

PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

WESTERN RECORDER

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BULKED-UP BOBBLEHEAD Samson is one of three "Bible Bobbleheads," joining Noah and Moses.

Kentucky native finds fans line up for Bible-based bobblehead dolls

By David Wintrey
News Director

Allen, Texas—A Christian artist with ties to Kentucky has found a way to celebrate his faith while creating a keepsake that many collectors appear eager to get.

"God works in strange and mysterious ways," says Dan Foote, creator of 7-inch bobblehead dolls depicting Noah, Moses and Samson.

"If we can be part of that strange and mysterious way, praise God," the Louisville native says. "This whole thing has been a lot of fun."

Foote estimates he's sold 750 of the light-hearted dolls, mostly on the Web. They also attracted the attention of Nashville's minor league baseball team, which commissioned 6,000 5-inch versions of the dolls to give away at "faith night" promotions this summer.

"The church groups are going crazy over these things," according to Brent High, church and youth programs director for the Nashville Sounds. "We've had some churches double the number of people they brought last year, and they attribute it to the bobbleheads."

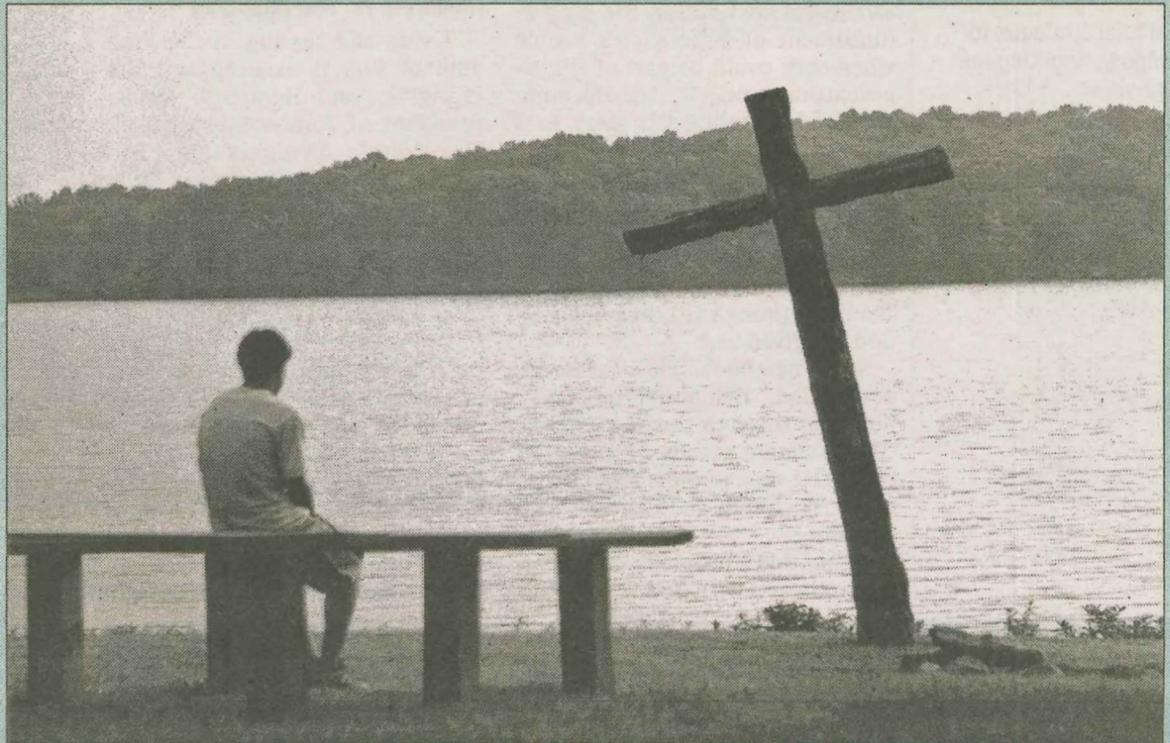
Who knew a biblical character with a spring in his neck could be so popular?

The whole thing started three years ago at a Texas Rangers baseball game, according to Foote, an author and cartoonist whose drawings have appeared in a variety of Christian books, magazines and discipleship materials. Clients range from Focus on the Family to the satirical magazine "The Door."

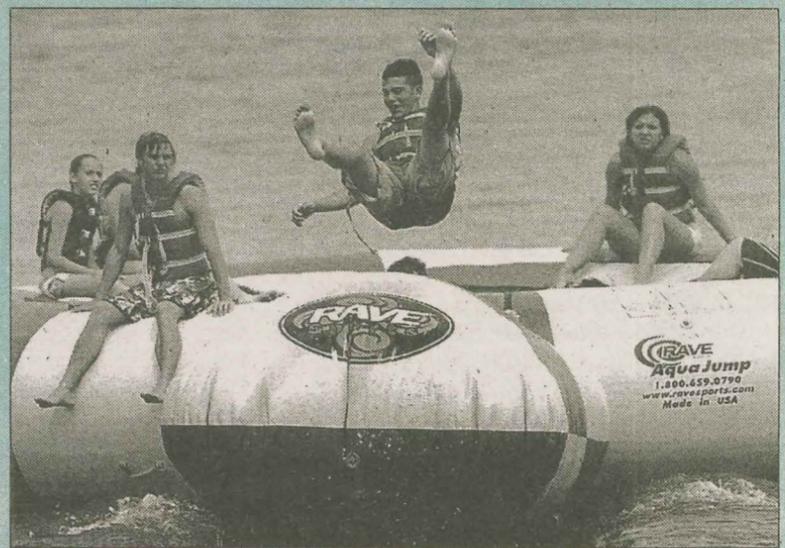
□ See Kentucky native's ... *Page 6*

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, July 21.

Crossing over



Attendance continues to grow at "Crossings at the Creek," the nine-week summer camping program at Jonathan Creek Camp and Conference Center in Western Kentucky. More than 3,300 teens and adult chaperones are expected to attend this summer. Crossings combines evangelistic worship and Bible studies with activities designed to attract unchurched youth. Kentucky Baptist Assemblies President David Melber said the organization is looking at expanding Crossings to reach more campers on campus and elsewhere. **Above:** A teenager looks out on Kentucky Lake. **Right:** Cody Ward of Morgantown Community Church and fellow campers enjoy the water trampoline. (Photos by Josh Booth) **Story and photos on page 3.**



WMU launching faith-based fight on poverty

By Kathie Chute
Baptist Press

Indianapolis (BP)—Woman's Missionary Union hopes to link churches with people's needs in an effort to break the cycle of poverty in the agency's latest national missions strategy.

"Project HELP: Poverty" will encourage churches to take part locally and nationally in attacking poverty, speakers said during last month's WMU annual meeting.

"Project HELP" is an ongoing initiative in which WMU identifies a social and moral issue and then ties in national projects to address it during the course of two years.

Kentucky WMU President Cathy Chinn and Randy Pool, coordinator of the Mississippi River Ministry of West Tennessee, led a workshop that outlined the Project HELP: Poverty program.

"How much do you love Jesus?" Chinn asked workshop participants. "Because the amount of love you have for Him determines how much you love others."

The project will use the Christian Women's Job Corps definition of poverty: "The condition of a person lacking financial resources to provide for adequate diet, housing, clothing, health care or transportation for themselves or their family."

WMU will encourage churches to adopt local, national and international action plans during the next year, ranging from one-time, short-term or ongoing projects to donating a bag (or box) of food, a book and a Bible, to participating in or giving to humanitarian aid projects in Mexico, which is the International Mission Study country this year.

During the workshop, Pool suggested a variety of projects.

"Take a look at your community and find out what they need. The needs will be different in every community," he added.

Project HELP: Poverty will use the recently published book "Breaking the Cycle: Issues Affecting Poverty" by Cathy Butler as its primary resource. In addition to addressing the issue of poverty, the book offers information from previous WMU "Project HELP" topics, such as hunger, AIDS, cultural diversity, literacy and restorative justice, into one resource.

Suggestions for poverty-fighting projects will be gathered from various sources and posted on the Volunteer Connection section of WMU's Web site: www.wmu.com/getinvolved/ministry/volunteer/.

Churches will begin addressing the issue when the emphasis □ See WMU launching ... *Page 6*

"Knowing what truly ignites the heart of God is something we desperately need to understand, yet we have such a hard time recognizing it."

Ken Hemphill, SBC's national strategist for Empowering Kingdom Growth

Hemphill: 'Kingdom of God is everything'

By Mark Kelly
SBC International Mission Board

Nashville (BP)—Ken Hemphill believes more Christians should experience the life-changing power of understanding God's purpose in history and the part He wants them to play in His Kingdom.

Hemphill, the national strategist for the Southern Baptist Convention's Empowering Kingdom Growth emphasis, said too many Christians miss out on the joy and fulfillment of being God's people when they could be part of His supernatural work in transforming lives and revealing His glory to a lost world.

"Kingdom questions are among the most important a Christian will ever face," Hemphill noted. "Few are more crucial to our understanding of why we're here and what we should be doing with the brief time God has given us."

In his new book, "EKG: The Heartbeat of God," Hemphill traces God's Kingdom through the pages of the Old Testament and the teachings of Christ. He shows how it exploded in the early church and cascades into our time.

Being God's people means aligning our hearts with God's, Hemphill

said, yet too few Christians experience His power in their daily lives.

"Knowing what truly ignites the heart of God is something we desperately need to understand, yet we have such a hard time recognizing it," he said. "We don't always know it when we see it. We don't always live by it when we do. And we don't always realize it when we're missing it."

Humdrum vs. life-changing

Living and serving in the Kingdom of God is exciting and life-changing, said Hemphill, former president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. "It will impact every area of your personal life. Even standing in line at the checkout counter no longer seems like a humdrum waste of time but potentially a Kingdom opportunity."

The greatest shame is for Christians to live out their days without ever experiencing what God had in mind for them, Hemphill added.

