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**FOR THE RECORD**

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## Study: TV might rush teens into sexual activity

By David Winfrey  
News Director

Elk Grove Village, Ill.—A regular diet of TV that's high in sexual content can encourage teenagers to engage in sexual activity sooner, according to a recently released study.

Researchers interviewed 1,792 teenagers about their TV viewing habits and sexual activity. Initial surveys were taken in 2001, with follow-up interviews the next year.

"Adolescents who viewed more sexual content at baseline were more likely to initiate intercourse and progress to more advanced ... sexual activities during the subsequent year," researchers wrote in *Pediatrics* online journal.

"TV may create the illusion that sex is more central to daily life than it truly is and may promote sexual initiation as a result," the researchers state.

The researchers found that 64 percent of all TV programs contained sexual content during the 2001-2002 season, the period studied by the survey. They also noted a 1999 study by the Kaiser Family Foundation that found youth watch an average of three hours of television each day.

"Youths in the 90th percentile of TV sex viewing had a predicted probability of intercourse initiation that was approximately double that of youths in the 10th percentile," they wrote.

"It's social learning: 'monkey see, monkey do,'" psychologist Rebecca Collins, the study's lead author, told *USA Today*. "If everyone's talking about sex or having it, and something bad hardly ever comes out of it, because it doesn't on TV, then they think, 'Hey, the whole world's doing it, and I need to.'"

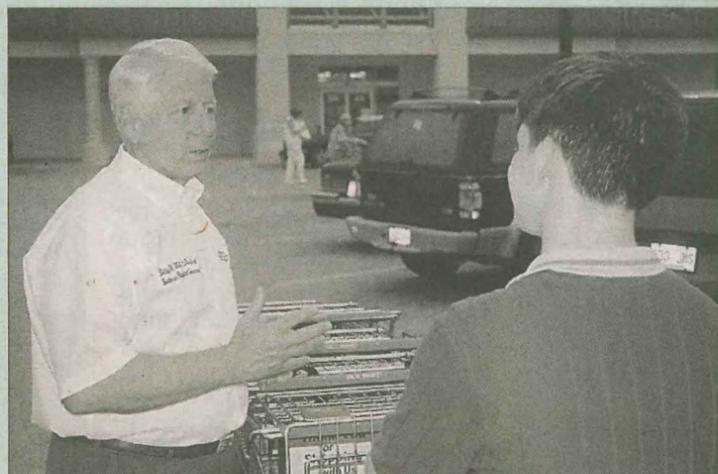
The study's authors found no significant difference between teenagers who watched portrayals of sexual talk and sexual behavior. "It apparently makes little difference whether a TV show presents people talking about whether they have sex or shows them actually having sex."

Jane Brown, a University of North Carolina media researcher who specializes in adolescents, told *USA Today* that teens whose parents supervise their activities closely are less likely to watch sexually oriented shows.

"Most important is keeping the set out of the children's bedrooms because otherwise the kids have complete control over what they watch," Brown said, adding that roughly 60 percent of teens have TVs in their bedrooms.

The study, "Watching Sex on Television Predicts Adolescent Initiation of Sexual Behavior," can be accessed at [pediatrics.org](http://pediatrics.org).

## Roamin' roads



Southern Baptist Convention President Bobby Welch's national bus tour rolled through Kentucky last week. Welch's "Everyone Can" evangelism emphasis calls for 1 million baptisms in the SBC next year. **Above:** Welch (center) visits with Kentucky Baptist Convention staff members (from left) Darryl Wilson, director of the adult Sunday school/discipleship group; Executive Director Bill Mackey; and Dan Garland, leader of the church development/evangelism team. **Left:** Welch witnesses to a young man in a grocery store parking lot after a rally at nearby Highview Baptist Church in Louisville. (Photos by Trennis Henderson) Story and more photos on page 3.

## Prayer can impact workplace, Henderson minister notes

By Ken Walker  
State Correspondent

Owensboro—Prayer shouldn't be limited to church or personal devotion time, according to the speaker at a recent Super Saturday church leadership workshop.

Instead, prayer also should be a regular presence in the workplace, according to Sam Newman, minister of music and education at Immanuel Baptist Temple in Henderson.

"We need to be focused on, 'God, what do you want in the workplace?'" Newman said at the Super Saturday workshop at Bellevue Baptist Church. "We need to ask Him to prepare us and open our eyes to opportunities."

Newman reviewed the "Experiencing God in Your Workplace" Bible study.

Based on the popular "Experiencing God" study, it was written by former Kentucky Baptist pastor Mike Rogers and his wife, Debi.

The study emphasizes that the nature of the work doesn't make a job "holy" or "secular," but the person's relationship with God.

Christians should pray that God would allow them to build relationships with co-workers—even those they don't like—and allow Him to work through them, Newman said.

Small steps can pay huge dividends, Newman said, recalling a home group that he and his wife formed a few years ago in the Washington, D.C., area.

Newman and his wife, Tina, were living in northern Virginia as Southern Baptist missionaries and church planters.

He recalled one woman who felt led to start a prayer group in her office. She was so excited about the results that she called Newman one day to tell him about it.

"She was getting all kinds of prayer requests through inter-office e-mail," he said. "They were going

to get together at lunch hour and pray for specific (things) that were going on."

Work-based prayer groups can help participants encourage each other and let people know about co-workers' problems that don't surface in ordinary conversation, Newman said.

But prayer doesn't have to be done solely in groups, Newman added. The point is to ask God to connect people with what He is doing in the workplace.

In addition, Newman said prayer is vital to withstanding the pressures of work. Workshop participants listed such job-related problems as foul language, self-centeredness and political backstabbing.

"God didn't promise to make the workplace perfect," Newman said. "We have an opportunity in the midst of all that to make an impact. It's tough, but He calls us to tough places."

## Baptists among grieving families in Russian massacre

**"The Bible teaches us that we must forgive. Vengeance is in God's hands."**

Russian Baptist Pastor Sergei Totjiev

Beslan, Russia—At least four—and as many as eight—children of Baptist leaders were killed when a hostage standoff in a Russian school ended violently Sept. 3, according to Baptist groups from the region.

The two-day crisis in the southern town of Beslan came to a climax when Russian commandos stormed the school following an explosion, according to news sources on the scene. Russian authorities have said that at least 335 people—many of them schoolchildren—were killed in the massacre.

Baptist World Alliance leaders familiar with the situation said the tragedy hit the local Baptist church in Beslan hard. Pastor Sergei Totjiev lost three of his five children. Of his two remaining children, one has been blinded, and the other is seriously injured.

### "We must forgive"

"Yes we have an irreplaceable loss, but we cannot take revenge," Totjiev told neighbors gathered outside his home. "As Christians the Bible teaches us that we must forgive. Vengeance is in God's hands."

Church elder Taimuras Totjiev—the pastor's brother—had five children taken hostage. Only one, 13-year-old Madina, has been found alive. Four other children, Boris, Larisa, Lyuba and Albina, are still missing and presumed dead.

In addition, at least one other child from the church died.

Yuri Sipko, president of the Russian Baptist Union, spent four days in Beslan, seeking to comfort families who lost loved ones in the



**RUSSIAN TRAGEDY** Family members and friends gather around Fatima Tetova, mother of slain hostages Irina, 13, and Alina, 12, as she cries during their funeral in the town of Beslan in the province of North Ossetia near Chechnya. (RNS/Reuters photo by Eduard Kornienko)

attack.

"We cannot describe the horror of this tragedy," Sipko said. "The entire city is in a state of mourning and paralysis. At each house in the school district gather groups of people sitting in heavy silence."

"The school, or, more accurately, its ruins, is encircled by a cordon of soldiers and policemen," he added. "The scariest sequel belongs to those families who do not know the fate of their loved ones, especially relatives and children who were not identified either in the morgue nor in the hospitals."

Noting that "the full gravity lies now on the hearts of the people of Northern Ossetia-Alania," Sipko

said, "No amount of help will be enough, and no quantity of prayers will be considered excessive."

### BWA, IMB respond to needs

In a letter to Sipko, BWA General Secretary Denton Lotz sent condolences "to all who have experienced the loss of loved ones, family and friends in the tragic and cruel events in Beslan."

"Our hearts go out to the parents of the children whose lives were so quickly and sadly taken from them," Lotz wrote. "Men and women of faith all over the world mourn the unbelievable loss of life that has come to innocent children."

BWA's relief arm, Baptist World

Aid, is working with local partner Mission Vera to help provide for the physical and psychological needs of the children and their families. The group's directors, Yevgeniy and Nadia Zhigulin, have attended funerals for many of the victims.

"During the days of deep grief our employees leave for Beslan for funerals of victims, providing material assistance where needed," the Zhigulins reported.

BWAid will provide \$2,500 to Mission Vera for relief work in Beslan.

The Southern Baptist International Mission Board released \$5,000 from its general relief fund to help in the aftermath of the 53-hour standoff. Two leaders of the Russian Baptist Union were able to use the funds to assist grieving families with burial expenses and other needs.

Half-naked children dashed out of the besieged school in every direction Sept. 3, according to televised reports. Some were carried and helped by parents and adults. Many were bleeding. Many received medical treatment and food and water outside.

The hostage incident began Sept. 1 when an armed gang took hundreds of children, parents and teachers hostage on the first day of school in Beslan, located in North Ossetia. The region is adjacent to the troubled Russian province of Chechnya, where rebels have been fighting the Moscow government and demanding an independent Islamic republic.

Based on reporting by Associated Baptist Press, Baptist Press and Baptist World Alliance

## Welch: Prepare for future attacks

Daytona Beach, Fla. (RNS)—Southern Baptist Convention President Bobby Welch is urging Baptist ministers to help their congregations prepare for the nation's next possible terrorist attack.

"When 9/11 came, the evangelical church of North America got caught not knowing what to do," Welch said on a DVD sent to Southern Baptist pastors and denominational leaders. "We can do better next time."

Affirming efforts by local New York churches and the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board after the twin towers were struck three years ago, Welch asked,

"What about all those other places and states where people across the United States were scared to death and didn't know what to do?"

He said his church, First Baptist Church of Daytona Beach, Fla., filled baggies with Scriptures and other information, knocked on doors and offered to pray with people.

"We cannot sit by when this country is being assaulted by hell and by Satan," Welch said. "We must get out there and be faithful to our biblical distinctive, which is sharing the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. If something else happens, mobilize your people."

## BAPTIST DIGEST

**'See You at the Pole' turns 15.** As teenagers gather around school flagpoles Sept. 15 to pray for their schools, friends and families, they will be marking the 15th year of the grassroots prayer event called "See You at the Pole." Over the years, millions of young people worldwide have come together for this day of student prayer. Last year, more than 2 million teenagers met for See You at the Pole in all 50 states, according to the National Network of Youth Ministries. Students in other countries such as Australia, Canada, Brazil, Japan and Nigeria also observed the time of prayer.

