season to life to help us prepare and see that visually," said Russ Hamilton, pastor of the church in Rolla, Mo.

"I think that they will see just exactly what the Lord had intended—to take the ugliness of the cross and make it beautiful."

For smaller churches, it can be

a challenge to develop simple yet symbolic ways of celebrating Easter, as the holiday usually swells the church attendance one spring Sunday.

"It is a struggle because we don't have a lot of resources to buy banners," Hamilton said. "We don't have a lot of people to have a big cantata. We don't have resources to really bring in a lot of big flowers. ... We try to use what we have."

A time for church starts

Instead of attending a musical production at the North Carolina church where he used to be a youth pastor, Jim Perdue will preach at the first official service of the Southern Baptist church he's starting in the booming Atlanta suburb of Forsyth County.

He'll spend the week between Palm Sunday and Easter doing "servant evangelism," delivering microwave popcorn door-to-door, giving out free water and soda, washing cars—all in an effort to attract those who might not normally darken a church door to the first service at a local high school.

"We wanted to focus on them and really show them that there's something valuable for them at church," said Perdue, the 26-year-old son of Georgia's governor. "There's a reason for them to be

there other than just on Easter Sunday."

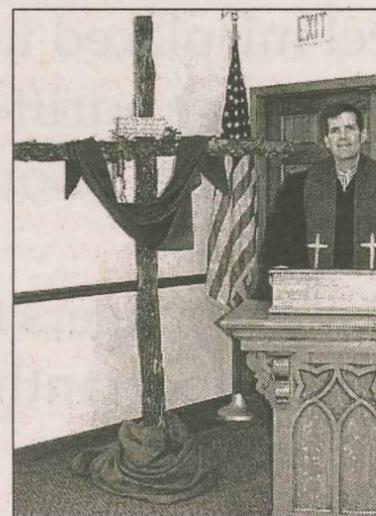
Ed Stetzer, church planting specialist with the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, said Easter is a common day for "new church starts" although some churches open their doors on Palm Sunday in hopes of beginning with "two strong Sundays."

Smaller churches in rural areas aren't new, and in some cases, neither are their Easter traditions.

Richard Lischer, author of "Open Secrets: A Memoir of Faith and Discovery," recalled what it was like 25 years ago to be pastor of a Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod congregation in southern Illinois on Easter Sunday. Rain or shine, members of the congregation assembled before dawn in a cemetery behind the church for a sunrise service, standing amid the burial plots of their relatives and ancestors.

"I think it was our way of dramatizing Christ's victory over death, a way of taking the message of life into enemy territory," said Lischer, now a Duke University professor of preaching.

John Bennett, director of the Missouri School of Religion Center for Rural Ministry, said sunrise services remain a tradition in rural settings, and the cemetery is a typical

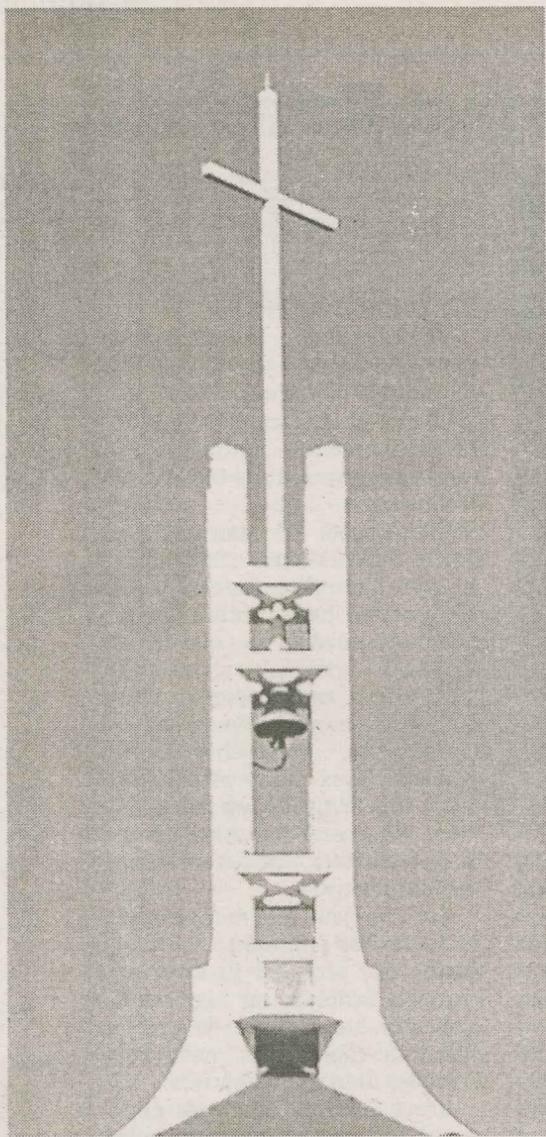


STARK SYMBOLISM Russ Hamilton stands near the rugged cross that stands at Ozark Highlands Christian Church in Rolla, Mo. Items that recall Jesus' Passion, including a crown of thorns and a whip, will be replaced by lilies on Easter Sunday to mark the Resurrection. (RNS photo by Theresa Ann Hamilton)

location.

"There will be a lot of those that are ecumenical, and then there's probably a breakfast in one of the churches in town," said Bennett of Jefferson City, Mo. "For the main service of the day, the groups would separate to go to their individual congregations."

Each Sunday, elders carry forward symbols to recall Jesus' Passion—a crown fashioned from a member's thorn tree, a sign reading "King of the Jews" in four languages, and a whip made from a leather belt.



“The Son of
Man came to
seek and to
save what
was lost.”

---Luke 19:10

At Oneida Baptist Institute, we minister to young people who are lost in many ways.

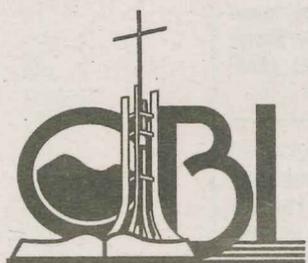
Some have been lost in the crowd at their public schools.

Others feel misplaced in their families.

Still others are adrift without a sense of purpose in their lives.

Many do not know the saving love of Jesus Christ.

At OBI, we help teenagers find academic success, acceptance and a sense of direction. Most importantly, we help them find the Savior who died in their place.



Education for Time and Eternity

Would you like to learn more about us?

Oneida Baptist Institute

PO Box 67, Oneida, Kentucky 40972
Phone: 606-847-4111 Fax: 606-847-4496
Web site: www.oneidaschool.org