"A lot is at stake if we fail to grasp the meaning of the Kingdom for us," he said. "We miss the joy of participating in God's supernatural work, the exhilarating freedom that comes from radical obedi-

ence, the opportunity to experience God's abundant provision. Saddest of all, we miss God's purpose for our lives.

"Whatever our situation, wherever we are, however we feel about our relationship with God, it is never too late to discover what it would mean to be a Kingdom person—and to experience the adventure of a lifetime."

Obedying Jesus' admonition to seek the Kingdom first (Matthew 6:33) is life's key quest in finding one's purpose on earth, Hemphill said, adding that a Christian in search of God's Kingdom must travel the pages of the Bible.

"We see God's Kingdom best by opening our Bibles and letting God speak to us through the pages of His story, through the lives of His people and through the love of His Son," Hemphill said. "But we aren't inventing a new model or lifestyle. We're building on what God already has shown us."

A singular focus on God's Kingdom clarifies a Christian's calling, invigorates everyday life and deepens one's relationship with God and others, Hemphill said. Wholehearted investment in God's Kingdom changes the world.

"When I think about the impact that faithful obedience to God's Word could have on our world, I am overwhelmed," he said. "You become an instrument in the hand of the sovereign God of the universe."

"To live with this kind of Kingdom focus is not merely one choice among a long list of priority-setting options and life-management techniques," he added. "For the believer in Christ, living in the Kingdom is the only reality there is."

"The Kingdom of God is everything. And living in the Kingdom is God's purpose for you. For me. And for all of God's people."

"EKG: The Heartbeat of God" is available through lifewaystores.com. A new discipleship study using the book, "A 40 Day Experience, EKG: the Heartbeat of God," will be available through LifeWay stores and online in August.

GuideStone offers Baptists health screening option

By Wendy Ashley
SBC GuideStone Financial Resources

Dallas (BP)—GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention (formerly the Annuity Board) has joined with Life Line Screening to make health screenings available to all Southern Baptists at an affordable rate.

"We believe this program will reinforce our commitment to help Southern Baptists take charge of their own health," said Doug Day, executive officer of benefit services for GuideStone.

LLS is a national provider of preventive health screenings.

Screenings scan for potential health problems related to blocked arteries that can lead to stroke, aortic aneurysms that can lead to a ruptured aorta and hardening of the arteries in the legs, a strong predictor of heart disease. Also offered is a bone density screening to assess risk for osteoporosis. The tests provide results for participants to review with their own personal physicians.

"Life Line Screening does not replace your personal physician," Day said. "The screenings simply try to provide you and your doctor with more information that can help to reduce your risk for complications from vascular disease and osteoporosis."

All Southern Baptists are eligible to participate in Life Line Screenings at GuideStone's reduced rates. Interested individuals can call Life Line Screenings directly at (800) 403-7417 for information about screenings in their area.

The four scans cost \$125 if coordinated through the toll-free number, and prepayment is required, according to Jane Wendel, marketing support manager at GuideStone.

LLS performs screenings at community sites such as churches or community centers. In 2004, LLS will hold more than 14,000 screening events throughout the country and expects to hold more than 17,000 events in 2005. To date, more than 2 million people have been screened.

"Individuals who take advantage of the preventive health screenings made available through LLS may be able to identify warning signs of serious illness before a problem occurs," Day said. "We want to motivate individuals to become aware of signs and symptoms of health problems and to modify their lifestyles for personal health and wellness."

The results of the screenings are mailed directly to the individual. LLS also will provide the individual with a detailed receipt that can be submitted to his or her insurance company to determine coverage.

Russian Baptists embrace EKG emphasis

Nashville (BP)—The Southern Baptist Convention's Empowering Kingdom Growth emphasis is spreading across Russia, according to convention leaders.

EKG was first introduced to leaders of the Russian Baptist Union a year ago by Carlisle Driggers, executive director of the South Carolina Baptist Convention. Driggers was participating in a leadership retreat along with Jere Phillips, associate professor of practical theology at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary in Memphis, Tenn., and Ed Tarleton, regional strategy associate for European Russia for the SBC International Mission Board.

During the retreat for the RBU's General Council, Driggers, Phillips and Tarleton reviewed the principles of EKG and how they could be used among Russian Baptists. After an extended prayer session, the Russian Baptist leaders declared that God was leading them to

make Empowering Kingdom Growth a national ministry focus.

Driggers' book, "A Journey of Faith and Hope," and the EKG planning process have since been translated into Russian, with 5,000 copies published for the 1,450 RBU churches.

Driggers and Phillips returned to Moscow earlier this year to lead a training conference for General Council members and district superintendents of the Russian Baptist Union. Also participating were Tarleton and Russell Kyzar, IMB strategy associate for central and eastern Russia.

"I have never seen anything ... that is having such immediate and wonderful impact as the Empowering Kingdom Growth seminars for all 60-plus leaders of the Russian Baptist Union," Tarleton said. "The RBU leaders are now talking excitedly about their visions, values and key result areas for impacting God's Kingdom."

BAPTIST DIGEST

Seminary debate continues. New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary trustees reportedly will weigh alternatives to Southern Baptist Convention sole membership during their October meeting, according to an article in the New Orleans Time-Picayune. SBC messengers "did not vote on sole membership," said seminary president Chuck Kelley. "They voted on a request for our trustees to consider sole membership and our trustees will consider it very carefully." Gary Smith, outgoing chairman of the SBC Executive Committee, countered that Kelley "has repeatedly given assurances that if the convention made that request, he would respond accordingly."

Crossover conversions top 1,900. Last month's Crossover Indiana evangelistic blitz resulted in 1,932 professions of faith in Christ, according to final statistics compiled

from the emphasis. Crossover is an evangelistic effort held since 1989 in conjunction with the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting. More than 120 Southern Baptist churches in Indiana participated in the effort, which included nearly 1,000 volunteers.

College controversy escalates. Trustees of Louisiana College in Pineville, faced with the resignation of their chairman and the school's president, elected a new trustee chairman July 9 in a closed-door, off-campus meeting. Bill Hudson, pastor of First Baptist Church of Rayne, La., announced his election as chairman after the meeting. He succeeds Joe Nesom, pastor of First Baptist Church of Jackson, La., who resigned June 27, claiming trustees were making decisions intended to "humiliate and punish those that they despise." The Louisiana Baptist col-

lege has been torn by controversy between the board's conservative majority and moderate minority. The school also is under investigation by its accrediting agency, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Virginia editor called as pastor. Michael Clingenpeel, editor of the Virginia Baptist Religious Herald since 1992, has resigned to become pastor of River Road Baptist Church in Richmond, Va., effective Sept. 7. He will succeed James Slatton, who retired last year after 31 years as pastor. Clingenpeel, a graduate of the University of Richmond in Virginia and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, previously was pastor of churches in Virginia and Michigan. A member of the board of Associated Baptist Press, he also was a trustee of the former Baptist Sunday School Board.

Crossings at the Creek



SUMMER CAMP SCENES A total of 3,600 teens and chaperones are scheduled to attend Crossings at the Creek during the nine weeks of summer camp at Jonathan Creek Camp and Conference Center. Above left: Luke Curry of Morgantown Community Church attempts the most difficult side of the ropes course blindfolded in an effort to raise \$15—the price needed to send a student to Jonathan Creek's sister camp in Moldova. Above right: Students circle up to pray before the evening worship service. (Photos by Josh Booth)

Program's growth results in expansion on campus, elsewhere

By David Winfrey
News Director

Jonathan Creek—When Carol Hiler helped take 16 youth to Crossings at the Creek summer camp in Hardin, she could hardly have predicted the response those teenagers would make during their week away.

Hiler, a youth leader at Pinckard Baptist Church in Versailles, said nine of the 16 teens made first-time professions of faith while at Jonathan Creek Camp and Conference Center.

"The Spirit of the Lord was moving in that place," Hiler said. "It was phenomenal to watch."

Hiler cited the youth's bonding with college-age counselors, the two hours of Bible study each day and the dynamic worship each night as factors that influenced the teenagers.

The camp pastor took the time to hang out with the youth, but was willing to be blunt with his messages about Christianity and the reality of hell, she added. "He made a lot of our kids stop and think about



EVENING WORSHIP Teens sing during the evening service.

where they were headed with their future."

The teenagers are excited about their experience, she said.

"They realize that they need to now go out and share with more kids in the community," Hiler said. "We're getting ready to do some fol-

low-up activities as a result of our experiences at camp."

As more campers come each year to the Jonathan Creek campus, organizers are looking for ways to expand capacity at the camp and grow in other ways as well.

This year, 3,600 teen campers and chaperones are scheduled to attend the nine weeks of Crossings. Capacity is limited by dining space, and Kentucky Baptist Assemblies is planning to build a new dining hall in the next couple of years. KBA President David Melber said Crossings could expand to 4,500 students after the new dining hall is built.

Meanwhile, KBA already has expanded its influence on an international scale. Money collected by campers at Crossings is supporting Christian camps in Moldova, an Eastern European nation that formerly was part of the Soviet Union. Contributions from Crossings campers and others are helping more than 2,800 Moldovan children attend camp, and organizers there already have reported more than 1,100 professions



WATER SPORTS Jake Forrester, a member of Hillvue Heights Church in Bowling Green, tries to hold on.



MESSAGE Camp pastor Brent Gambrell, a youth speaker from Nashville, talks to students about the definition of being a disciple of Christ.

of faith this summer, Melber said.

Next summer, Crossings will expand to Northern Kentucky, with three weeks of "Crossings On Mission" camp on the campus of Northern Kentucky University. The camp will involve teens in hands-on mission projects as well as devotional time, fun activities and evening worship.

Melber praises the impact camps can have on teenagers.

"They're away from the TV and away from all the other stuff," he said. "It's amazing some of the things we hear from God when we read our Bibles and pray for a week."