### Former presidents join Southern.

Two former seminary presidents have been named part-time professors at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. Mark Coppenger, pastor of Evanston Baptist Church in Evanston, Ill., was dismissed in 1999 as president of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo. Trustees said at the time that Coppenger's "expressions of anger ... had irreparably damaged his ability to lead the seminary." Southern Seminary President Al Mohler appointed Coppenger distinguished professor of apologetics. Ken Hemphill, national strategist for the Southern Baptist Convention's Empowering Kingdom Growth initiative,

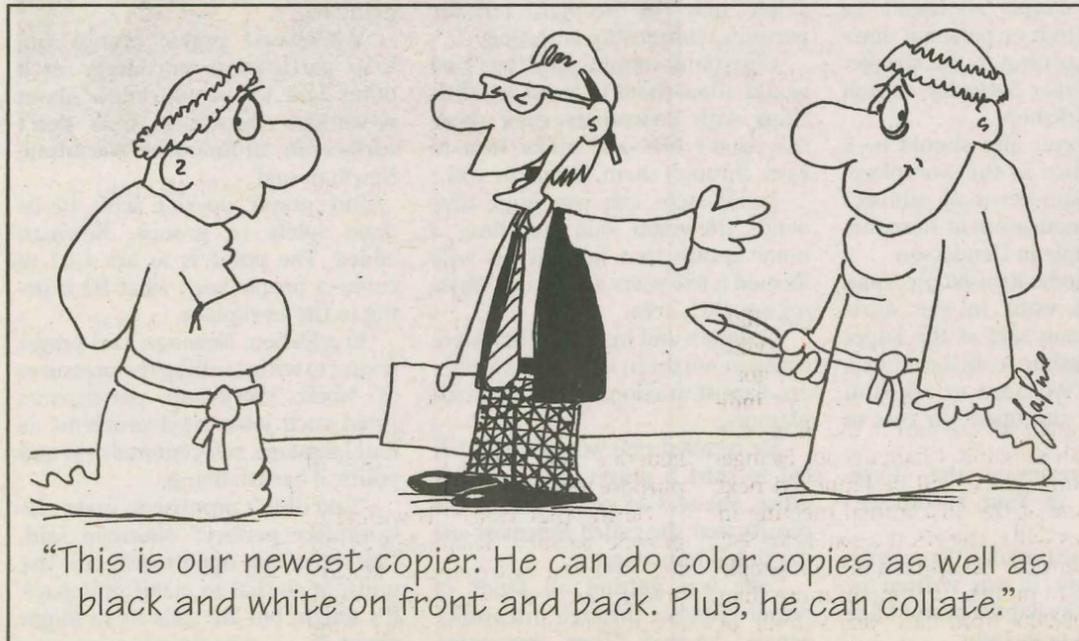
resigned last year as president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. Mohler named him distinguished professor of evangelism, missions and church growth.

### Baptists aid relief training.

Victim Relief Ministries, a Dallas-based non-profit organization with Baptist ties, will have the lead role in mobilizing the nation's faith community in the event of a terrorist attack or mass-casualty tragedy. At the request of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the national organization will train volunteer victim-relief chaplains Sept. 24-25 in Dallas and Oct. 7-9 in New York City. The group also trained workers last month in California. Victim Relief Ministries, supported in part by the Baptist General Convention of Texas, has trained 1,200 volunteers nationally.

### Johnson inaugurated at Boyce.

Jerry Johnson, former dean of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's Boyce College, will be inaugurated this week at president of Criswell College in Dallas. Johnson, 40, began serving as president at Criswell in February. A graduate of Criswell College, Southern Seminary and Denver Conservative Baptist Seminary, Johnson is a former pastor of churches in Texas and Colorado.

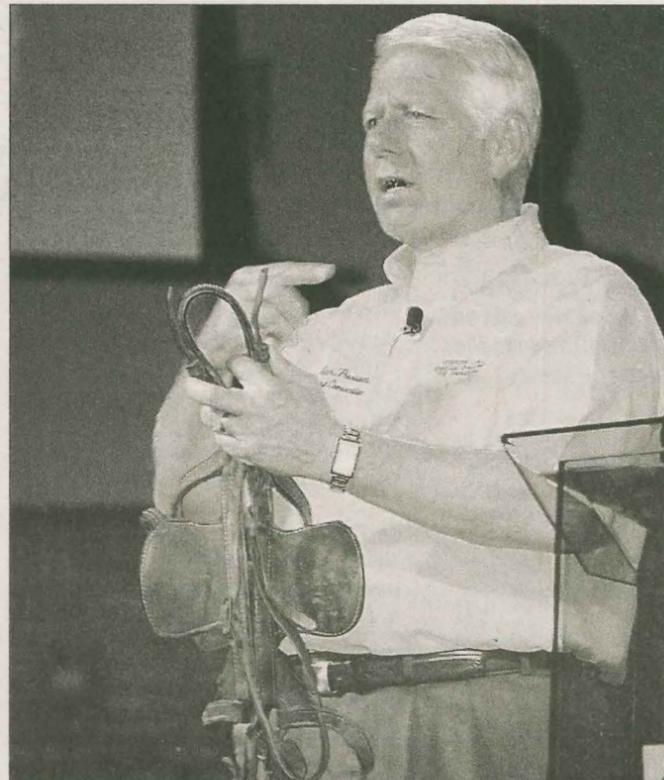


"This is our newest copier. He can do color copies as well as black and white on front and back. Plus, he can collate."

## 'Everyone Can' bus tour



**KODAK MOMENT** At the conclusion of the Sept. 7 evangelism rally at Highview Baptist Church in Louisville, Bobby Welch invited participants to pose for photos in front of his tour bus. Photos from stops in each state will be displayed next June at the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Nashville. (Photos by Trennis Henderson)



**FOCUS** During a rally in Louisville, Bobby Welch holds up an old mule bridle and blinders that remind him to avoid distractions and stay focused on the task of evangelism.

### Welch urges Ky. Baptists: Flex 'spiritual muscle,' help baptize 1 million

By Trennis Henderson  
Editor

**Louisville**—Southern Baptist Convention President Bobby Welch brought his star-spangled bus to the Bluegrass State last week for stop 20 on his 50-state trek to promote evangelism.

Welch, who was elected SBC president in June, has served 30 years as pastor of First Baptist Church of Daytona Beach, Fla. He also is the co-creator of FAITH, a Sunday school-based evangelism strategy used by churches across the nation.

Welch announced plans for his ambitious 20,000-mile journey a few hours after his presidential election. Describing the strategy to Kentucky Baptist leaders who traveled with him Sept. 7 from Northern Kentucky to Louisville, Welch said he first considered traveling across the nation in his Suburban or an RV.

As plans escalated, he said he realized, "If you went to all that work and effort and trouble, you would need to make it count," including efforts "to link with the press."

As a result, Welch ended up with a 45-foot bus featuring bold, custom-designed graphics; a six-member

traveling crew; and a 25-day travel itinerary. The anticipated cost, which is being footed by his congregation, is \$50,000.

Welch's travel team includes a schedule coordinator who is a staff member at his church; a photographer/videographer who also is a member of First, Daytona Beach; a freelance reporter for Baptist Press; and two professional drivers.

Team members sleep on the bus as it travels from state to state, logging up to 600 miles during overnight legs of the trip.

Noting that "we have had a variety of guests on board," Welch said reporters from CNN, PBS, the Boston Globe, the Orlando Sentinel and Religion News Service have conducted interviews on the bus.

#### Kentucky stops

Welch also is inviting Baptist leaders from each state to join him as he travels through their home region. Kentucky Baptist representatives who joined Welch on his trip from Florence to Louisville included KBC Executive Director Bill Mackey; evangelism team leader Dan Garland; Sunday school director Darryl

Wilson; Pastors' Conference President Mark Payton, pastor of Shively Heights Baptist Church in Louisville; and Western Recorder Editor Trennis Henderson.

Welch said his bus tour "came out of a desire to connect with all Southern Baptists." In addition to 56 scheduled stops for evangelism rallies and door-to-door witnessing, he said he plans to make up to 15 unscheduled stops at churches along the way to visit pastors, "hug their neck and pray with them."

After being on the road for more than a week, Welch decided to make his first two spontaneous visits in Kentucky. He first stopped at Crestwood Baptist Church where he and Pastor Troy Dobbs prayed together in the church's worship center.

His next stop was at Lakewood Baptist Church in Louisville. The church doors were locked, but trustee chairman Lester Adams happened by and unlocked the church sanctuary for the group.

Welch invited Adams to join the team for prayer. After visiting with Adams for a few minutes, Welch prayed specifically for Pastor Scott Hughes and his wife, Vickie, who recently had undergone surgery.

"I appreciate you coming by to pray for our pastor and his wife," Adams noted. "It's a good feeling to know other people are interested in our church."

#### Goal: 1 million baptisms

During an evening rally at Highview Baptist Church in Louisville, Welch said one of his primary goals is to encourage churches and individuals to take part in the "Everyone Can Kingdom Challenge for Evangelism" which will be launched next June at the SBC annual meeting in Nashville. The effort's goal is for SBC churches to baptize 1 million people in 12 months, a jump of more than 600,000 from last year's total of 377,357 baptisms.



**PRAYER MEETING** SBC President Bobby Welch leads an informal prayer time during a spontaneous visit to Lakewood Baptist Church in Louisville.



**ROAD TRIP** SBC President Bobby Welch shows a map of his bus tour route to Kentucky Baptist leaders (from left) Bill Mackey, Mark Payton and Darryl Wilson.

"We could witness, win and baptize 1 million people right now. We have the spiritual muscle to do it," Welch declared. "There are two reasons we do not. One of the problems is a lot of that spiritual strength is suffering from atrophy. ... The other is we can't get two muscles working together at the same time.

"The quest," he added, "is to generate and create this unity of purpose for evangelism."

Noting that Welch "is willing to provide personal leadership in doing personal evangelism," Mackey pointed out, "It's one thing to talk about evangelism; it's another thing to lead the way in doing it."

## WESTERN RECORDER

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

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## Debt sidelines potential missionaries

By Erich Bridges

Richmond, Va. (BP)—As a new school year gets under way, many American universities send some of our best and brightest young scholars abroad for study—along with some of our worst and most obnoxious knuckleheads.

The “ugly American” stereotype has found new life among some of the 160,000 students who go overseas each year, according to a recent article in The New York Times. Most traveling students still behave more or less like adults, The Times reports, but college officials worry that their institutions are “exporting drunkenness, misconduct and other trouble to an unprecedented degree.”

One student abroad got into a fistfight over a political disagreement—while studying diplomacy, of all things. Other American “scholars” regularly dropped trash out of dorm windows, or trashed hotel rooms like rock stars on tour. Some skipped classes and study excursions altogether, hitting local beaches and bars instead. Still others got themselves arrested for drug possession, then whined about being held accountable under local laws.

The response from foreign nations and universities, according to one U.S. college provost quoted by The Times: “We’re tired of this. ... Don’t send us your troublemakers.”

Surely we can do better.

### Christian students marginalized

Yet, while spoiled brats and frat-house hooligans hop overseas in growing numbers, some of our best and brightest young Christians aren’t going anywhere—either for study or for missionary service.

Why? Because of one nasty four-letter word: debt.

Student loan payments can pressure personal budgets for years after college. And while tuition rates continue to soar, grants—once the bulk of student aid—are falling. In the year 2000, nearly 70 percent of

graduates with bachelor’s degrees carried student debt into their early professional years, according to the National Center for Education Statistics. That’s 24 percent higher than a decade earlier.

“Student debt is a reality for most college students in public, private and faith-related schools,” writes Ben Sells in Mission Frontiers magazine. “When the debt is so high that monthly payments can’t be made on a missionary salary, it’s a hurdle too high for many potential missionaries.”

Student debt often sidelines “impact” missionaries, says Sells, former director of the International Centre for Excellence in Leadership at the Southern Baptist International Mission Board. He defines “impact” missionaries as recent college grads who can make a significant contribution almost immediately, like “impact” athletes who become stars in their rookie seasons. What they lack in maturity and experience, young workers more than make up for in boldness, risk-taking and teachability.

All of which goes for naught if school debt won’t let them get to the mission field.

But student loan payments often can be deferred for young missionaries on short-term assignments. Better yet, they can be avoided:

■ Many high school seniors can get inexpensive freshman college credits through dual enrollment.

■ High school graduates can attend more affordable community colleges for a year or two, then transfer to four-year schools.

■ Mission-minded Christian institutions—including Southern Baptist colleges and universities—offer many forms of assistance and creative paths to ministry (for more ideas, visit [www.missionfrontiers.org](http://www.missionfrontiers.org); click on “Back Issues,” then on July-August 2004, “Student Debt and Missionary Service”).

Besides, student debts aren’t the worst mission-stoppers. Nor are

car loans or home mortgages. Cars can be sold; houses can be sold or rented.

The worst forms of debt for Christian workers are big credit card balances and unsecured consumer loans. They top the list of financial obligations that chain potential missionaries to home shores.

“We have many, many people come to us whose debts do not allow them to go” overseas, says Jerry DeOliveira, a missionary candidate consultant at the IMB. “We counsel them to tear up their credit cards and pick a plan to pay them off.”

True, young Christians called to vocational ministry often get into debt while sacrificing earning potential to attend seminary or Bible school. But too many are lured into needless debt by the pressure of consumer culture, which relentlessly markets “wants” as “needs.”

### Spending habits form early

It starts early. Christian commentator Chuck Colson reports that in 2002 alone, American teens spent \$100 billion and persuaded their parents to spend an additional \$50 billion on them. Credit companies have targeted college students for years, and now market teen-oriented credit cards and cash cards.

“Discipline is what moderns need the most and want the least,” Richard Taylor wrote more than 40 years ago in “The Disciplined Life.”

“The easy style of living and spending of these years of plenty has seeped into Christian circles,” Taylor warned. “We have given lip service to the altar of the Lord but in practice have bowed at the shrine of the swank. We have been mesmerized by materialism ourselves even while protesting it in others. We have been thrown off balance by the prevailing false standards of value.”

Hard words, but true. For the Lord’s sake, let’s not sacrifice our children—the next generation of missionaries—at the “shrine of the swank” to which we have bowed.

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

Adventure Camp counselors, also conducted a camp in Maine.

The SonReach vacation Bible school team ministered to more than 1,000 children and witnessed 45 professions of faith. Other Son teams, made up of students involved in Baptist Student Union programs around the state, provided leadership at Discovery Camps and traveled to churches on the weekends.

Other Kentucky Baptist college students were involved in missions through other summer programs. Morehead State University had more students employed by Centrifuge than any other college or university. This is a credit to the excellent work by campus minister Gene Parr.

The Kentucky Woman’s Missionary Union’s GA and Acteens camps also were very successful with more than 600 participants. There were 11 professions of faith, six rededications, and one commitment to vocational Christian service.

We rejoice to hear of the professions of faith among older children and youth. Please pray for an upward trend in reaching these age groups for Christ!

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

## COMMENTARY

## Summer ministries reap spiritual harvest

During a recent Kentucky Baptist Convention staff forum we heard reports of extensive and fruitful ministries resulting in hundreds of decisions for Christ. I wish that every Kentucky Baptist could have been present to hear those reports. Let me share some of the highlights with you:

### Kentucky Changers

Kentucky Changers is an exciting program in which Kentucky Baptist youth pay their own way to participate in building and renovation projects for people in need each summer.

The youth and the crew chiefs work on home improvement projects during the day and participate in worship rallies each evening.

In Murray there were 288 participants in 22 projects, including one replacing damaged ceiling tiles in the high school where they slept on mattresses. There were 152 participants in Kentucky Changers projects in Frankfort and 328 in Maysville.

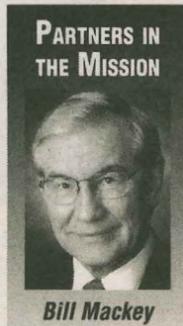
Altogether, Kentucky Changer

decisions included 34 professions of faith (four by homeowners or occupants), and 20 commitments to vocational Christian service. My hat is off to the chaperones and crew chiefs who make it possible for the youth to have life-changing experiences.

### Camps

Discovery Camps for children and youth at Cedar more Baptist Assembly saw 1,730 participants this summer with 77 professions of faith, 82 rededications and 33 commitments to vocational Christian service. The last week was a Discovery Missions Camp for children.

The Baptist Men on Missions department conducted Mission Adventure Camps for approximately 200 campers at Campbellsville University. A traveling missions education team also provided creative missions education during camps at Camp Howard in Upper Cumberland Association and at Camp Laurel River in Laurel River Association. A traveling team, consisting of the Mission



Bill Mackey

## STEWARDSHIP

## Trust God even amid challenging financial times

By Jeremy White

Most people often have heard about the importance of setting financial goals and making plans. Certainly, meeting your desires through planning and goal setting is part of wise stewardship.

Proverbs 21:5 says, “The plans of the diligent lead surely to advantage, but everyone who is hasty comes surely to poverty.” Then, the Psalmist says God gives us the “desires of our hearts.”

But frequently in life we don’t obtain all our desires or reach our goals. When that happens, do you feel like a failure? Do you lose some faith in God? Do you resent any change in plans or circumstances God sends your way? Does it affect your relationship with Him?

Changing a plan isn’t mean you misheard or that God changed His mind. It just means that His plan and direction may differ from your timing.

Not reaching a goal or obtaining a desire could mean that God has something different (usually better) in mind for you. Or it could be a means of discipline—remember He disciplines those He loves.

When He withholds a desire, see it as God wanting more and better for you. He might choose to wait until you are ready. Praise Him when He arranges and allows financial blessings—or prevents undoings. Don’t forget all the financial blessings He has provided through the years. His goals for your brief life here might not include prosperity, ease and comfort.

Remember, rest and revel in His answered prayer for financial matters; just don’t let resentment creep in when things don’t go your way in human terms. This is teaching time. This is testimony time.

Have you failed in your use of God’s money? Have you been angry at His “no”? Don’t let your first failure keep you so defeated that you talk yourself into failing again. Confess it, receive His mercy and move on. You will have another opportunity tomorrow.

Remember growth is a process, not a once for all. Jesus wants children who rely on Him, students who listen to Him, not grown-up graduates who think they don’t need Him anymore or who don’t trust Him for their overall well being.

Jeremy White is a certified public accountant in Paducah. See his free weekly financial tip on his Web site at [www.consultcpa.com](http://www.consultcpa.com).



## What is an appropriate age for young couples to marry?

**Q: I recently read that young people should be married by age 17 to 20 to stem the tide of young adult lust, citing the biblical text, "It is better to marry than to burn." What is an appropriate age by which a person should be married?**

Judging from the high rates of infidelity and unhappiness among many married Christians, a wedding ring is no guarantee against lust. Your question is a painful one for many never-married adults who long for the right person to come along.

### SINGLES

Dr. Scott Stanley is a leading researcher in the movement to strengthen marriages. He is coauthor of several highly acclaimed Christian resources including "A Lasting Promise" and "12 Hours to a Great Marriage." Stanley points to research indicating two reasons Baptists have a higher divorce rate than the general population:

- Baptists tend to marry at a younger age.

- Young Baptist couples tend to be more economically challenged than the population at large.

Dr. Neil Clark Warren, author of "Finding the Love of Your Life," points to age 25 as an indicator of marital success. Research shows the younger a person marries before age 25, the higher the divorce rate. Warren explains that the adult worldview generally forms around age 25 and changes less dramatically after that point. Young people who marry earlier are likely to experience dramatic changes in their psychosocial development in their young adult years. Two adults who marry, Warren reasons, have a better chance at success than those who marry without a level of maturity needed to make marriage work.

Financial stress is the top reason divorcing couples cite for the dissolution of their marriages. It makes sense to have a financially sound base before embarking on the challenging task of forging two lives into one.

For young adults who are not married, remember that Jesus Christ lived a life of purity as a never-married single adult male. Contemplate His example and draw upon His strength as you live for Him as a single person (see Hebrews 2:18, 4:15).—James Stillwell

**Q: As a Christian parent, how concerned should I be about the spiritual growth of my children?**

If your child was not walking or talking by age 4, you would be in the pediatrician's office wanting to know what was wrong. If your child brought home a report card with completely unsatisfactory grades, you would want to meet with his or her teacher to find out why. Are we as concerned about the spiritual growth of our children as we are their physical and mental development?

### PARENTING

Research shows that most parents have no real expectations regarding the spiritual growth of their children. The expectations we do have are minimal at best. Most parents are pleased simply to have churchgoing children. In my 28 years of ministry to children, I cannot remember a time when a parent came up to me and asked me how their child was progressing spiritually. George Barna says, "For the most part, we have lulled ourselves into complacency regarding the spiritual growth of our children."

As a starting point, parents should establish expectations or desirable outcomes. What do you want your child to learn about God and about the Christian life? For example, when should your child know and be able to find the books of the Bible? What attitudes and behaviors do you want to see in their lives? Have your children remained self-centered, or have they learned that being a Christian involves putting others first?

If churches issued spiritual report cards for worship, Bible knowledge, discipleship, stewardship, service and evangelism, what grades would your child receive? Would you be surprised?—David Garrard

Family Forum writers are:

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



## A call to evangelism: Don't miss the bus

I confess that my first impression of Bobby Welch's 45-foot, American flag-adorned bus (especially during the final months of a hotly contested U.S. presidential race) was that it came across a bit gaudy and over-the-top—not to mention the mixed church-state message.

Granted, I have the ability to be just as cynical as the next person—and more than some. I also wondered about the promotional hype—and cost—associated with a 25-day, 50-state bus tour for a denominational president.

While I'm still not too sure about the bus graphics, I further confess that spending a few hours with Welch convinced me that he is absolutely sincere in his stated goals for his road trip—to help encourage and equip Southern Baptists across the nation to get serious about leading friends, neighbors and strangers to personal faith in Jesus Christ. And that is worth celebrating.

Those who know Welch well have long been aware of his unwavering commitment to personal evangelism. That passion is best reflected in his role as co-creator of FAITH, a Sunday school-based evangelism strategy used in churches throughout the nation.

But Welch doesn't just talk about evangelism and challenge other people to get involved; he lives it.

In conjunction with rallies in each state to promote his "Everyone Can' Kingdom Challenge for Evangelism," Welch takes time for personal evangelistic visits and urges rally participants to do the same.

"In 25 traveling days, I will have had the privilege to share the gospel with people in every state," Welch noted. "I thought it would be inconsistent with the message if we didn't try to visit" unsaved and unchurched people

during the trip.

Emphasizing that "I'm interested in the people we don't even know yet," Welch said, "We are trying to connect with real people in real life. This is exactly where it works best—out there among the people.

"I don't spend much time talking to people who don't want to talk about" spiritual issues, he added. "Somewhere out here are multiplied millions of people waiting on a good word. If we go with a right attitude, the Holy Spirit interprets that."

Welch also deftly deflected potential ego-related questions about his cross-country campaign trek. "I don't want my name on this," he said of the "Ev-

eryone Can" evangelism emphasis, adding that his goal is for the effort to become self-perpetuating "even if I am not president another year." And I am confident he means it.

But what about the lofty goal of 1 million baptisms in 12 months—more than twice the number Southern Baptists have ever baptized in a single year? Isn't that somewhat unrealistic? Welch has an answer for that too, of course.

Insisting that the 16-million-member Southern Baptist Convention already has ample ability and resources to reach and baptize 1 million converts, he remarked, "I'm not really willing to bust a gut to do again what we've done before."

Issuing a call for Southern Baptists to pursue a "unity of purpose for evangelism," Welch added, "We're not majoring on what we're against. ... We're majoring on who we are and what we're for."

Gaudy bus or not, that's a message worth celebrating—and supporting. When it comes to personal involvement in evangelism, don't miss the bus.

### STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

## An Arabic Coke filled with love

By Joyce Dover Whitten

In a personal tribute I wrote in April to my beloved sister, Jean Dover Elliott, and her husband, Larry, I shared that Jean sent me an old Coca-Cola tin that I received two days

after she and Larry flew to Baghdad, Iraq. With the gift was a note from Jean in which she wrote in part, "This is a little addition to your Coke collection. Maybe I can find an Arabic Coke for you in Iraq." I would like to share "the rest of the story."

Art and Doty, managers of the guest house in which Jean and Larry stayed while in Baghdad, told me that Jean searched all over Baghdad for an Arabic Coke for me, but could not find one. However, Jean did not give up. While she was in Erbil, Iraq, she found my prize, an Arabic Coca-Cola.