"TIGER BALL" Students take part in a team-building activity.



BIBLE STUDY Counselor Lewis Curd (right), a student at Union University, leads students in a group Bible study each morning.

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

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Baptism decline

A great deal has been written over the past few years about a decline, or declining rate, in baptisms. Jimmy Draper's most insightful "frog in the kettle" commentary is only the latest in a long series of such articles in Baptist papers generally.

As pastor of a church which has not baptized for several years, anything I may say here might be considered defensive. Still, it is true that not every church has equal opportunity to reach new converts. We at Poplar Grove have started a children's Sunday school class recently, and have (with the help of the Mississippi River Ministry) made sure our baptismistry works and will have hot water piped to it when that day comes! And the last person who was baptized is still active, surely a healthy sign.

But when the statistics show baptisms down but total membership up, the obvious "no-brainer" answer is in a significant change in the way we (as a whole, not in every church) are receiving members.

Before someone cries "Landmark," let me assure the readers they are correct: I still hold the older view, such as is set out in Joe T. Odle's "Church Member's Handbook" which we're using just now at Poplar Grove. But the purpose of this letter is not to argue the issue; it is merely to point out the obvious.

When those whom we now receive by "statement" were received by baptism, baptisms went up. As the "open" view has gained favor, the number of baptisms will automatically go down. Believe what you may about the authority for baptism, you must recognize that this one change is largely responsible for "the decline in baptisms" which is so much bemoaned.

R. Charles Blair
Clinton

Break the silence

The two articles appearing in the June 29 issue of the Western Recorder, "Hidden abuse: Evangelist finds healing by sharing about past" and "Counselors: Facing truth first step toward healing," ought to serve as a wake-up call to Kentucky Baptist churches concerning child sexual abuse.

In recent days we have seen the Catholic church literally rocked by one allegation after another concerning abuse of children by clergy members. However, one would be amiss to think that such activity is limited to the Catholic church alone.

I speak as one who is a survivor of childhood sexual abuse by a church member. I know that I am not alone. Although the abuse occurred over 18 years ago, it still affects me today.

I have been in and out of therapy and only recently have I begun trying to deal with the abuser himself (who, I might add, served as a deacon, RA director and song leader and as far as I know is still in a leadership position in that church).

I have contacted the district attorney and sheriff in the town where the abuse occurred and where the perpetrator still attends church. I have also notified the pastor.

So my message to Kentucky Baptist churches is simple: Don't just assume someone who is a church leader and a "good" Christian man or woman is safe with children. Pedophiles are very good at what they do—deceiving everyone around them and hurting children.

And for parents, don't just assume your children are safe from pedophiles. Ask your children pointedly if anyone is doing or has done anything to them that they aren't comfortable with. Only by breaking the silence will pedophiles be exposed and stopped.

Name withheld



Partnerships undergird Cooperative Program

I am sometimes asked about how the Cooperative Program works. I'm always pleased to share because I am convinced that CP is a tremendous blessing from God that enables us to effectively fulfill the Great Commission.

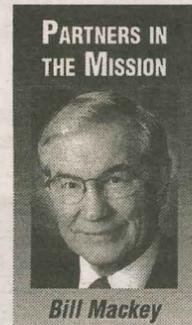
I believe God uses the Cooperative Program to change lives every day and that CP leverages the very best that Southern Baptists have to offer. Through CP, every participating church—no matter how small or large—ministers simultaneously on a local, regional, national and international level just as Jesus calls for in Acts 1:8.

It's the cooperation that makes it work so well because it facilitates a harmonious partnership among the local church, the association, the state convention and the Southern Baptist Convention. The framework is set up in such a way that state conventions carry the primary responsibility for promoting CP, receiving and distributing CP funds and providing support for the local church.

This means the state convention plays a vital (if sometimes less-than-glamorous) role in reaching our world for Christ. The state conventions work to help churches be healthy so they can minister effectively in their communities, have the resources to support broader efforts to evangelize the world and multiply.

In Kentucky, that's where the Mission Board staff comes in with its wide array of consultation, training and ministry events and services. More than 25,000 church and association leaders participate in conferences each year and thousands more participate in mission experiences.

The Cooperative Program also provides the foundation on which state and Southern Baptist missions work can be built. For example, even as the Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union works effectively to promote missions, missions education and direct missions giving through the Lottie Moon, Annie Armstrong and Eliza Broadus offerings, its own



Bill Mackey

BWA offers hope

By withdrawing from the Baptist World Alliance, the Southern Baptist Convention has injured the cause of Christ. Last February a courageous retired Baptist pastor did a prayerwalk around the SBC Executive Committee building, opposing the proposed withdrawal. If I had known about it beforehand, I would have joined him.

Baptists in the South have no idea what it is like to be a tiny minority regarded as a cult, persecuted or taxed to support a state church. Most Baptists outside the U.S. fall into one or more of those categories. Baptist World Alliance is their main link to something stronger and more influential that gives them hope.

Southern Baptist wealth and numbers have given the SBC a "we can do no wrong" complex, making them believe all Baptists must march to their tune.

Most of the thousands of Southern Baptists who might have voted against withdrawal no longer attend SBC annual meetings because most things are predetermined with little opposition tolerated. Yet many of those who do not attend still give financial support.

Woman's Missionary Union and several state editors courageously took stands against withdrawal. Years ago I heard about a church that excluded a member. The next Sunday the majority excluded the minority that had voted not to exclude the individual. I don't think WMU can be excluded, but will reprisals be next?

The SBC cut-off of International Baptist Theological Seminary in 1991 was one of the main motivations that gave birth to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Now as churches and individuals rally to support the Baptist World Alliance, maybe more people will see the value of such an alternative as the CBF.

Bill Moore
Owensboro

budget is supplied by the Cooperative Program. Likewise, the work of our Kentucky Baptist colleges and other agencies and institutions is enhanced greatly both by direct CP support and by state convention work to strengthen and multiply the local church.

This foundation of state support manifests itself nationally and internationally as well. CP funds provide crucial support for the International Mission Board, the North American Mission Board, six Southern Baptist seminaries and the ministries of the SBC Executive Committee. Not only do these organizations rely on the direct CP gifts that are channeled through the state conventions, they further benefit when local churches and associations, buoyed by the help they receive from state CP ministries, are able to assist them directly through special offerings, missions volunteers, students, etc.

I am delighted that Kay and I have the privilege of serving with a people who have the heart of God for missions. Thanks for your partnership in CP missions through your local church!

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

STEWARDSHIP

Have you read any good financial books lately?

By Jeremy White

As you go on vacation or relax in the hammock in the backyard this summer, you probably have several books on your reading list. After you get done with your favorites, consider the following financial books to help you with your stewardship:

"The Treasure Principle" by Randy Alcorn. This is a small book (similar in size to "The Prayer of Jabez") and a simple read, but it has a powerful message about the joy of giving. It is one of the best books I've read about the eternal rewards awaiting faithful stewards. As Alcorn says, "You can't take it with you—but you can send it on ahead." Rather than a technical financial book, this is more of an inspirational book for an eternal perspective on material matters.

"The Total Money Makeover" by Dave Ramsey. The latest book by popular radio show host Dave Ramsey provides a plan to improve your financial fitness. It gives your budget, debt and savings a workout with helpful steps and specific strategies. Many actual family cases and testimonies help substantiate his approach. If you have not read Ramsey's earlier book, "Financial Peace Revisited," I would recommend it as well.

Perhaps the next two recommendations are merely shameless self-promotion, but they are unique in the targeted subject matter.

"Wealth to Last" by Larry Burkett and Ron Blue with Jeremy White. Written for those in the second half of life, this book addresses the financial topics facing adults after the kids are grown and gone. It addresses how to make those big decisions about pension and Social Security options, invest your 401(k) and IRAs, or decide what insurance is necessary. Take advantage of the authors' collective wisdom and biblical perspective in answering the questions: Will I have enough to retire? Will my wealth last the rest of my life?

"Splitting Heirs" by Ron Blue with Jeremy White. Even if your nest egg seems small, it can have a huge impact on the next generation. A serious topic written with humor and practical tips, this book helps you choose and prepare the next steward. Prevent heir loss—read this for your wealth to be a blessing to others and not a curse.

Jeremy White is a certified public accountant in Paducah. See his free weekly financial tip on his Web site at www.consultcpa.com.



Discovering, affirming mate's strengths enhances marriage

Q: My wife and I have spent our marriage intentionally building one another up, believing this is a privilege and responsibility of marriage. She has helped me when I have been discouraged in my work. I have been able to remind her of the talents and abilities God has given her. Are there any guidelines for applying our God-given abilities to the marriage relationship?

Congratulations on building a marriage filled with affirmation and blessing! By adulthood most of us can better describe the places where we lack ability or talent. Understanding how God has uniquely gifted each of us can be a challenge. Taking this knowledge and applying it can be even more challenging.

MARRIAGE

Part of God's plan in marriage is that you are in the position to know your spouse better than anyone else, and can serve as God's chosen one to encourage and support your spouse. This is a sacred opportunity. The greater insight each of us has into our abilities, the more likely we will develop them into strengths. Having someone's love and commitment helps motivate us to shape our talents into strengths.

Some of these concepts have been researched and developed in an assessment tool called the Strengthsfinder. It is taken online and identifies your top five strengths out of a possible 34. "Living Your Strengths" is a book that examines how Christians can apply their strengths in their devotional life, congregational life and their community. Such awareness also is helpful in understanding your spouse's differences and how those differences can be assets to the marriage and a complement to your own strengths.

One of my husband's top strengths is WOO—though not the woo you might be thinking of. It stands for "Winning Others Over." This means he enjoys getting to know new people and is not intimidated by strangers. One of my strengths is Deliberative. This means I am a private person and often will approach life from a serious, more reserved perspective. Understanding how we are different helps us enter into each other's point of view.