To ensure protection for my Coke, Jean carefully wrapped it in an Iraqi newspaper, English version, dated Feb. 12, 2004. She further secured it by placing it inside her camera carrying case where it rested snugly. I can just imagine Jean's delight as she thought to herself how pleased I would be to

receive that special bottle of Coke.

Jean left the protected Coke at Enrique's house in Erbil while she and Larry traveled to Mosul, Iraq,

with David and Carrie McDonnall and Karen Watson to scout sites for water purification projects. I can imagine how very happy and joyful they were at the prospect of replacing filthy water with clear, clean, sparkling water for the Iraqi people.

Jean and Larry were to return to Baghdad on March 16 and would pick up their things at Enrique's on their way back. On March 15, the five Southern Baptist mission workers were on their way to David and Carrie's home in Mosul with plans to have dinner together. The very last traffic light turned red. If the light had stayed green a little longer, they would have been on an open highway. However, as they were stopped for the traffic light, suddenly and without warning, they were gunned down and killed in a brutal drive-by shooting. Carrie McDonnall is the only survivor.

After the tragedy, Art and Doty traveled to Mosul and Erbil

to gather Jean and Larry's belongings for shipment to their family. God's hand eventually delivered my special gift to me through very wonderful circumstances.

My husband, Ron, and I attended the Southern Baptist Convention in Indianapolis in June. We were so blessed to be with Jean and Larry's older son, Scott, and his wife, Leia, at the press conference with Carrie McDonnall and her mother. Leia gave me a bag with "something from Jean," adding that "the family knew it could be for only you." There in the bag was the bottle of Coke, red-capped with printing in English on one side and Arabic on the other side.

Jean and Larry were traveling and working to assess ways to help and show the love of God to the people of Iraq. I feel in awe that all the while Jean also was thinking of me. My very special Coke has made its way home. It has Jean's stamp all over it—a stamp which invisibly says love, thoughtfulness, perseverance, determination, enthusiasm, self-sacrifice and joy.

Thank you, Jean. I love you and miss you.

Joyce Dover Whitten is a Baptist pastor's wife in Rising Sun, Ind.

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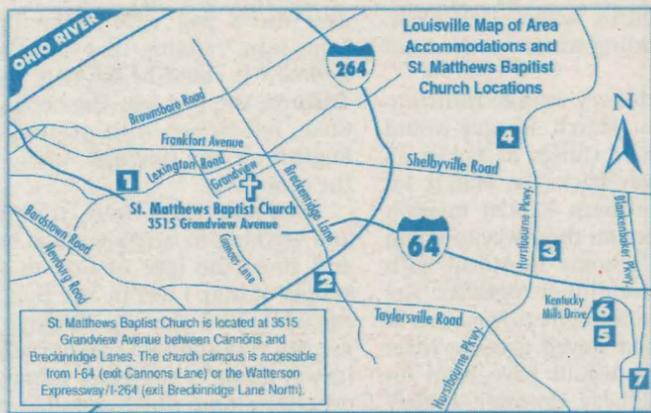
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## Giving back up Kentucky Baptists set CP record, reverse two-year giving decline

By Trennis Henderson  
Editor

Louisville—Halting two years of financial decline, Kentucky Baptists contributed a record \$23 million in Cooperative Program gifts for the 2003-04 fiscal year.

The Kentucky Baptist Convention's fiscal year, which concluded Aug. 31, posted a jump of more than \$1.2 million (5.8 percent) over the previous year's gifts of \$21.8 million.

The year-end total of \$23,070,734 also exceeded the convention's revised budget of \$22,181,335 by 4 percent. It fell slightly short of the original \$23.2 million budget goal which was reduced in January in response to the previous year's budget shortfall.

Lowell Ashby, leader of the KBC business services team, said the past year's 5.8 percent growth in giving helped the state convention regain an average annual growth of 2 to 3 percent over the past five years.

KBC Executive Director Bill Mackey pointed out that part of the past year's increase was due to calendar-related issues. Aug. 31 was on a Tuesday this year, giving churches two days to send in receipts from the final Sunday of the month. The previous fiscal year ended on a Sunday, so receipts from that year were recorded in the 2003-04 budget year.

As a result, Mackey said, "Last year wasn't as bad as it looked and this year probably isn't quite as good as it looks."

Even with those adjustments, he added, "the bottom line is Kentucky Baptists have continued to be consistent in increasing their support of missions whenever possible."

"I hope and pray that this is an indication that Kentucky Baptists are pleased with the mission study report and the strong focus on reaching people for Christ and developing them into fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ," Mackey said.

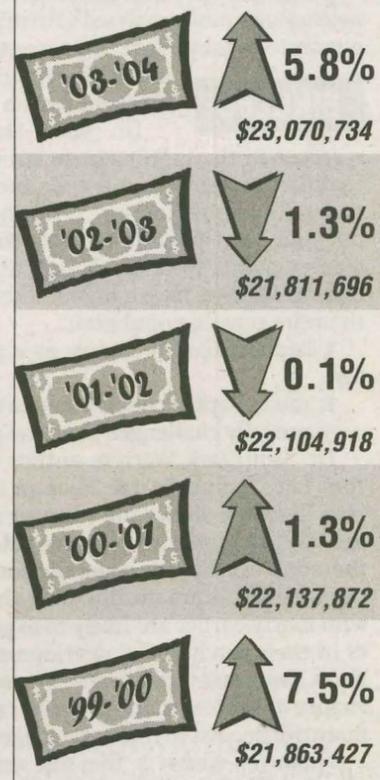
### Positive financial indicator

The past year's financial growth also is a strong indication that Kentucky Baptists' Cooperative Program gifts will meet or exceed budget at least the next two years. The current budget year, which began Sept. 1, calls for \$22,504,000 in CP income, more than \$500,000 below 2003-04 receipts.

The proposed budget for 2005-06, recommended last week by the KBC Mission Board's business and finance committee, is \$23.1 million, only slightly above the past year's receipts. That budget will be considered for approval in November by the Mission Board and KBC messengers.

Ashby noted that any gifts that exceed budget will be distributed according to the budget formula for KBC and Southern Baptist Convention ministries. That distribution plan includes 64 percent for KBC causes and 36 percent for SBC

### CP giving



entities.

Reflecting on the giving decline during the previous two years, Mackey said convention leaders "had to make adjustments in not replacing some staff positions and making priority decisions about ministries which meant that some ministries could no longer be funded at previous levels."

This past year's growth in income "does provide some encouragement that the KBC can more adequately fund current staff and ministries and have needed financial resources to help implement 'Kentucky Baptists Connect'" —the state convention's five-year strategy to increase baptisms, church starts, leader training and other key priorities across the state.

In addition to increased Cooperative Program giving, Kentucky Baptists increased their gifts to state, North American and international missions offerings.

One giving area that had a small drop was restricted Kentucky only funds (gifts designated to fund only Kentucky Baptist ministries). That total was \$491,005, a decrease of \$11,856 (2.4 percent) from the previous year.

Gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions jumped 13.5 percent to \$3,826,079. The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions increased 10.2 percent to \$1,762,924. Gifts to the Eliza Broadus Offering for State Missions increased 3.5 percent to \$897,648.

Affirming Kentucky Baptists' "sacrificial obedience to God," Mackey said, "When we consider the increase in Cooperative Program as well as the three major mission offerings, it is a tribute to the faithfulness of Kentucky Baptists in supporting mission causes at home and around the world."

## Evacuating again

*Ivan forces Kentucky volunteers to leave Florida for second time*

By David Winfrey  
News Director

Punta Gorda, Fla.—Same song, second verse.

Shortly after returning to Florida because Hurricane Frances forced them to evacuate their disaster relief work related to Hurricane Charley, Kentucky Baptist volunteers fled the Sunshine State a second time as Hurricane Ivan neared.

Three feeding teams from Kentucky have moved out, according to Larry Koch, director of disaster relief for the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Baptist men on mission department.

The Blood River Baptist Association kitchen returned home to Hardin to make repairs, while the Kentucky-wide unit and the kitchen from Green Valley Baptist Association in Henderson were relocated to Atlanta to wait for Ivan to blow through.

"We're going to try to leave the equipment there and go home for a couple of days," Koch said, adding that Atlanta Motor Speedway has agreed to store the mobile kitchens. "Then we'll go back out (to Florida) when we get the call."

Approximately 120 Kentucky Baptist volunteers have traveled to Florida to help with feeding and cleanup work.

One Kentucky kitchen responded to Hurricane Charley, but coordinators asked for more teams after Hurricane Frances. A total of 121 Baptist disaster relief units from a multitude of states were dispatched to Florida after Frances.

The Kentucky teams were dispatched to Punta Gorda after Frances, but before two could set up they were told to leave, Koch said.

"I was told that Ivan has an eye-



**ON THE ROAD AGAIN** Kentucky Baptist disaster relief volunteers load an oven from their mobile kitchen onto a truck to evacuate from First Baptist Church of Punta Gorda. Volunteers expect to return to Florida after the threat from Hurricane Ivan is gone. (KBC photo by Larry Koch)

ball on Punta Gorda again, so they wanted us out quick," he said.

"Charlie blew this place all to pieces and then Frances dumped huge amounts of water on roofs that were not covered," he said. "Everywhere you look, you see the blue tarps on the roofs. Post office is disabled and the county office has tremendous damage."

One kitchen served approximately 13,000 meals last Thursday and Friday before packing up. In total, Kentucky Baptists have served about 65,000 meals after both hurricanes, Koch said.

"It's frustrating. But we realize you've got to do what you've got to do."

With additional reporting by Baptist Press

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## NATIONAL NOTES

**Black caucus lobbied on marriage.** A group of African-American church leaders opposed to gay marriage has asked members of the Congressional Black Caucus to support a constitutional amendment to "protect marriage." Signers said an amendment is needed because the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act has been challenged by federal judges.

**Democrats seek general's dismissal.** Eleven Democratic members of Congress have written to President Bush urging him to dismiss Lt. Gen. Jerry Boykin, a defense undersecretary who was investigated after comparing the war on terrorism to a religious battle. The letter follows recent press reports that a Defense Department investigation of Boykin found he failed to get proper clearance for his remarks at churches and didn't make it clear that they were not official.

**American Baptists might cut missionaries.** Leaders of the American Baptist Churches USA say they must close a \$1.5 million budget gap to avert the recall of missionaries. Leaders of the denomination's International Ministries Division say that the upcoming World Mission Offering must increase by 36 percent from \$4.2 million to \$5.7 million to keep all missionaries in their assignments and maintain existing ministries.

**Third judge strikes down abortion ban.** A third federal judge ruled Sept. 8 that a law against partial-birth abortions is unconstitutional because it ignores parameters set by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2000. U.S. District Judge Richard Kopf of Lincoln, Neb., agreed with two other judges in New York and San Francisco

that the law must include a provision that allows the procedure to protect the mother's health. Four years ago, the U.S. Supreme Court mandated such a provision when it struck down a similar Nebraska law.

**IRS probe sought for Democratic rally in church.** A watchdog group that advocates church-state separation has asked the Internal Revenue Service to investigate a Miami church that hosted a Democratic rally in late August. Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, said in a letter to the IRS the activities at the event seemed to go far beyond engaging in nonpartisan activities such as voter registration and education.

**D.C. marriage rally goal: 1 million.** Seattle pastor Ken Hutcherson is hoping for 1 million Christians on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., next month in support of the traditional definition of marriage. He and others have organized "Mayday for Marriage" Oct. 15, featuring James Dobson, Tony Perkins, Chuck Colson and Richard Land.

**Congress faces church-state, moral issues.** Congress is expected to consider two issues of interest to Christians before adjourning next month. An appropriations bill for the departments of Labor, Education and Health and Human Services includes a "conscience protection" provision that would allow government-funded health care providers to object to providing services that sponsoring groups opposed, such as abortion services. Also, the House is expected later this month to consider the proposed constitutional amendment that would ban same-sex marriage nationwide.

## Spiritual adviser, White House official speak of Bush's faith

By Adelle Banks  
Religion News Service

**Washington (RNS)**—President Bush doesn't believe he received divine direction to run for the nation's highest office or to wage war, a man who has acted as his spiritual adviser told religion reporters Sept. 10.

Kirbyjon Caldwell, pastor of a Houston church, was a surprise guest accompanying Jim Towey, head of Bush's faith-based initiatives office, at the annual meeting of the Religion Newswriters Association.

Both Caldwell and Towey defended the president as a man whose faith has been misrepresented and misunderstood and said they consider him to be a "mainstream" American regarding his faith.

"He does not believe that God told him to run," Caldwell declared. "He does not believe God told him he would win. And he surely does not believe God told him to drop any bombs anywhere in the world."

Caldwell, who said he calls Bush "Brother President," said he generally refuses to disclose what they discuss. In response to questions from reporters, he affirmed the president's personal use of faith.

"When you get hit with bad news every daggum day you walk into the office ... you better have something that just helps you to

calibrate or maintain your equilibrium," he said.

Although the president has spoken about how his faith has changed his life, Towey said that doesn't mean dramatic religious rituals occur in the Oval Office.

"He's commander in chief, not chaplain in chief," said Towey, director of the White House Office of Faith-based and Community Initiatives.

"I haven't seen him ... lost in prayer or levitating. If he had healing powers, he'd fix his knees." Bush injured his knees last year, halting his routine jogging schedule.

Towey defended the president's position supporting government funding of faith-based organizations as sound policy.

"The separation of church and state is very important, but we also recognize that that wall separating the poor from effective programs had to come down," he said.

Towey said he thinks there's a double standard in reactions to Bush's religious speech because other presidents such as Abraham Lincoln and Franklin D. Roosevelt have referred to matters of faith in their addresses.

"The reality is I think he's no different from his predecessors and I think he connects with most Americans," he said.



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## Conflict mars leadership transition at Habitat

By John Pierce  
Baptists Today

Americus, Ga. (ABP)—Millard Fuller, who founded the world-renowned Christian housing ministry Habitat for Humanity International with his wife, Linda, in 1976, will end his service as president next year.

But Fuller and Habitat directors have been in conflict for several months over how and when the leadership transition will take place.

While retaining the title of president and chief executive officer, Fuller, who turns 70 in January, said he has been forced into a "figure-head" role since former board chairman Paul Leonard Jr. was sent to the

Americus, Ga.-based headquarters in June as managing director.

During the past year, Fuller was accused of improper behavior toward a former employee, but a rigorous board investigation found "insufficient proof of inappropriate conduct" according to an Aug. 25 memo to Habitat employees.

But broader issues of leadership styles and transition plans have been the primary sources of conflict.

### Jimmy Carter gets involved

Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, a longtime Habitat volunteer and personal friend of the Fullers, intervened to negotiate a resolution.

He hosted a May 21 meeting of Habitat leaders at his home in Plains, Ga., and afterward made recommendations that were developed by board leaders into a document signed by the Fullers that called for Fuller's retirement in January 2005.

A subsequent meeting was held at the Carter Center in Atlanta Aug. 23 after Fuller and board leaders continued to disagree over current leadership issues and a succession plan. Recommendations stemming from that meeting were approved in a called meeting of the full Habitat board the next day.

In the Aug. 25 memo to Habitat employees, board leaders called Leonard's appointment as managing director "a first step in an important process the board will be engaged in over the coming months."

At this time, however, Fuller has not publicly announced his retirement. He has sought to extend his term as Habitat's first president and CEO until later in 2005 when the completion of the 200,000th house built by the worldwide ministry is expected to occur.

Fuller said early minutes from the founding of Habitat in 1976 referenced a goal of housing 1 million people. The 200,000th house would symbolize that goal.

Board leaders have offered Fuller the opportunity to preside over the dedication of that historic milestone, but not in the role of CEO.

## Christian teachers' advocates hail ruling about off-hours activities

Washington (RNS)—Supporters of Christian teachers are hailing an appellate court decision as a mandate to permit faculty to participate in religious activities in public school buildings during their off hours.

The 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals recently ruled that a Sioux Falls, S.D., elementary teacher has the right to attend an after-school Bible club meeting in her school building.

"Sometimes Christian teachers become weary of perceived discrimination against us in school systems and courts," said Finn Laursen, executive director of Christian Educators Association International, a Pasadena, Calif., organization.

"But now there's clear court-mandated fair treatment."

The appellate court, in an opinion filed Sept. 3, upheld a lower court's ruling that Barbara Wigg could participate in the Good News Club at other schools and reversed a lower court ruling preventing her from doing so at her own school, Laura B. Anderson Elementary School.

"In an effort to avoid an establishment of religion, (the Sioux Falls School District) unnecessarily limits the ability of its employees to engage in private religious speech on their own time," the court ruled.

Mathew Staver, president of Liberty Counsel, an Orlando, Fla.-based legal organization that represented Wiggs, said it was the first time such a ruling had been made in this country.

"Teachers who desire to take off their official teaching hat and put on a private one, step down the hall after the last bell, and participate in religious clubs have been finally liberated by this court's decision," he said in a statement.

Tom Hutton, a staff attorney with the National School Boards Association, said his Alexandria, Va.-based organization filed a friend-of-the-court brief on behalf of the school district, asking the court to maintain the "widely understood rule of thumb" that school employees should pursue their religious expression outside the school setting.

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**GEORGETOWN**

C O L L E G E

## Ask yourself these questions before you tell that joke

*The challenge of coming up with new material every week doesn't have to compromise good taste.*

By Robert Dietz

Orlando (BP)—Professional speakers often capture an audience through effective storytelling and humor. Many pastors, ministers and other church leaders are no different.

But the challenge of coming up with new material every week doesn't have to compromise good taste in exchange for getting a laugh out of the audience.

Humor by its nature highlights the imperfections in all of us. This includes the mistakes, prejudices and misfortunes of people like those sitting in your congregation.

In an effort to increase awareness of what is appropriate humor for the pulpit or Sunday school room, I want to suggest some guidelines for your consideration before you use a joke or story:

■ **Does it pass the "Is God laughing?" test?** I think God has a great sense of humor. I think He can appreciate a good story or joke. But, before you tell a story or joke, ask yourself, "Is God going to be pleased if I tell this story?"

■ **Does it pass the "spouse-confidant" test?** Pastors and other church leaders need someone who will give them honest, objective feedback regarding material they want to use in sermons, Sunday school or elsewhere. This can be helpful, particularly if the person

has a good sense of humor. They may be able to tell you an even better story that makes your point.

■ **Does the humor belittle or tear down anyone?** The one exception to this rule is jokes on yourself. Leaders who can laugh at their own weaknesses and failings often strike a responsive cord with an audience.

■ **Don't play the "race card."** Using a joke or story that makes light of racial or ethnic differences can be detrimental to the family of believers and supports existing prejudices.

The humor in a story about a black pastor or an Irish priest still should exist without the racial or ethnic reference. If you don't think it does, don't use it.

■ **Be nice.** Jokes that negatively reference persons' physical attributes, such as weight, height or baldness, are not appreciated by those who believe they fit that category, whether they do or not.

If you can't think of any member of your church who fits the description in the joke or story, pretend you have a visitor who does. Then ask yourself, "Should I tell it?"

■ **Jokes about people's occupations often promote negative stereotyping.** Jokes about bankers being tightfisted, used-car salesmen being liars and lawyers being shysters are one-sided and provide

no opportunity for rebuttal.

■ **The level of tolerance in any church might not be as high as you think.** The use of slang, marginally acceptable words, words that might be misunderstood and quips about questionable topics such as sex, may not be well received.

This guideline is violated more in speeches in civic organizations and to the public than in churches. Still, it is amazing how often these subjects slip into sermons in the form of stories and jokes.

Similarly, subjects such as divorce, alcoholism and gambling are painful issues in the lives of people in your congregation. Jokes that focus on such personal failures are not appropriate in church.

■ **Avoid "inside" jokes.** They leave the "outsider" feeling left out. Regardless of how funny the event might have been or the humor derived from highlighting it again, you will lose your audience when they realize they do not understand the references being laughed at by those around them.

■ **Know the reaction.** If you make a person in your congregation a "target" for your jokes, be certain you know how he or she will react to that sort of attention. Do not assume you know.

■ **Beware of using ad-libs to carry a laugh further.** Ad-libs pro-

vide the greatest danger for violating other guidelines because they do not provide the opportunity for thoughtful consideration of word selection or subject matter. Besides, a pastor's job is not to be a stand-up comedian.

Comedians understand the principle of restructuring a joke so that it works for a particular audience. Often a joke or story can be "neutralized" from violating these guidelines without losing the purpose or humor in the story.

But never try to clean up a seamy story and tell it in church. The likelihood is that you will have people in your audience who have heard and remember the seamier story and will be embarrassed that you would dare tell that sort of story.

One final word: If you don't have enough humor in your bones to tell a joke effectively, don't try it. Few things disrupt the flow of a sermon or speech more quickly than a joke that falls flat. With a little creative effort, however, most church leaders should have the ability to use humor effectively without the negative baggage that often accompanies it.

Robert Dietz is a deacon and Sunday School teacher in Orlando. This article is adapted from one previously published in *Facts & Trends* magazine, a magazine of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

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#### Arbitrary giving doesn't follow biblical stewardship

The Bible teaches proportionate giving. In the Old Testament, the tithe, or 10 percent, was to be returned to God. The same principle of proportionate giving carries over into the New Testament. As Christians, we are not to give arbitrarily or haphazardly. God has gifted us with a certain amount of financial resources, a portion of which we are to give back to Him for Kingdom work.

From 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 we could paraphrase Paul this way: "Don't take an arbitrary approach to giving; it's much too important for that." That is, don't say, "Well, I guess I'll give \$25 to my church," or "I guess I'll increase my giving by \$5." Consider what proportion or percentage of income you are now giving. Is that a proper proportion? If not, then what is? Paul pointed to the Macedonian Christians who "gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability" (2 Corinthians 8:3).

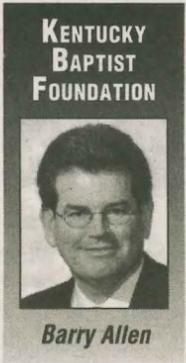
Begin by letting God's Word speak to you. "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house.

Test me in this, says the Lord Almighty, and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it" (Malachi 3:10).

Then make the careful and prayerful decision, which Paul suggested, for giving. "Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7). Let God's Word and the inspiration of His Holy Spirit be your guide.

If you desire information about how proportionately to give through your estate plan for the benefit of your church and other Baptist causes, please call toll-free Laurie Valentine or me, or log on at [www.kybaptistfoundation.org](http://www.kybaptistfoundation.org). We are also available to conduct in your church Christian stewardship education seminars related to estate, financial and charitable gift planning. There is no cost to you or your church for these services.