This is only one tool to help you continue to gain insight into yourself, your spouse and your relationship. Building one another up comes more easily when you have identified your strengths.—Valerie Vincent

Q: What is the ideal age to marry? The Bible says, "It's better to marry than to burn." I've heard that means we need to marry while we are "hot," which would mean sometime in our late teens.

Too many people marry the wrong person just because they reach a certain age. Neil Clark Warren explains that age 25 is the age around which most people finalize their worldview. This explains why the divorce rate is higher for those who marry at a younger age, but levels off for those who marry at age 25 or older.

SINGLES

Scott Stanley of the University of Denver cites research indicating Baptists have the highest divorce rate due to marrying too young and being economically challenged. Stanley's first point meshes with Warren's. His second point matches a survey of American divorce lawyers who list economic challenges as the No. 1 reason cited by separating couples for their divorce.

The challenge, whether married or single, is to be a responsible and "holy" adult, living according to biblical guidelines. Dedicate the sexual part of yourself to God in prayer. After all, Jesus was a 30-something never married male. He is our example and the One who gives us strength to live His way (Hebrews 4:14 and 2:18).—James Stillwell

Family Forum writers are:

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Exhibit offers rare glimpse of Bible history

The first time I viewed a display of the Dead Sea Scrolls was several years ago at the Shrine of the Book, a major wing of the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. My most recent opportunity to view a small collection of Dead Sea Scroll fragments was last week in Indianapolis.

While the Jerusalem experience was far more memorable and impressive, the traveling exhibit in Indy was worth the drive—and I didn't have to go halfway around the world to get there.

"The Dead Sea Scrolls to the Bible in America" will be open through Aug. 15 at the Adam's Mark Hotel in downtown Indianapolis. If you've never had the opportunity to view scroll fragments dating to approximately 150 B.C.—or even if you have—visiting the nearby exhibit is a worthwhile excursion.

The Dead Sea Scrolls, discovered at Qumran in 1947 by a Bedouin shepherd boy, are the earliest biblical fragments in existence today. From 1949 to 1956, archaeologists uncovered more than 200 copies of biblical books as well as several hundred apocryphal and sectarian manuscripts in 11 caves in the area.

The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls "represents a turning point in the study of the history of the Jewish people in ancient times, for never before has a literary treasure of such magnitude come to light," according to the Israel Museum Web site (www.imj.org.il). "Thanks to these remarkable finds, our knowledge of Jewish society in the Land of Israel during the Hellenistic and Roman periods as well as the origins of rabbinical Judaism and early Christianity has been greatly enhanced."

The Indy exhibit, comprised primarily of privately owned pieces from the Bible Museum in Phoenix, provides a convenient setting to gain a firsthand

glimpse of extensive Bible history. It could be an educational summer outing for a senior adult group, Sunday school class, church staff or even a vacation Bible school field trip.

Information posted next to the exhibit's postage-stamp size fragments from Genesis, Deuteronomy and Psalms explains that "the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls from 1947-56 provides absolute assurance that the Hebrew Bible has remained virtually unchanged since before the time of Christ. Comparison of the Hebrew in the scroll fragments to the Hebrew of modern editions shows almost letter-for-letter accuracy over a 2,000-year period."

While the scroll fragments are the main attractions in the traveling exhibit, there is much more to see, read and experience. Among other memorable items in the 150-piece collection are:

■ Fragments of Exodus from the Greek Septuagint dating to the 4th century. "When New Testament writers cite Holy Scripture from the Old Testament, over 80 percent of the quotes can be identified from the Septuagint version," the display notes. "The Septuagint text was, in effect, the Word of God for the first three centuries of the church."

■ A medieval Torah scroll as well as hand-lettered pages of Scripture from the 10th through 13th centuries.

■ Rare copies of the 1455 Gutenberg Bible (the first printed Bible), the 1539 Coverdale "Great Bible" (the first complete Bible printed in English), the 1560 Geneva Bible (the first English Bible with numbered verses and the version the Pilgrims brought to America) and various early versions of the 1611 King James Bible.

For information about tickets and exhibit hours, visit www.DeadSeaScrollsToAmerica.com or call toll-free (866) 786-7261.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson



COLOSSIANS A fragment of Colossians from a 3rd century Coptic text.

Beware of the dead man's float

By Ginger Plowman

Opelika, Ala. (BP)—I've had one too many household chores, one too many appointments and one too many items on my to-do list. With eight phone calls and 23 e-mails to return, two piles of laundry to fold and several errands to

run, I decided to throw all inklings of responsibility to the wind. "Kids, grab the towels and the sun screen! We're gonna indulge in an all-day relaxation at the pool!"

Squeals of delight echoed through the house as two over-excited children danced a jig while changing into their swimsuits. As we climbed into the car, I noticed some intense conspiring was going on between brother and sister. "Can we invite friends to come?" came the result of the whispering. I found this request to be perfect, as my definition of "friends at the pool" is ones who play with your kids so that mommy doesn't have to participate in 15 rounds of Marco Polo. "Sure," I grinned, satisfied at my ability to win the greatest mom in the world award while accommodating my own agenda to "veg" by the pool.

We arrived at the pool, and the kids immediately became enamored with fun in the sun. With my book, my sunglasses and my jumbo sweet tea, I stretched out on the lounge chair. Finally, a little rest and relaxation. A sigh of contentment escaped my lips as I reflected on the sheer brilliance of my plan.

In between chapters two and three of my high suspense novel, I lowered my book to check on the children. Isn't it amazing how people can experience a shift of emotions in the blink of an eye? I

FIRST PERSON

went from total contentment to total terror in a split second. In the center of the pool, floating face down was 5-year-old Matthew (one of my children's friends). The site of his lifeless form sent a flash of heat and a wave of nausea through my entire body. "Oh, Jesus, please!" I yelled as I leaped from my chair and dove into the water. The adrenaline rush threatened to paralyze my muscles, and I seemed to move in slow motion. My face twisted in emotion as my heart told me that it was too late; this child had drowned.

When I got within two feet of Matthew, he popped up, took a deep breath and began another session of the dead man's float.

"Matthew!" I yelled with a voice that quivered from a mixture of fear and relief, "Have you lost your mind? I thought you had drowned!" Not grasping the level of anxiety he had caused, Matthew shrugged his shoulders, readjusted his blue dolphin goggles and swam off. Needless to say, it was hard to capture the serene sense of calm I had enjoyed before the raising of Lazarus.

Once my heart rate had dropped back to a normal level and the nausea passed, I began to ponder the similarities of Matthew's Broadway

production with our walk with Christ. I began to wonder if the sense of sadness, desperation, panic and sorrow that I felt when I saw Matthew's lifeless body is the same way our Heavenly Father feels when we, His children, do the dead man's float in our spiritual lives. Does He grieve at the mere possibility of losing us to the snares of the world? Does He run full speed to try and rescue His drowning beloved? You bet He does. He is our Father and we are His children. The love we have for our own children is only a fraction of the love our Father has for us. "For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His love for those who fear Him" (Psalm 103:11).

We must be aware of the dangers of floating in our spiritual lives, because a body that floats eventually will sink. We may be tempted to skip our prayer time and put off nourishing ourselves with His Word day after day. It is during these times of floating that temptation can take us under. Eventually our sins will weigh us down and cause us to sink deeper and deeper into despair.

We must swim the race. I realize the Bible says we must "run the race" but work with me here. I say we must swim the race with eagerness, in such a way as to win the prize. Spend time with Jesus, read His Word and let His living water be the strong current that keeps you swimming in the right direction. And whatever you do—never stop to float!

Ginger Plowman, of Opelika, Ala., is an assistant director for Proverbs 31 Ministries

WMU launching Project HELP initiative to fight poverty

"Many children who live in poverty may not be aware they are poor until they start school."

Joye Smith, national WMU preschool ministry consultant

Continued from page 1

officially kicks off in September, but many of the projects that fight poverty are the same ones WMU already has addressed, according to Brenda Price, associate executive director for Kentucky WMU.

"All the issues we've had before, hunger, AIDS, child advocacy, violence," Price said, listing previous emphases. "There's some aspect of those that would be a part of Project Help: Poverty."

Price said WMU leaders voted in Indianapolis to extend the poverty initiative an extra two years, through 2008 because the issue is so pervasive.

Preschoolers against poverty

Another workshop at the Indianapolis meeting suggested ways to involve preschoolers in Project HELP: Poverty.

"People tend to think of poverty as something distant," said Joye

Smith, national WMU preschool ministry consultant and author of the children's book "What Does It Mean to Be Poor?"

"But one in five children in the United States is poor, so there is a high likelihood that you'll have children in poverty situations in your church."

She said poverty affects women and children in particular. Statistics on poverty include many working parents, many of whom are single parents, and many of those are women. One in three children will be poor at some point in childhood, she said.

"It's something that affects every race and all ethnic groups," Smith pointed out. She suggested five ways to get preschoolers involved in Project HELP: Poverty:

- Help preschoolers see the needs of people. Workers can use simple explanations to talk about those needs, she said. For example, to emphasize a need for transporta-

tion, discussion can turn to how someone could get to church if they did not have a car.

- Let preschoolers know God loves everyone, no matter what their needs are. Leaders should emphasize That God doesn't love only those who have financial means, Smith said.

- Teach that poverty affects all races and all ethnic groups. "It is not something that happens only in faraway places," she said, "but something that happens right in our own towns and in places close to where we live."

- Use Bible thoughts to help preschoolers see God wants them to share with and help others.

"Sharing what we have," Smith said, "is a concept that is difficult for preschoolers but one that is important in our world."

- Be sensitive as they work with preschoolers who might come from low-income situations themselves.

"Be sure they don't feel left out because they can't contribute to projects or feel that discussion is focusing on them," she cautioned.