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



Barry Allen

### Kudzu



Doug Marlette

### For Heaven's Sake



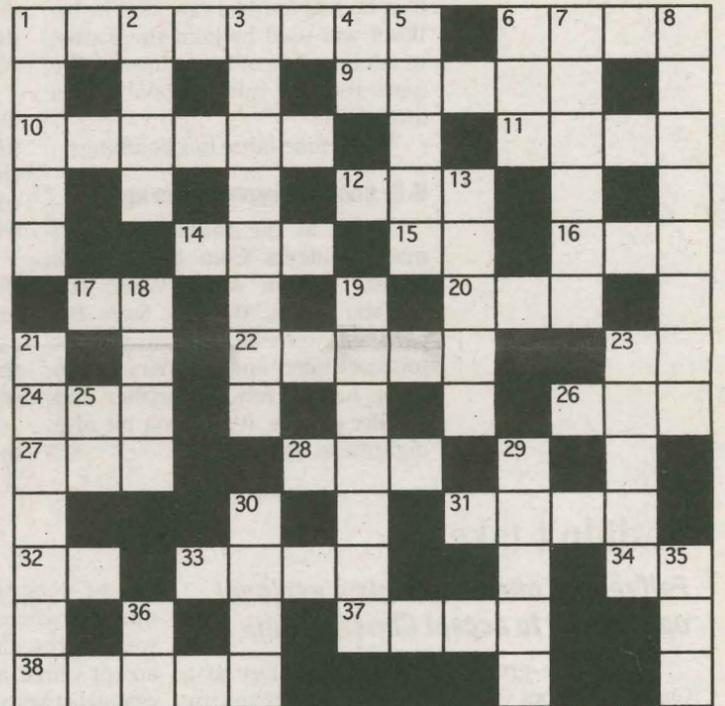
Mike Morgan

### Bible Crosswords

Michael J. Landi

#### Across

- 1 Saul fought against them (1 Samuel 14)
- 6 "There shall they rehearse the righteous \_\_\_\_ of the Lord" (Judges 5:11)
- 9 "He shall \_\_\_\_ with his teeth, and melt away" (Psalm 112:10)
- 10 Actress McDaniel
- 11 "My \_\_\_\_ shall be joyful in my God" (Isaiah 61:10)
- 12 "Out of thine hand the \_\_\_\_ of trembling" (Isaiah 51:22)
- 14 Word heard on movie sets
- 15 Preposition
- 16 "By the rivers of Babylon, there we \_\_\_\_" (Psalm 137:1)
- 17 Land of Job
- 20 "\_\_\_\_ unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" (Matthew 23:15)
- 22 Tenth part of one's income
- 23 \_\_\_\_ of the Chaldees
- 24 Town of the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chronicles 8:12)
- 26 "Go and \_\_\_\_ in the ears of Jerusalem" (Jeremiah 2:2)
- 27 Joshua, the son of \_\_\_\_
- 28 Gershwin
- 31 "The Lord make his \_\_\_\_ shine upon thee" (Numbers 6:25)



- 32 Word with grade or braid
- 33 Father of Ehud (Judges 3:15)
- 34 Scale unit (abbr.)
- 37 \_\_\_\_ Behind (LaHaye/Jenkins book)
- 38 "All we like \_\_\_\_ have gone astray" (Isaiah 53:6)
- 8 "He went out, and departed into a \_\_\_\_ place" (Mark 1:35)
- 13 "To see thy \_\_\_\_ and thy glory" (Psalm 63:2)
- 18 "David took the strong hold of \_\_\_\_: the same is the city of David" (2 Samuel 5:7)
- 19 Without end
- 21 Languages (arch.)
- 23 Father of Michaiah (2 Chronicles 13:2)
- 25 Greek letter
- 29 "If ye have \_\_\_\_ as a grain of mustard seed" (Matthew 17:20)
- 30 "I \_\_\_\_ where I sowed not" (Matthew 25:26)
- 35 Nephew of Abraham, the son of Nahor (Genesis 22:21)
- 36 Biblical pronoun

#### Down

- 1 Item worn by the high priest (Exodus 28)
- 2 "Because the Lord loved you, ... he would keep the \_\_\_\_" (Deuteronomy 7:8)
- 3 "The tongue is a fire, a world of \_\_\_\_" (James 3:6)
- 4 Common abbr.
- 5 "As a jewel of gold in a swine's \_\_\_\_" (Proverbs 11:22)
- 6 Balaam's beast
- 7 "They hated knowledge, and did not \_\_\_\_ the fear of the Lord" (Proverbs 1:29)

#### Last week's solution



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## Middle East violence slowing biblical archaeology

**"We could have employed paid workers, but where's the educational value in that?"**

Archaeologist Shimon Gibson

By Michele Chabin  
Religion News Service

Jerusalem (RNS)—Since the start of the Palestinian uprising four years ago, local archaeologists, many of them working on sites alluded to in the Bible, have had to scale back or even cancel their digs.

That's because the threat of continued violence has kept foreign professors and students from providing assistance at large digs.

Twin bus bombings that killed 16 people in the southern Israeli city of Beersheba on Aug. 31 did nothing to calm skittish scholars and nervous insurance companies. But archaeologists still are hopeful that the attraction of biblical history—especially the discovery of a cave said to be John the Baptist's—will lure academics and tourists alike.

"The intifada has definitely had an effect on Israeli archaeology, including our dig," said Shimon Gibson, the archaeologist who excavated the "John the Baptist cave."

Gibson announced in mid-August that he had found a cave that he believes was used by John the Baptist to anoint some of his followers. The news received international media attention.

Then came more bus bombings.

### U.S. pool of diggers dries up

"Prior to the intifada we had many students from the (United) States," Gibson said. "When the intifada began, the U.S. State Department advised Americans not to travel here, and ever since then we've had to rely on smaller and smaller groups. It's been a bit of a nightmare, actually."



**POOL OF SILOAM** Despite a shortage of volunteer workers, a June archeological dig in Israel uncovered what is believed to be the original Pool of Siloam, where Jesus sent a blind man to wash a mud mixture from his eyes. The steps shown here lead down into the pool. (RNS photo courtesy of HolyLandPhotos.org)

A major problem is that American institutions find it difficult to obtain insurance for anyone they send to the region, said Gideon Avni, director of the excavations service department at the Israel Antiquities Authority.

From the mid-1990s through 2000, Avni said, approximately 45 foreign academic institutions, two-thirds of them American, ran or co-ran digs in Israel. That number dwindled to five in 2003.

With a lull in the violence before the bus bombings, the situation improved. "We have 12 American excavations," Avni said. "We hope the trend will continue despite the recent attacks."

Avni stressed that even when the foreigners stopped coming,

Israeli teams tried to persevere. Even during the intifada years, he said, Israelis carried out 15 to 20 large-scale excavations and about 200 mostly short-term "rescue" digs on sites uncovered in the course of modern-day sewer repairs and road construction.

Gibson, a senior fellow at the American Albright Institute of Archaeological Research in Jerusalem, said he managed to continue his dig because the cave he excavated is so small, fitting only 20 workers at a time.

For larger digs, needing 100 or more people, "the lack of volunteers was disastrous," Gibson said.

To compensate for the loss of his younger university students, Gibson began to use the services of older vol-

unteers from the United States and Europe as well as Israeli volunteers of all ages.

"We had pensioners who always wanted to work a dig," Gibson said. "We could have employed paid workers, but where's the educational value in that?"

Excavations at the northern fortress of Megiddo, the great biblical battlefield, managed to continue "because we had Israeli students and some paid volunteers from the Parks Authority," said Yisrael Finkelstein, a Tel Aviv University archaeologist who has been excavating the site for years.

### Biblical finds

When the number of excavators dropped from 200 in 2000 to just 50 in 2002, "we considered stopping the dig," Finkelstein said. "It was that bad. But then we decided that if the Israeli people could go on with their lives during this time, we would, too."

Some of the excavations that managed to survive the intifada years have unearthed some remarkable finds.

In June of this year an Israeli team discovered what is believed to be the Biblical Pool of Siloam, the main water reservoir for Jerusalem dwellers two millennia ago. It is fed by the Gihon Spring, which has been under excavation for decades.

Haifa University archaeologist Ronny Reich explained that the pool was found by chance.

"A sewage pipe was being repaired," Reich said, "and as often happens in Jerusalem, something ancient was uncovered."

## 'It didn't take'

### Fall revival offers students a personal opportunity to accept Christian faith

One of the greatest challenges we face as a Christian school is helping our students spiritually. Because of the diverse spiritual backgrounds of our students, our efforts to meet their spiritual needs are unique. I do not know of another Christian boarding school in the nation that has the diversity we do when it comes to spiritual experiences and influences.

We have some students who have been brought up in solid Christian homes and understand the biblical stories and illustrations used in our chapel and church services. Others have no idea who David, Abraham, Moses or Paul were. When they hear about any of the major events in the Bible—the flood, the parting of the Red Sea, the creation story or even the Crucifixion of Jesus—some students are hearing those stories for the first time and often with little comprehension.

Add into that mix our students who come from any number of world religions—Muslim, Buddhist, Jewish and even the occasional agnostic or atheist—and you begin to get a good idea of how challenged we are to present the gospel of Jesus Christ. As I have written before, I wish I could tell story after story of the Muslim or Buddhist or Hindu student who gave his or her life to Christ, but I can't. However, in the past few years several of our students from countries where the preaching of the gospel might only be a small "voice in the wilderness" have made professions of faith. Students from China, Bosnia, Mongolia, Madagascar and Ethiopia are among those who have professed their belief in Jesus while here.

Last week we had our fall revival. Each evening, anywhere from one to three dozen students went to the altar for prayer, rededication or to accept Christ as their Lord and Master. For the evangelist who might not know much about the scope of our ministry, it's often an eye-opening experience. Even though our evangelist this time did have considerable knowledge of Oneida, he confessed to not knowing as much as he should have about the complexity of the spiritual needs of our students.



W.F. Underwood

On the last evening of our revival, one young man who had been here only two weeks went forward. When I interviewed him about possible enrollment more than a month ago, he was filled with frustration and bewilderment. From a Christian home, he had experienced considerable conflicts in his family. He told me he had "gone forward" several times but that it just "did not take." I asked him why he felt that way, and we discussed the importance

of allowing Christ not only to enter our lives but to be the center of everything we do.

Only time will tell if it "took" this time. It will be our opportunity and challenge to nurture this young man during his time here. Hopefully, we will be an influence that will help him let Christ have control of his life. My faculty and staff do not know about this young man's background. They will not give him any more or less attention than they do the rest of our students. What a challenge our faculty and staff face—presenting Christ as the hope of the world to so many young people with differing needs and backgrounds!

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

## Offering Bread of Life to homeless

### Former prisoner leads shelter in Crossville, Tenn.

On Labor Day my wife and I joined a small group of friends in singing "Happy Birthday" to Ralph Reagan, director of the Bread of Life Mission in Crossville, Tenn. We should have sung "Amazing Grace" to celebrate the life transformation of this former prisoner.

Motioning to the area behind the mission, Ralph said, "I grew up in the projects over there and came to this church for Sunday school. God is so good to use me and my wife, Connie." The ministry also includes an emergency shelter for abused women, a medical clinic staffed by 12 volunteer physicians, counseling services, food and clothing distribution.

After his Clear Creek graduation in 2000, Ralph returned to Crossville with a vision and commitment to minister among the street people. "This is one of the fastest growing communities in Tennessee," he said. "That always brings in people looking for work, or running from problems."

Four years ago, Ralph personally borrowed \$96,000 to purchase the abandoned church. Volunteers helped refurbish the facility. Since then, the mission has acquired ad-

joining homes and property across the street. Construction on a new 100-bed shelter begins this month, made possible by a \$1.4 million gift. The application for construction brought a neighbor to the mayor's office. "We don't want a homeless shelter in our neighborhood," she stated. The mayor responded, "Ma'am, it's been there for two years. Have you had any complaints?" She hadn't.

Worship services have registered more than 600 professions of faith. "At a board meeting some questions were raised about the high water bill," Ralph said. "I told them it was probably the frequent baptisms; they went on to other business."

"We needed a piano and asked the Lord to send it," Ralph recalled. "When I went to the office, a church called to say they had a piano to donate. The Lord provides what we need."

In July, First Baptist Church of Crossville ordained Ralph to the ministry, a public affirmation of a pilgrimage started after he received a Gideon Bible in a Tennessee prison.

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

### CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

## Pat Robertson book prescribes return to Ten Commandments

By Charles Honey  
Religion News Service

Virginia Beach, Va. (RNS)—When Pat Robertson sees thousands of gay couples trooping into San Francisco's City Hall to receive marriage licenses, he sees a sin for which God rained sulfur on the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

But the Christian broadcaster said he sees something else that he finds alarming—a people forsaking the biblical principles on which he says America was built, and a court system aiding and abetting the trend.