"Many children who live in poverty may not be aware they are poor until they start school. It's important to let all the preschoolers know that everyone can help."

Suggested activities for preschoolers to help others include:

- Bringing canned goods for distribution to shelters or to community families.

- Putting stickers on canned goods in the church's food pantry.

- Adopting a low-income family to help with their needs.

- Taking children to shelters to sing songs or act out skits.

- Decorating paper bags used to distribute food from the church's food pantry.

- Collecting hygiene items for shelters and putting together hygiene kits in Zip-lock bags.

Kentucky native's 'Bible Bobbleheads' a hit with baseball team

Continued from page 1

When Foote and a friend received free bobblehead dolls at a game, the friend told Foote he had the talent to sculpt something similar.

But Foote wasn't interested. When he lived in Cleveland, he'd already looked into the idea. Licensing agreements with teams and athletes posed too large of a legal and financial headache.

The only way it would work, he told his friend, was if the bobblehead depicted someone well-known but dead, like a famous author.

Or a Bible character.

Bouncing ideas around

The two joked about the idea during the game.

Foote suggested a John the Baptist doll, with a detachable head.

Foote didn't plan to pursue it, but he became more intrigued as his friend continued to push what he thought was a good idea. "As a creative person, I'm always bouncing ideas around," Foote says.

As the idea continued to bounce, Foote's brother-in-law Abner Dabney, who sells promotional products in Louisville, connected Foote with a manufacturer in Lake Katrine, N.Y.

But making the dolls proved pricier than he anticipated, Foote says.

"After I swallowed hard, I did what any red-blooded American would do. I called my dad."

With new financial backing, Foote involved his brother, Andy, to build the Web site and set up a distribution strategy through UPS.

Today their company, "Isaac Bros.," has become a nice side business for the three principles. Each doll includes a small comic book, drawn by Foote, telling the character's Bible story.

Each doll has a cartoon look to

it; two have modern-day features to help tell their story. Samson sports a "God's Gym" T-shirt; Noah has an umbrella under one arm and a dove in his hands.

Questioned motives

Foote admits he and his friends "have gotten some heat" from people questioning whether their motives are faith-filled or financially driven.

But he doesn't want anyone getting bent out of shape just because Noah has a spring where his throat should be.

"We're not telling anyone that these are filled with some sort of spiritual power.

"We all have a deep faith," he insists. "We don't want to be disrespectful."

Each doll represents someone with a story to tell and the dolls offer a unique way to tell it, he says.

"They're examples of God doing His perfect will through imperfect people, and that's what we're celebrating."

Foote notes that the company's namesake, Isaac, is Hebrew for laughter. That's something Foote says Christians aren't always good at.

"As Christians, we should be filled with the most joy, and at times that doesn't seem to be the case with a lot of believers," he said. "We tend to be the biggest sticks in the mud."

Foote noted one friend keeps a Moses bobblehead in his office to encourage him to be more like the Old Testament leader and to spark conversations about his faith with visitors.

Foote said Isaac Bros. could expand to other products, but only if it continues their theme of fun, creative items "to celebrate heroes of the faith."

"We'll see where God is leading us," he said. "God's hands are all over this."

The dolls are popular enough that Foote and his partners are working on another set of three.

"We were so happy with the first set of three and we want the next set of three to be a complementary part of the package," he said.

The Nashville Sounds already have signed on to give away the second set next season.

The next set will depict Daniel, Queen Esther and John the Baptist. "Our first foray in to the New Testament," Foote notes.

And, no, John's head doesn't come off.

With additional reporting by Baptist Press



Creator Dan Foote notes that the company's namesake, Isaac, is Hebrew for laughter.



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Kruschwitz notes God's call includes ministers & laity

By Trennis Henderson
Editor

Birmingham, Ala.—Emphasizing that a sense of spiritual calling applies to all Christians, not just professional ministers, Robert Kruschwitz said early Christians gradually developed “a distinction between laity and ordained.”

Pointing to the Protestant Reformation, Kruschwitz said Martin Luther and John Calvin helped rekindle the view that “vocation applied not just to people in religious communities, but in work settings.”

“Luther’s idea was that God called you to be something,” noted Kruschwitz, director of Baylor University’s Center for Christian Ethics. “Vocation for Calvin became a much more radical notion—God calling you to use your gifts to bring the Kingdom of God into an imperfect world.”

Leading a workshop titled, “Called Out, Not Left Out: Vocation for Laypersons,” during the recent Cooperative Baptist Fellowship general assembly in Birmingham, Ala., Kruschwitz said, “The call in the New Testament is not to be a teacher, philosopher, writer, editor, doctor, housewife or mother. It’s to be a member of God’s Kingdom, to accept with joy God’s forgiveness and to live out that joy and forgiveness before others. It’s to change the world.”

“As laypersons, how are we to live out God’s Kingdom?” he asked. “Jesus didn’t give His life on the cross so that once a week we could be religious. If we’re called out to be in that Kingdom, what does that mean? How are we going to participate in the Kingdom seven days a week?”

Kruschwitz cited such Old Testament leaders as Joseph serving in Pharaoh’s court, Deborah judging Israel and Daniel serving in Babylon as examples of laypeople serving God in the workplace.

“How as a church do we find that, recognize it, affirm it and say God has called us each by name—sometimes to things that are not churchy or religious?” he added. “We have to understand that our vocational lives need to be aligned with God’s purposes in the world.”

Marriage amendment dies in Senate

By Kevin Eckstrom
Religion News Service

Washington (RNS)—The U.S. Senate defeated a proposed constitutional amendment July 14 that would have banned gay marriage, killing—at least for now—attempts on the federal level to define marriage as between one man and one woman.

Senators defeated the amendment in a 50-48 procedural vote; 60 votes were needed to keep it alive, and 67 votes were needed for it to pass.

“The battle has just begun,” said Sen. Wayne Allard, R-Colo., the amendment’s chief sponsor.

Allard and other proponents said they were heartened to get nearly half the Senate, mostly Republicans, to support the amendment, even though they fell far short of the two-thirds “super-majority” needed for final passage.

Passing the amendment would have required approval from two-thirds of both the House and Senate, and then be ratified by 38 states. Earlier this month, House GOP leaders said they might hold a vote on the amendment before the November elections.

During four days of debate, Democrats rejected Republican overtures to scale back the amendment to read only, “Marriage in the United States shall consist only of the union of a man and a woman.”

Currently, 38 states prohibit gay marriage, and similar ballot initiatives are likely in nearly a dozen more this November. In May, Massachusetts became the first—and thus far, only—state to allow gay marriage. Marriage licenses have been

granted in some localities, such as San Francisco, New Paltz, N.Y., and Multnomah County in Oregon, but their legality is under court review.

Different route in House

On the same that the amendment died in the Senate, a different approach to opposing same-sex unions passed a House committee.

The House Judiciary Committee voted July 14 to send the Marriage Protection Act of 2004 to the House floor. The act is a so-called “court-stripping” provision. If enacted and signed into law, it would prevent federal courts from deciding on the legality or constitutionality of cases involving the Defense of Marriage Act.

That 1996 law—passed by a wide margin in Congress and signed into law by then-President Bill Clinton—defines marriage in exclusively heterosexual terms for federal purposes. DOMA also says that states cannot be forced, under the Constitution’s “full faith and credit” clause, to recognize same-sex marriages performed by other states.

The Marriage Protection Act, introduced by Rep. John Hostettler, R-Ind., passed the committee on a party-line, 21-13 vote. Republican leaders said they would bring the

bill to the House floor the week of July 19.

The recent legalization of same-sex marriage in Massachusetts, coupled with Supreme Court rulings on gay rights, has caused many lawmakers to seek ways to limit what they consider a runaway federal judiciary in the area of marriage law. The bill’s proponents feared a federal court could strike down DOMA unless prevented by law.

Senate Republicans, with the strong support of President Bush, had pushed hard for the amendment just two weeks before the start of the Democratic convention in Boston. Sen. Rick Santorum, R-Pa., said Republicans intend to resurrect the amendment next year.

The Democrats’ presumptive ticket for the White House—Sen. John Kerry and his running mate, Sen. John Edwards—were on the campaign trail and were the only two senators not to vote on the amendment. Both said they opposed it.

While polls show most Americans oppose legalizing gay marriages—55 percent, according to a CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll conducted in May—a lower percentage (51 percent) said they support amending the Constitution to prohibit them.

With additional reporting by Baptist Press and Associated Baptist Press

The clock is ticking

Oneida's tutoring lab helping students turn disadvantages into opportunities

By Karen Case
Tutoring Lab Teacher

The clock is ticking. Educational minutes are cascading beyond retrieval. Without immediate intervention and an accelerated academic pace, a multitude of students will be lost in a flood of overwhelming disadvantages. Learning disabilities, behavioral disorders, self-esteem issues, oppositional defiance, attachment disorders, low academic skills, attention deficits and impulsivity are problems that hinder some of our students. By the time these special needs students reach middle school, time is short. Attempts to adapt their program for success already have failed.

Oneida Baptist Institute’s tutoring lab seeks to turn these disadvantages into opportunity. Students are assessed for educational and behavioral needs. Work is adapted to an individualized format to optimize educational growth. Focusing on a student’s strengths allows tutors to work toward academic success. When a specific intervention fails, immediate adjustments are made to tailor the program to the student’s needs.

“Allen” came to Oneida in the fall of 2003. He was quiet and withdrawn. Facial distortions and frequent ticks hindered his concentration and written work. Unable to function in a traditional classroom of any size, the tutoring lab accepted him as an all-day student. Allen’s day was filled with intensive work in reading, language and mathematics. Within a few weeks, the tutoring lab faculty realized Allen’s problems were severe. They faced the possibility of being unable to

provide enough help for Allen to reach independence in academics.

Allen expressed his personal goal. He wanted to achieve success in the middle school classroom with other students his age. Daily he expressed this desire. As he struggled to control the physical movements of his body, tutors strove to find keys to unlock the natural intelligence Allen showed in other areas. Progress was excruciatingly slow.

Allen asked to take at least one class in the middle school. Although success was doubtful, he was given a chance. His tutors improvised a course on organizational and study skills. Disappointment and apprehension grew as his low scores were posted in the 30-50 range. Allen’s determination inspired the teachers not to give up, and slowly those grades rose. Before the end of last school year, Allen had passed two classes in the middle school, raised his reading comprehension scores and committed to return to his studies this summer.

Allen’s academic road has been a steep climb. He is still far from the top. Victory is not assured. But his determination continues. Allen’s infectious smile greets his tutors each morning. Success has brought him out of his quiet, withdrawn nature. The facial contortions have diminished, concentration and focus have increased, and Allen’s countenance reveals the personal victories he has attained. Allen will be taking half of his class load in the middle school this fall and will continue to work toward leaving the tutoring lab behind. The OBI tutoring lab has bought him some extra time.

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



THIS IS ONEIDA

W.F. Underwood

Newlywed finds a nurturing place

Military background mission experiences help adjustment

Michelle and Jeff Bullens moved to Clear Creek a week after their marriage.

“I did OK,” Michelle said. “With my father in the military, I was used to adjusting quickly. It was neat meeting different people and hearing how they came to Christ and the ministry. Our different experiences help shape us and prepare us for future service.”

Michelle was born in Germany and her father was stationed there again for three years when Michelle entered the fourth grade. “Dad always made sure we attended church,” she remembered. “I hung out a lot at church on Sunday afternoons while Dad attended deacon meetings and Mom practiced the piano. They always supported me through college, helping me raise money for BSU mission trips and then drove me to visit churches to share my experiences.”

College mission encounters included several spring break trips, a month at Baptist Village in Israel, and a year home schooling three missionary children in Honduras. “I also helped Mission-

ary Cindy Poole with backyard Bible clubs and a community center,” Michelle said. After graduation from Berea with an elementary education major, Michelle married in 2002. Jeff has completed three semesters at Clear Creek.

“This is a nurturing place for us. We live at Hemlock Heights with other couples without children,” she said. “It’s real good to see how they figure out this married thing; I get good advice from them.” She appreciates the “Women in Ministry” classes with their balance on Bible study and practical guidance for effective ministry as a pastor’s wife.

Both of them hold campus “workshop” positions. Jeff works in maintenance and Michelle coordinates the library research office.

“Jeff and I don’t know about the future; we’re open to wherever God calls,” she said. “Jesus is the one way to know God, but there is not just one way to serve Him.”

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



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CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE

Bill Whittaker

Report: 'Reality TV' has more sex, bad language than other programs

Nashville (BP)—Reality television shows, which composed at least 20 percent of the prime-time schedule during the February sweeps period, have grown "qualitatively and quantitatively coarser" than their scripted counterparts, according to a new study by the Parents Television Council.

Researchers examined the first four episodes of 29 network reality series broadcast from June 2002 to August 2003 and found 1,135 instances of foul language, 492 instances of sex—either visual act or verbal reference—and 30 instances of violence for an average of 14.5 instances of offensive content per hour. The results are a 52.6 percent increase from a similar PTC study in October 2002.

The current study, released June 25, showed reality series had an average of 3.5 more instances per hour of sex and foul language than their scripted counterparts.

The study examined such programs as "Big Brother," "Survivor" and "Meet My Folks."

"Networks need to be held accountable for the dangerous and irresponsible messages they are communicating to young fans of the reality genre," the study states.

Reality TV now constitutes 13 percent of broadcast programming, up from 4 percent in 1999.

Among the findings:

■ The amount of bleeped profanities per hour has increased by 273 percent since the 2002 study. Verbal sexual references were also more frequent, increasing from 0.9 instances per hour to 3.31 instances per hour.

■ Nudity was the second most frequent type of sexual content on reality television, and PTC counted 16 instances of sexual activity on reality programs during the duration of its study.

■ Although the use of foul language and sexual content dramatically increased since 2002, the total violence per hour on reality shows decreased by 285 percent.



"WHO WANTS TO MARRY MY DAD?"
Don Mueller (right) proposes to Christena Ferran as Mueller's children watch on the NBC reality television show. A study by the Parents Television Council reported that such programs have more objectionable content than their scripted counterparts. (©NBC photo by Chris Haston)

■ Reality shows airing on the WB and UPN networks contained the highest levels of offensive content, with 25.4 and 24.2 instances of offensive content per hour, respectively, the study said.

■ The two worst broadcast reality shows overall were CBS's "Big Brother 4" and WB's "The Surreal Life."

Talent competitions, physical makeover documentaries and home improvement series were not counted in PTC's analysis of reality television shows.

The underlying theme of reality television, the study said, is unhealthy.

"Research shows that viewers, young viewers especially, are influenced by the behavior they see modeled on TV. As reality TV continues to spread, we need to be mindful of the messages and values these shows are communicating to young viewers."

The complete Parents Television Council study on reality television can be accessed at www.parentstv.org.

Study: 'The Passion' affected religious beliefs, saw some convert to Christianity

Ventura, Calif. (RNS)—A new poll says 11 million people changed their religious beliefs after seeing Mel Gibson's "The Passion of the Christ" and a fraction of movie-goers became Christians after seeing the film.

The survey, by the Ventura, Calif.-based Barna Group, said the film about the death of Jesus was remarkably effective at drawing attention to the Christian Savior, even if it persuaded a small ratio to make a profession of faith.

"More than any other movie in recent years, 'The Passion' focused people on the person and purpose of Jesus Christ," George Barna, the director of research, said.

"In a society that revolves on relativism, spiritual diversity, toler-

ance and independence, galvanizing such intense consideration of Jesus Christ is a major achievement in itself."

"The Passion" is the year's top-grossing film, at \$609 million worldwide. Barna said about 67 million adults have seen the movie, about one-third of all adults in the United States.

Among those, less than one-tenth of 1 percent of movie-goers (about 67,000) became Christians after seeing the film, and less than one-half of 1 percent (335,000) were motivated to share their Christian faith, according to Barna's research.

Barna said "major transformation is not likely to result from one-time exposure to a specific media product."

Marriage Ministry: A Guidebook.

Bo Poser & Charles Qualls. Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2004. 144 pages. \$16. ♦♦♦♦ (out of five)

This book is part of an ongoing series of "Help! Books" from Smyth & Helwys. Each of the books seek to provide help for church leaders by providing practical helps for a particular area of ministry.

"Marriage Ministry" addresses the role of the minister in the life of married couples, from premarital counseling through ongoing marital life. First the authors want marriage ministry to regain a more central role in the life of the church by encouraging ministers to adopt a missional overview for marriage enrichment in the church. This means going beyond programs and activities to providing opportunities for the married couples in the church to grow in relationship with Christ. The authors make a good case for the need for increased attention to marriages.

One chapter each is devoted to premarital ministries and what has typically been considered marriage enrichment. The authors share a wealth of wisdom. Some is fairly common knowledge while other information is new. The authors share freely from their own experience, and for the most part I found their suggestions and encouragement very helpful.

The book concludes with appendixes, two of which outline a marriage enrichment weekend and a money management weekend. The outlines are good and the suggested topics to discuss are timely. But since this is a guidebook, a helpful addition would have been the inclusion of suggested resources for study in order to prepare material for the presentations.

This book is a "help" for the minister just beginning and a good refresher for the experienced minister who might be questioning whether previous commitments to premarital counseling and marriage enrichment are worth the effort. Wayne Hager

Bored with God: How Parents, Youth Leaders and Teachers Can Overcome Student Apathy. Sean Dunn. InterVarsity Press, 2004. 105 pages. ♦♦♦

The cover art for this book shows three guys sitting on a couch in various states of disinterest.

If you are a youth leader, you have seen that look and posture many times, and you might be tempted to buy this book hoping it will give you some ideas on how not to plan boring programs. You will be disappointed.

"Bored with God" does not deal with lack of excitement different programs might generate, as much as it does a dangerous spiritual condition.

Ancient church teachers developed a list of sins that were deadly to a person's relationship with God: pride, greed, envy, wrath, lust, gluttony and sloth (or apathy). One writer has observed that the first six sins culminate in the last, working together "to deaden the spiritual

senses so we first become slow to respond to God and then drift completely into the sleep of complacency." Dante called apathy the sin of insufficient love.

It is this most dangerous spiritual state that Sean Dunn seeks to describe. The bulk of the chapters describe some manifestation of the sin and offer advice on how youth leaders can lead youth out of "the sleep of complacency."

Apathy, according to Dunn, is the central reason youth do not stick around church after they graduate from high school. If the church does not address this critical problem, he believes, we will continue to lose the majority of our youth.

Dunn's continued use of the word bored to describe the condition he seeks to address was annoying, because apathy and sloth are so much more than mere boredom. I found myself constantly reminding myself that boredom meant apathy. His prescriptions for each dimension began to sound the same. Jim Holladay

Shaping the Church: Adapting New Testament Models for Today. Malcolm Tolbert. Smyth & Helwys, 2003. 171 pages. \$18. ♦♦♦♦

Malcolm Tolbert's "Shaping the Church" is comprehensive in its synopsis of how New Testament images of the church can be adjusted for today's context.

He admits that none of the topics discussed are fleshed out in sufficient detail; indeed that is not his intent. Rather he seeks to introduce key themes for the church's life, offer a brief insight into the New Testament background for each theme and suggest ways the biblical material provides direction for churches seeking to be faithful to their calling.