"The foundation of this great land was the Bible, and the heart of the moral standards of our nation was the Sermon on the Mount and the Ten Commandments," Robertson said in a phone interview from his Virginia Beach, Va., office. "The assault on the Ten Commandments is a symptom of the judicial arrogance which is trying to strip our religious values from the public arena."

The courts and "liberal elites" have long been chipping away at America's Christian cornerstones, Robertson argues in a new book. Only by restoring religion and the Commandments to schools, courthouses and other public places can America's moral decline be reversed, he asserts.

"It is time for America to return to its spiritual foundation," Robertson writes in "The Ten Offenses," released earlier this year. "If we are to check the rapid erosion of our society, we who believe in the God of the Bible must insist that the Ten Commandments be honored in the public square."

But with a federal judge last year ordering Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore to remove a Commandments monument from his courthouse, and the spate of gay marriages, Robertson fears for America's future.

"I believe that if we have conduct that flies in the face of a holy God, it might be dangerous for the well-being of this nation down the road," said Robertson, host of "The 700 Club" television program and founder of the Christian Coalition. "We can hardly say 'God bless America' when we break every law He's ever given us."

### Some disagree

America might be in some trouble morally, other religious observers agree. But they don't agree the problem will be solved by a return to America's religious roots—or even that its roots are specifically religious.

"What Robertson is prescribing, that we go back to some generic Judeo-Christian code, is unfair to a lot of people—people who don't have a belief or a monotheistic belief to begin with," said James Bratt, a professor of American history at Calvin College. "It would (also) be unfair to monotheists like Jews and Muslims."

Still, Robertson's warnings of a moral decline resonate with millions of conservative Christians.

Gay marriage is just the most recent fray in what Robertson sees as an ongoing culture war. In "The Ten Offenses," he says most Americans support school prayer, including "one nation under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance and public display of the Ten Commandments.

He says all these are under siege by the courts, the media, academics and the American Civil Liberties Union, which want "a pliable judicial oligarchy" of "secular humanism." If citizens don't turn the tide, he warns, America is in for "a virtual earthquake of violence, immorality and untold suffering."

Robertson has drawn scorn in the past for such righteous hyperbole.

Earlier this year, he said God had told him 2004 would be prosperous for America and that President Bush would be re-elected in a "blowout."

"I've worked for the Lord for the last 50 years," said Robertson, 73. "It would be rather strange if He didn't say something to me sometimes along the way."

### Runaway court

In "The Ten Offenses," he writes that the Supreme Court is a runaway body that systematically has stripped religion from American culture. The court also has outstripped its constitutional powers, Robertson contends.

"The U.S. Supreme Court has raised its fist and shaken it in the face of Almighty God," he writes.

He cites the court's 1962 and 1963 rulings outlawing compulsory public-school prayer and Bible reading. He attributes those decisions to an alarming increase in teen pregnancy, drug abuse and divorce.

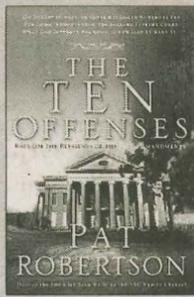
Despite his warnings, Robertson does not see all America going to hell in a handbasket. He notes signs of religious revival in packed megachurches and names several born-again congressional leaders, as well as President Bush. But he also sees things in the media that "would have been unthinkable 30 or 40 years ago."

"I think America is on more or less a knife's edge. It's a question of which way we're going to go."

He hopes it goes back to what he believes is a Christian nation, tolerant of other faiths but unswerving in its biblical morals. He hasn't given up on his prayer campaign, which he says is supported by 120,000 Christians, that three liberal Supreme Court justices retire in the near future.

Is the prayer campaign working?

"Not yet," Robertson answered jovially. "But the Lord works slowly and does mysterious things. It's not over yet."



**Seeing Is Believing: Experience Jesus through Imaginative Prayer.** Gregory Boyd. Baker Book House, 2004. 220 pages. \$12.99. ♦♦♦♦ (out of five)

"A person can believe Christianity is true, but it will affect his or her life only to the extent that it's also experienced as real. When all we have to go on is our belief that it's true, devoid of any real experience, our faith has little power to make us significantly different from non-Christians."

With those words, Gregory Boyd challenges much of contemporary Christianity to reexamine our approach to the Christian life.

Rather than encouraging us to work harder, learn more and buttress our will to believe in the face of doubt and moral challenges to faith, Boyd contends we must do less. We should learn to grow by resting in Jesus. As we rest in Jesus, we begin to see Jesus, God, ourselves and others in a different light. Out of the new vision, we can live a new life. Rather than trying to create a new reality out of our beliefs and efforts, we learn to live in and out of a reality that we see through our imagination.

Boyd invites us into a renewed reality of prayer that is based in the ancient cataphatic tradition. Based on the incarnation of God in the person of Jesus, this tradition "requires that we think of God and relate to God through mental images." These mental images invite us into a new vision that transforms our living.

Boyd's treatment of passionate, experiential prayer is thorough and challenging. Thorough, because he traces the rationale for this way of praying from the Scriptures through the tradition of the church. Challenging, because this experience of God challenges much of the juridical understanding of salvation that the Reformers promoted. *Jim Holladay*

**The Lost Message of Jesus.** Steve Chalke and Alan Mann. Zondervan, 2004. 197 pages \$14.99. ♦♦♦♦

Looking at the title and cover (a picture of a note stuck in an old bottle), one might suppose authors Steve Chalke and Alan Mann are claiming a new discovery of an old message, lost for millennium.

Instead, the two authors are promoting the concept of revisiting our familiar and comfortable ideas about Jesus' message to see if we have the correct understandings of His teachings.

As they write: "The reality is that so many Christians, young and old, don't actually know enough about Jesus and His message and so can only guess what He would do."

Chalke and Mann want to provoke thoughtful debate, pose fresh questions and shed new light on the message of Jesus.

Many of their statements will stir hearts and emotions about Jesus and His ministry. One example is their treatment of Jesus being touched while in the crowd by the woman with the issuance of blood. The authors point out that the Pharisees would have seen Jesus afterward as

being unclean. But Christ's power does just the opposite, making the unclean clean. And that observation has ramifications for all mankind.

This book can help Christians at any maturity level better understand their faith in Christ.

Chalke and Mann take the scriptural history of Jesus and shed new light on familiar passages. They take the story and look at it from a first-century view as opposed to the 21st-century lens that so many Christians are familiar with.

The authors not only emphasize the first century views of Scripture, but they also relate scriptural views to the world of today with modern illustrations to help readers better understand what has been written.

If you enjoy looking at the Christian faith from a fresh perspective, this book has the outside-the-box views you will enjoy. Also helpful are the suggested additional reads for continuing one's journey of living the message of Jesus. *Steve Coleman*

**The Essence of the Church: A Community Created by the Spirit.** Craig Van Gelder. Baker Books, 2000. 207 pages. \$19.99. ♦♦♦♦

Craig Van Gelder, professor of congregational mission at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minn., writes out of the missional church approach to understanding the church's basic nature and work.

Essentially, that approach distinguishes between missions as a program or aspect of the church's work, to understanding the church as the heart of God's missionary work in the world. As a result, Van Gelder encourages us to take a fresh look at the church as God's missionary community, rather than a human community organizing to do God's work.

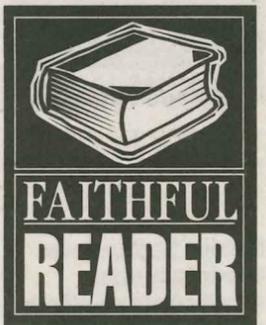
In the North American context, Van Gelder argues, a functional approach to understanding the church has held sway. This approach leads the church to reshape itself as a response to "a new or changed ministry context."

The problem with this approach is that it defines the church "primarily in terms of what churches do," which "leaves unaddressed some basic questions about the nature of the church."

Perhaps a more serious consequence of this functional approach, he contends, is that it tends to diminish the authentic spiritual dimension of the church.

Van Gelder also takes issue with the current understanding of missions and evangelism that began with William Carey and the modern mission movement in 1792. Van Gelder is concerned that we have come to see missions and evangelism as something supported by many, but done by few.

Van Gelder builds this book around three interrelated tenets: "The church is. The church does what it is. The church organizes what it does." This book is not so much a total rethinking of the church as a call to reexamine the biblical understandings. *Jim Holladay*



By Jim Holladay, pastor of Lyndon Baptist Church in Louisville; and Steve Coleman, pastor of education and youth at New Work Fellowship in Hopkinsville. They welcome feedback or suggestions for book reviews. Contact them via e-mail at: lyndonpastor@aol.com; risen4me@hotmail.com



## PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following ministries throughout Kentucky:

**Mission Service Corps**  
**Missionary Brian Crawford of Russellville.** Crawford serves as a missionary chaplain to the staff and guards at the Green River Correctional Institute in Central City. Crawford's faithfulness to the spiritual needs of the staff is evident by his involvement and investment in their lives. He does servant evangelism through such efforts as free "thank you" meals for the more than 200 staff members. Pray that God will continue to provide for Crawford's needs as he serves each day. Pray also that the staff will be receptive to the gospel and the love of Christ that is shared with them in practical ways.

**Prayer ministry of Woodland Baptist Church in Middletown.** Angela Blevins is leading the church's prayer ministry and is seeking to challenge the church in personal and corporate prayer. She and pastor Mike Sharpe are preparing to kick off this ministry with a month-long emphasis on prayer through preaching, teaching and special events. They want to challenge each member to deepen and lengthen their daily prayer time. Pray for them as they develop a strategy for their prayer ministry. Pray also that members will see the need for prayer as the power for everything their church does.

If you would like Kentucky Baptists to join in praying for a ministry of your church or association, please send the information to Eric Allen at [Eric.Allen@kybaptist.org](mailto:Eric.Allen@kybaptist.org) or call toll-free (888) 263-5080.

## MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **ALEXANDRIA**—Licking Valley Church will celebrate its 150th anniversary Oct. 3 with morning worship, a fellowship lunch at 12:30 p.m. and an anniversary service at 1:30 p.m.

■ **BARDWELL**—Antioch Church recently celebrated its 100th anniversary with former pastor **Jimmy Stairs** as guest speaker.

■ **BARLOW**—First Church will hold revival services Sept. 25-29 with **Aubert Rose** as evangelist. **Tom Camp** is pastor.

■ **BREEDING**—**Jessie Hagan** recently resigned as pastor of Harrods Fork Church.

■ **COVINGTON**—Latonia Church called **Charles Wilson** as interim minister to music.

■ **EAST BERNSTADT**—First Church will hold revival services Sept. 19-22, 7 p.m., with **Bob Hamblin** as evangelist.

■ **EDDYVILLE**—First Church called **T.J. Hawkins** as minister of music effective Aug. 23.

■ **ERLANGER**—Erlanger Church called **Mike Osborne** as pastor of worship and evangelism effective Sept. 19. **Dan Francis** is pastor.

■ **FORT MITCHELL**—Fort Mitchell Church called **Sarah Matthews** as interim director of youth and church activities.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Grace Church recently honored **Donna Foley** for 30 years of service as church secretary.

**Lloyd Mahanes**, a retired Kentucky Baptist pastor, died July 14 at age 86. Mahanes served 33 years as pastor of Boone's Creek Church. A member of Means Church, he also was pastor of Magnolia Church as well as churches in Michigan and Florida. He is survived by his wife, Iris, a daughter and two sons.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—**Getsemane** Church's adult choir will present its

fall concert Sept. 26.

■ **MADISONVILLE**—Grapevine Church called **Jerry Gifford** as pastor effective Sept. 19.

Second Church will celebrate homecoming Oct. 17.