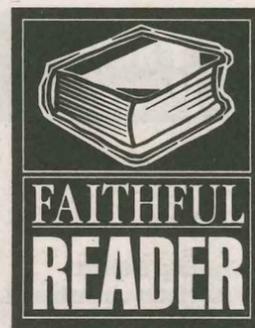
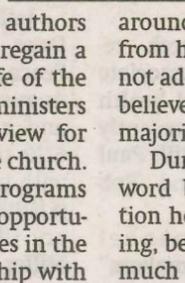
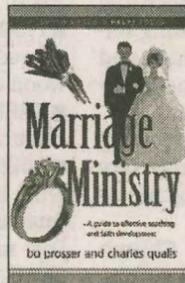
This is both frustrating and stimulating. Frustrating, because often I found myself wishing he would say more or develop a theme further. Stimulating, because by not going further, he challenged me to dig around in the biblical material and my own mind to draw out the implications for my own church.

Tolbert writes out of a deeply Baptist perspective (he has taught New Testament at two Southern Baptist seminaries and has been a missionary to Brazil). From that viewpoint he not only affirms, but challenges

many of our notions about church life and practices. For example, he encourages us to re-examine church membership. Insisting that being a member of a church is not having one's name on a role, he urges us to see that, from a New Testament perspective, being a church member

means being "a functioning part of the body of Christ." Think how that would reshape our numbers. Other areas—baptism, the Lord's Supper, church polity—while anchored securely in the New Testament and Baptist history, expand beyond our habitual ways of thinking.

Tolbert's book would make an excellent group study for Sunday school, deacons, church staffs and other groups. Jim Holladay



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

PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following ministries throughout Kentucky:

Greenup Baptist Association in Ashland.

More than 75,000 non-Christians live in the Ashland area. Additional personnel are needed, including a full-time church planter, a full-time pastor, a mission pastor, two full-time associate pastors for music and five part-time youth pastors. The greatest need is for people to respond to God's call. Pray that strong Christians will step up and fill these positions as God leads. Pray also for Director of Missions Asa Greear as he leads this association in missions involvement and evangelism.

Jeffersontown Baptist Church. Pastor Sanford Hill and student leaders open their church to teens in the community each Friday night during the school year for "Uptown Teen Ministry." Sixty percent of the teens attending have no church affiliation, and yet the ministry has become so popular that volunteers had to turn away more than 250 teens last year due to fire code restrictions. Pray for the Uptown Ministry Team as they deal with space issues and plan for a new year of ministry beginning this fall. Pray especially for an evangelistic strategy to reach the unchurched teens who attend.

Mission Service Corps missionary Chris Clarke in Marion. Chris is the founder and director of Happy Trails Ministries and serves as chaplain each weekend in horse shows and equine venues throughout the region. Chris is known for his "cowboy church" method of sharing the gospel with those who attend his weekend services. Pray that those attending services will respond positively to the gospel and make decisions to receive Christ. Pray also for finances to complete the purchase of a horse trailer.

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **AURORA**—Ferguson Springs Church will hold a homecoming service July 25. The regular Sunday morning service will be followed by a meal and gospel music singing in the afternoon. **James Keeling** is pastor.

■ **BELLEVUE**—First Church recently celebrated its 100th anniversary with a homecoming and picnic at Bullittsburg Camp.

■ **BRODHEAD**—Poplar Grove Church recently called **Perry Dobbs** as pastor.

■ **COVINGTON**—Latonia Church recently called **Lynn Smith** as associate pastor for senior adults and health ministries. The church also recently ordained **Jay Henson, Bill Hill, Paul Knapp, Jim McKenney** and **Bob Roark** as deacons.

■ **ELIZABETHTOWN**—Immanuel Church will host the "Joymakers"

July 25, 6 p.m. **Charles Darland** is pastor.

■ **FRANKFORT**—**Jerry Chase** recently retired as minister of music at Crestwood Church.

■ **GARRETT**—First Church recently celebrated its 65th anniversary.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Cloverleaf Church will host the **Christian Brothers Quartet** in concert July 31, 7 p.m. For more information, call (502) 367-0218.

Jeffersontown Church will host Dave Ramsey's 13-week Financial Peace University series beginning August 8, 6:30 p.m. Orientation and registration will be July 21, 6:30 p.m., and July 25, 12:30 p.m., with lunch provided.

■ **MOUNT VERNON**—Pine Hill Missionary Church recently called **Wayne Miller** as pastor.



CHURCH IN THE PARK Approximately 225 people attended Bracken Baptist Association's annual "Church in the Park" celebration July 11 at Washington Recreation Park in Maysville. Approximately 15 churches were represented, according to **Truett Cocanougher**, director of missions. The evening included an associational youth activity, recreation, food, music and a devotional message by **Ronnie Beams**, pastor of Owingsville Baptist Church.

FOR SALE: Church pews. Beautiful, high-quality hardwood pews (580 total linear feet). Excellent condition. For more information, please call (859) 635-5725.

FOR SALE: Large, 3-manual Conn organ. Make offer. (859) 277-7806.

SEEKING: Minister of music, Culpeper Baptist Church, Culpeper, Va. 1,000 members; two worship services (contemporary and traditional); moderate conservative church founded in 1774. Resumes received at: Personnel Committee, 318 South West St., Culpeper, VA 22701; tfusion@culpeperbaptist.org; (540) 825-8192. Affiliated with Shiloh Baptist Association and Baptist General Association of Virginia.

SEEKING: The Kentucky Baptist Fellowship is seeking resumes for the position of associate coordinator for missions. The person who fills this full-time position will: provide leadership for missions participation and education in Kentucky; engage individuals and churches in hands-on mission work; and network with individuals, groups and churches to develop and expand ministry possibilities. Please submit resumes to: John Lepper, coordinator, Kentucky Baptist Fellowship, 225 South Hurstbourne Parkway, Louisville, KY 40222. Contact same for a position description (jlepper@kybf.org or (502) 426-1931). Deadline for receiving resumes: Aug. 6, 2004.

SEEKING: Youth pastor. Smiths Grove Baptist Church in Smiths Grove, Ky., is currently receiving resumes for a bivocational (part-time) youth pastor. SGBC is a God-centered church that God is blessing and growing in many ways. Interested applicants should contact us at (270) 563-2010 or www.smithsgrovebaptist.org.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of music and youth for Calvary Baptist, located at 111 N McWhorter St., London, KY 40741. Calvary is a conservative SBC church with blended worship services. Interested applicants may visit our Web site at www.calvarybaptistlondonky.com. Resumes should be addressed to: Search Committee, Attn: Pastor Harlan Avera, at the address above. No phone calls, please.

SEEKING: Outstanding opportunity to join a vibrant ministry team as a full-time minister of activities at Walnut Street Baptist Church, a large, growing and multicultural church located in the heart of Louisville, Ky. Ministry includes outreach and evangelism to the surrounding community as well as supporting activities in a three-story facility with skating rink, bowling lanes and more. Send resume to: Activities Search Committee, Walnut Street Baptist Church, 1143 S Third St., Suite A, Louisville, KY 40203; or www.walnutstreet.org.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July

22-23 Quarterly Prayer Meeting for Spiritual Awakening, Haven of Rest Family Ministries, Inez.

23-24 World Missions Unlimited, First Baptist Church, London.

26-30 Discovery Youth Camp, grades 7-12, Cedarmore Camp.

26-28 Mountain Missions Conference, Oneida Baptist Institute.

30-31 World Missions Unlimited, First Baptist Church, Madisonville.

August

2-6 Discover Kids Week, Cedarmore.

14 Super Saturday, Erlanger Baptist Church.

14 Super Saturday, Bellevue Baptist Church, Owensboro.

16 Understanding Other Beliefs Conference, Warren Association Office, Bowling Green.

17 Understanding Other Beliefs Conference, Northside Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.

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

Benton Williams, former leader of KBC partnership missions, dies

Nashville—Benton Williams, a pioneer in the Kentucky Baptist Convention's partnership missions emphasis, died July 12 at age 74.

Williams, who served on the KBC staff from 1984 to 1995, was the first head of the KBC partnership missions department. He helped coordinate partnership efforts in Ohio, Utah-Idaho, Kenya, Brazil and Russia. He also served several years as director of the KBC's missions/church services division.

Describing Williams as the "planning engine" for the KBC's early partnership mission projects, former KBC Executive Director Bill Marshall said at Williams' retirement, "The positive impact of the Kentucky/Russia partnership is testimony to his effective leadership."

Reflecting last week on Williams' missions focus, Marshall

added, "The apostle Paul would have found in Benton an amiable and energetic traveling companion on his missionary journeys."

Prior to joining the KBC staff, Williams served at the former Baptist Sunday School Board as special program director for national student ministries and as pastoral section supervisor in the board's administration department.

He and his wife, Elizabeth, also served 12 years as Southern Baptist missionaries to Thailand, where they were involved in both student work and church development. He also was pastor of churches in Texas and Tennessee.

Williams' funeral was held July 15 at Woodmont Baptist Church in Nashville. He is survived by his wife, four daughters, six grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

CLASSIFIED ADS

SEEKING: Part-time minister of youth. Send resume to: Personnel Committee, First Baptist Church, 230 S Fifth St., Williamsburg, KY 40769.

SEEKING: Christian Social Services, Inc., a private non-profit social service agency in Morehead, Ky., is seeking candidates for full-time director. Responsibilities include: oversight of daily operations of main facility and branch office, fundraising, community collaboration, staff and board development, and program development and supervision. Prefer candidate with master's degree in social work, education or related field, proven administrative experience, fundraising ability and case management experience. Submit letter of interest and copy of resume to: Director Search, PO Box 147, Morehead, KY 40351. Application deadline is Aug. 15, 2004. For more information, call (606) 784-5329.

SEEKING: Part-time youth minister. Send resume to Palestine Baptist Church, 80 Church Lane, Campbellsville, KY 42718, Attn: Youth Search Committee.

SEEKING: Small, rural, conservative Baptist church is seeking a full-time or interim ordained Southern Baptist minister. If interested, please contact Jennifer Marsh at (859) 235-0184 or send resume to Jennifer Marsh, 202 Oddville Ave., Cynthia, KY 41031.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for New Hope Baptist Church, a conservative, rural Southern Baptist congregation. Send resume to: New Hope Baptist Church, PO Box 62, West Liberty, KY 41472. Contact: Tim Clark, (606) 743-9055.

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

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

SEEKING: Full-time youth pastor/children's educational coordinator for an independent Baptist church. Prefer some experience and/or formal training. Submit resume to: Elliottville Baptist Church, PO Box 160, Elliottville, KY 40317. E-mail: pastortim@adelphia.com.

SERVICE: We service, install and maintain the following equipment: computers and networks; surveillance cameras (digital recording); phone trees (autodialing equipment). Computer classes, onsite training also available. (502) 664-7599.

Baptists ministering to Sudan refugees

By Mark Kelly
SBC International Mission Board

Khartoum, Sudan (BP)—Southern Baptist relief funds are helping hungry and thirsty refugees in the midst of what United Nations officials are calling the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

More than 1 million people are homeless and as many as 30,000 citizens are dead in western Sudan's Darfur province as Arab militias drive black Africans from their land.

Arab "Janjaweed" militias have burned thousands of homes and used systematic rape to terrorize black African villagers into leaving the area. The Sudanese military has provided air cover and other support for the militias.

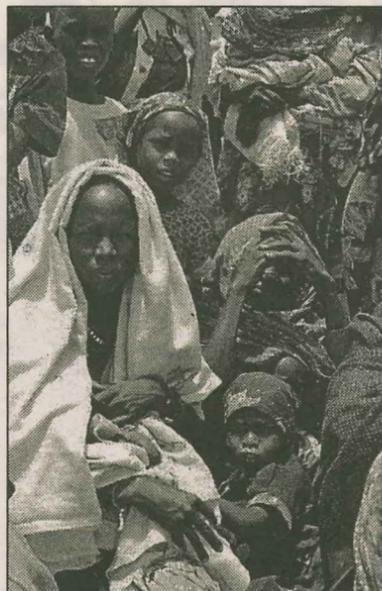
The situation has grown so dire that U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell and United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan both visited Sudan during the same week in early July. They pressured the government to stop the genocide and prevent starvation and disease on a massive scale.

Food and water are scarce, and the recent onset of the rainy season could unleash a malaria epidemic in crowded refugee camps, a humanitarian worker told Baptist Press.

As many as 350,000 people could die of disease or malnutrition this year in what UN officials have identified as the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

\$100,000 needed for clean water

An initial emergency grant of \$5,000 from the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund purchased food and grain for refugee camps, according to hunger and relief consultant Jim Brown. Another \$100,000 will be needed to get clean drinking water into the camps, and long-term plans call for helping repair and dig wells in the area.



SEEKING REFUGE The looming crisis in Sudan's Darfur province is evident in neighboring Chad where thousands of refugees have fled to escape marauding Arab militias. (United Nations photo by Eskinder Debebe)

While Sudan has been notorious for a two-decade civil war between Muslims in the north and Christians and animists in the south, this conflict involves Muslim-on-Muslim oppression, the humanitarian worker said.

"My friends from Darfur say all the villages have been destroyed, but other humanitarian workers say the destruction is not so complete," the worker told Baptist Press. "Of course, neither group has seen more than a small part of the country because access is limited by the government and the militias."

"It has shocked them that, as Muslims, they are under threat from other Muslims," he added. "Now those who have fled are saying, 'I can't pray anymore. Why should I remain a Muslim? Muslims only hurt my family and take my land.'"

"Their foundation in Islam is beginning to be shaken. They are beginning to really question their Islamic faith."

Prayer requests

While financial contributions are needed for the relief effort, the relief worker there listed several prayer requests:

Access and freedom to work. "The rainy season started in June, and that makes everything 10 times worse," the worker said. "Many refugees literally are living under bushes. Pray that shelter can be secured, disease is held at bay, food and water can be distributed."

Crop planting. "This is the time for planting crops, but it is unsafe for people to do so. If they do not return home now to plant their crops, they will miss an entire cycle of harvest, resulting in widespread hunger in the months ahead."

Spiritual searching. "Pray that they (Sudanese) will continue to question and seek truth in their hearts," the worker said. "Pray that they will be faced with their own sin and their need for forgiveness in Christ. Pray that believers will have opportunities to share spiritual relief, as well as physical."

Christians in southern Sudan persecuted by northern Muslims. "It is very easy for them to be apathetic toward the plight of the refugees," the worker noted.

"If Muslims who are experiencing theft and death at the hands of their Muslim neighbors experience grace and mercy in the form of food, shelter and compassion from Christians, it could be very powerful. Pray for Southerners to be forgiving after experiencing so much hurt."

Contributions for hunger and relief ministries in Sudan can be sent to: Sudan-General Relief, International Mission Board, Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230.

House 'Jubilee' Act would cancel debts of world's poorest countries

Washington (RNS)—A bipartisan group of legislators introduced the "Jubilee" Act in the House recently.

The bill, H.R. 4793, would cancel the debts that the world's 50 poorest countries owe the International Monetary Fund (IMF) the World Bank and other international development banks.

"Five years ago," said Rep. Maxine Waters, D-Calif., one of the bill's co-sponsors, "the worldwide Jubilee movement reminded Congress that the Lord instructed the people of Israel to celebrate a Jubilee, or Year of the Lord, every 50 years."

According to Leviticus 25, God enjoined Moses to free slaves and forgive debts during a Jubilee year.

The bill was co-sponsored by Reps. Barney Frank, D-Mass.; Spencer Bacchus, R-Ala.; Jim Leach, R-Iowa; and Barbara Lee, D-Calif. The lawmakers said debt cancellation was a "moral issue," and money saved by countries by eliminating their debt could be used for education and the eradication of disease and hunger.

Last month, Waters also called on the president to emphasize the morality of debt relief at the recent G-8 meeting of the world's most affluent nations.

"President George W. Bush often reminds us of the importance that religion plays in his life," Waters said. And he "should bring the biblical principals of justice and charity into the boardroom of the IMF."

The bill's introduction was welcomed by members of the Jubilee USA network, a national coalition of religious and secular social-justice groups.

Marie Clarke, the national coordinator for the Jubilee USA Network, said the group planned to deliver a letter endorsed by hundreds of religious leaders from across the world to the G-8 countries' heads of state. The letter emphasized the "moral imperative" of debt cancellation, she said.

The bill was referred to the House Subcommittee on Domestic and International Monetary Policy, Trade and Technology.

It is unclear how far the bill will get in the House, but the Jubilee coalition is excited nonetheless. "This is our visionary bill," said Adam Taylor, executive director of Global Justice and an associate Baptist minister in Washington. "This is what God's Kingdom should look like."

For information about the Jubilee Act, H.R. 4793, visit www.house.gov.

Historic church handed back to Chinese Christians

Shanghai, China (ABP)—The 135-year-old Cathedral Church of the Holy Trinity in Shanghai, China, was handed back to Chinese Christians in June, according to the Church Times of London.

Built in 1869, the gothic cathedral is a symbol of the presence of Christianity before the civil war of 1949 and the later Cultural Revolution. The church building was closed in 1949 and served as a cultural and historic site under municipal authority.

Now the cathedral—its original towering spire long gone—will serve as headquarters for the Three-Self Patriotic Movement of Protestant Churches in China and the China Christian Council. Cao Shengjie, CCC president, said the group has grown to include 50,000 congregations.

The Three-Self Movement aims to form a Chinese church independent of the West that is self-governed, self-supported and self-propagating. It has been accused of being subservient to the Chinese government. The CCC is a service organization for all Christian denominations in China and a member of the World Council of Churches.

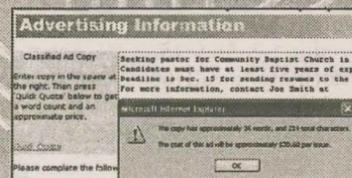
Cao said the relocation to the historic building will "effectively refute the wanton attack of the United States on China's religion policy and freedom of religion," the Church Times reported, and Christians in China can "fully enjoy the freedom of religion."

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Dr. Timothy George

Dean and Professor of Divinity

A.B., University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

M.Div., Harvard Divinity School

Th.D., Harvard University

Timothy George is the founding dean of Beeson Divinity School and has been at Beeson since its inception in 1988. He teaches church history, historical theology, and theology of the Reformers. He is currently serving as executive editor for Christianity Today along with serving on the editorial advisory boards of The Harvard Theological Review, Christian History, and Books & Culture. He has served on the Board of Directors of Lifeway Christian Resources (formerly the Baptist Sunday School Board) of the Southern Baptist Convention. A prolific author, he has written more than 20 books and regularly contributes to scholarly journals. His textbook, *Theology of the Reformers*, is the standard textbook in many schools and seminaries on reformation theology. It has now been translated into several languages. He has been active in the evangelical dialog with the Roman Catholic Church in addition to being a highly sought after preacher and conference speaker. As founding dean, George has been instrumental in shaping the character and mission of Beeson Divinity School. An ordained minister, he has pastored churches in Tennessee, Alabama, and Massachusetts. He and his wife, Denise, have two children, Christian and Alyce.

September 23-24, 2004

Thursday 3 p.m. First Session

Thursday 8 p.m. Second Session

Friday 10 a.m. Third Session

"Is the Father of Jesus the God of Muhammad?: Understanding the Differences Between Christianity and Islam"*

"The Church of the Undivided Christ"

"Christianity and Islam Interaction in the 21st Century"

Breakout Sessions • September 23 at 5 p.m. • September 24 at 8 a.m.

*Title of Dr. George's latest book which has been highlighted in Christianity Today and other publications

Register by contacting the Office of Church & External Relations at 270.789.5520 or relations@campbellsville.edu
\$30 Early Bird Registration by Sept. 1 • Hotel Referrals Available