■ **MOUNT VERNON**—Scaffold Cane Church will celebrate homecoming Sept. 19. **Bobby Turner** is pastor.

■ **NORTONVILLE**—Nortonville Church will celebrate its 100th anniversary Sept. 18, 4 p.m.

■ **PAINT LICK**—Mount Tabor Church will host "Homecoming Weekend" Sept. 18-19 to celebrate its 120th anniversary. Activities include a cookout and games Sept. 18, 4 p.m., and morning worship, potluck luncheon and an afternoon of singing and skits Sept. 19. **Tim Robbins** is pastor.

■ **PRINCETON**—**Jerry Holeman** recently resigned as pastor of Beulah Hill Church.

Donaldson Church recently ordained **Michael Cannon** and **Jason Felker** as deacons. **Matthew Ellis** is pastor.

■ **RUSSELL SPRINGS**—Indian Hill Church will hold homecoming Oct. 3 and will begin revival services Oct. 4.

■ **SUMMERSVILLE**—**Donald Finn** recently resigned as pastor of Brush Creek Church.

■ **WILLIAMSTOWN**—Williamstown Church recently honored Pastor Emeritus **R.T. Daugherty** on his 90th birthday Sept. 12. **Steve Rice** is pastor.

### What's going on?

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

**FOR SALE:** 35 navy choir robes with red/green stoles: \$350. Nineteen orange-red choir robes with yellow/ivory stoles: \$190. Contact **Sturgis FBC** (270) 333-2691. E-mail: [kbeaver724@yahoo.com](mailto:kbeaver724@yahoo.com).

**FOR SALE:** Bestselling books by Christian author, Glenn Mollette. *Silent Struggler: A Caregiver's Personal Story*; *Spiritual Chocolate: Inspirational Delights for the Heart*. All books available at [Barnesandnoble.com](http://Barnesandnoble.com).

**NEEDED:** 1975 edition of Baptist Hymnal. **Jim Wilcox**, (270) 525-3407. South Carrollton Missionary Baptist Church, PO Box 106, South Carrollton, KY 42374.

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister of music/youth or two part-time positions. Send resumé to: **Dr. Tom Stokes**, First Baptist Church, 302 Magnolia, Tompkinsville, KY 42167; or call (270) 487-6538.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of youth and recreation. Seeking a spiritually mature, dynamic and creative individual. Experience and formal training are preferred. Resumes accepted through Oct. 15. Please send resumé to: **Fern Creek Baptist Church**, PO Box 91146, Louisville, KY 40291, Attn: Personnel Committee.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor. Send resumé and references to: **Liberty Baptist Church**, c/o Joy Fletcher, PO Box 208, Russell Springs, KY 42642. (270) 866-5525.

**SEEKING:** Full-time youth/recreation minister for First Baptist Church, Fulton, Ky. Seminary degree preferred. Send resumé to: Personnel Committee, **Fulton First Baptist Church**, PO Box 1140, Fulton, KY 42041.

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister of music/worship leader for a Southern Baptist congregation that engages in a blended style of worship. Seminary degree preferred and at least five years of local church experience required. Submit resumé to: Minister of Music Search Committee, **Second Baptist Church**, 720 West Seventh St., Hopkinsville, KY 42240. Resumes will be received until Oct. 15, 2004.

**SEEKING:** Part-time youth minister (grades 6-12) for **Forks of Elkhorn Baptist Church** (approx. attendance: 550). Resumes accepted by mail or e-mail by Sept. 30 deadline. Mailing address: Youth Minister Search Committee, **Forks of Elkhorn Baptist Church**, 495 Duckers Road, Midway, KY 40347. Or e-mail to: [Forks.Baptist@verison.net](mailto:Forks.Baptist@verison.net).



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### September

- 17-18 Collegiate Creative Ministries Workshop, Calvary Baptist Church, Lexington.
- 18 Children in Action Missions Day Camp, Cedar Crest.
- 18 Keyboard Clinic-East, First Baptist Church, Richmond.
- 18 Keyboard Clinic-West, Beaver Dam Baptist Church, Beaver Dam.
- 18 Ministers' Wives Retreat, Northside Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.
- 20-21 State Ministers' Golf Tournament, Cherry Blossom Golf Course, Georgetown.
- 23-24 Men's Chorale Retreat, Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.
- 23-23 Wind Orchestra Retreat, Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.
- 24-25 Women's Chorale Retreat, Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.
- 24-25 Women on Mission Fall Retreat, Jonathan Creek.

### October

- 1-2 Celebrate the Mission, Executive Inn West, Louisville.
- 1-3 Focus-2004, Hillvue Heights Baptist Church, Bowling Green.
- 8-11 Soak A City Youth Evangelism Conference, Franklin.
- 8-9 Women on Mission Fall Retreat, Cedarmore.
- 15-16 Women on Mission Fall Retreat, Cedarmore.
- 16 Creative Ministries Workshop 101, Lexington Avenue Baptist Church, Danville.
- 18 Senior Adult Choir Festival-West, First Baptist Church, Madisonville.
- 22-23 Youth on Mission Night, TBA.
- 25 Senior Adult Choir Festival-East, Porter Memorial, Lexington.
- 28-29 Quarterly Prayer Meeting for Spiritual Awakening, First Baptist Church, Murray.
- 30 Pass, Punt, Kick, Campbellsville University.

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

## Events boost marriage enrichment

Richmond—"Celebrate Oneness," a pair of one-day marriage enrichment events, will be held Sept. 25 at First Baptist Church of Richmond and Oct. 23 at Bellevue Baptist Church in Owensboro.

The workshops, sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention leadership development team, are designed to provide couples with biblical encouragement and insights for nurturing healthy marriages.

Wayne Spivey, pastor of Cynthia Baptist Church, and his wife, Cindi, will be the keynote speakers at the Richmond event. Skip

Alexander, pastor of Campbellsville Baptist Church, and his wife, Leigh Anne, will be the featured speakers in Owensboro.

Each workshop will include registration at 8:30 a.m., a worship celebration at 9 a.m., workshops and lunch. The events will conclude with a 2:30 p.m. worship time that will include an opportunity for couples to renew their marriage vows.

Registration is \$20 per couple and free childcare is available. For more information, visit [www.kybaptist.org/marriagecelebration](http://www.kybaptist.org/marriagecelebration) or call (502) 254-4733 or toll-free (888) 254-5702.

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**SEEKING:** Part-time children's minister for Highland Park First Baptist. Call (502) 231-3917.

**SEEKING:** The Lynn Association of Baptist Churches is now accepting resumé for the position of director of missions. Please submit resumé or inquiries to **Rev. Kelvin Edwards**, 2368 Aetna Grove Church Road, Summersville, KY 42782. (270) 324-2920.

**SEEKING:** Full-time youth/associate pastor in dynamic, growing Southern Baptist church. Must be willing to become a full-time member of the community. Bachelor's degree and youth experience required; salary and benefit package commensurate with education and experience. Send resumé to: **Cynthiana Baptist Church**, PO Box 355, Cynthiana, KY 41031, Attn: **Maribeth Thomas**; or e-mail: [waynespivey@bellsouth.net](mailto:waynespivey@bellsouth.net).

**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 resumé to **MBC Youth Council**, 175 Mexico Road, Marion, KY 42064, Attn: **Brent Highfil**, or call (270) 965-2149. [turnerchandler@hotmail.com](mailto:turnerchandler@hotmail.com).

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of music. Send resumé to: **First Missionary Baptist Church**, PO Box 368, Benton, KY 42025, Attn: **Donnie Harris**.

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister to students for Southern Baptist church. Experience and/or seminary degree a plus. Send to **MSSC**, 814 Dotson Memorial Baptist Church, Maryville, TN 37801. Target date for receiving resumé is Sept. 30, 2004.

**SEEKING:** Minister of music to bring liveliness, passion and blended/convergent elements to worship in a traditional Northern Kentucky church. Part-time position planning morning worship, leading 35- to 40-voice choir, overseeing accompanists, handbells and children's music. Staff of five ministers includes two women (CBF, SBC). E-mail [steve@latoniabaptist.org](mailto:steve@latoniabaptist.org), or mail to PO Box 15103, Covington, KY 41015; [www.latoniabaptist.org](http://www.latoniabaptist.org).

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

## Baptist swims English Channel to promote Haitian ministry

Ridgefield, Conn. (ABP)—George Brunstad gives new meaning to the term “putting feet to your faith.” In fact, he also put his arms and his legs into it.

To raise awareness for his church's ministry in Haiti, Brunstad swam the English Channel.

While remarkable in itself, Brunstad's feat is all the more extraordinary because the Wilton, Conn., resident is 70 years old. His Aug. 28-29 swim set a new record, not for speed—it took him 15 hours, 59 minutes—but because he is the oldest person ever to tackle the channel. He broke the record of Bertram Clifford Batt of Australia, who was 67 years old when he made the journey in 1987.

Brunstad didn't swim the channel just to set a record, though. He wants people to know about a ministry his church sponsors in Hinche, Haiti.

“His inspiration for the swim came when he went with our church last November on a mission trip to Haiti,” said Robert Guffey, Brunstad's pastor at Wilton Baptist Church. “George swam to raise awareness of and money for the Center of Hope orphanage and school project that WBC sponsors in Haiti.”

Brunstad, a retired American Airlines pilot, has competed in several open-water swims. But he said the channel swim was the most grueling feat he has undertaken.

“My preparation swimming in Long Island Sound and especially off the coast of Maine helped me,” Brunstad told the News-Times of Danbury, Conn. “But I had to swim as hard as I could for as long as I could” to make it across the channel.

Covered with a combination of lanolin and petroleum jelly to keep warm, Brunstad got into the water on the morning of Aug. 28.

Brunstad was allowed an escort swimmer for a few minutes every six hours. The escort helped steer him as currents pushed him away from the course. Even with that help, Brunstad swam a total of 32 miles—seven more than a direct route across the channel from England to France.

“Near the end, I had to swim four hours to make two hours' time because of the tide coming toward me,” he recalled.

His hard work and perseverance paid off. At 2:12 a.m. on Aug. 29, Brunstad completed his swim. And despite the early morning hour, there were people on the beach in France cheering his arrival.

Brunstad credited the “hand of the Lord” for giving him good swim conditions.

## ‘Church Without Walls’

Neighbors make it tough for church to live up to its name

By George Jaksa  
Religion News Service

Flint, Mich. (RNS)—When Church Without Walls opened about two years ago, it chose its name to describe its ministry.

But concentrating its ministry outside the church building is sometimes easier said than done, church leaders have found.

The nondenominational Christian church with about 125 members held an old-time tent revival in late July and it wasn't long before a Flint police cruiser rolled in next to the tent outside the church.

The problem? Noise complaints from people in the neighborhood. An officer asked church leaders to turn down their loudspeakers, saying she could hear the sound two blocks away.

For that matter, so could people outside Wild Things, a topless bar at the other end of the block whose parking lot abuts the church's.

“I enjoyed the music,” a bar employee said. John Pinkston, 33, of Flint has worked at Wild Things since the club opened more than a year ago.

“That's why I was outside listening,” he said. “It was a different kind of music to what we have here. ... It was relaxing.”

The complaints irk Warren, who addressed about 60 revival participants who spilled out of the white tent set up between the church and the strip club during the first night of the August revival.

“If they are going to give us a citation for tonight, they might as well give us three because we will be here,” he declared. “If we can hear them (neighborhood residents) listen to football games, they can listen to us praising the Lord and



**OUTSIDE EXPRESSION** Kevin Thompson, music minister at Church Without Walls in Flint, Mich., raises his arms in worship at a recent tent revival at the church. (RNS photo by Megan Spelman)

saving souls.”

No citations were issued, although a police cruiser reappeared and parked on the street for about 20 minutes before leaving.

“We toned it down a little bit after (that),” Warren said. Church administrator Kenyetta Dotson, 33, said only about 10 percent of church worshippers come from the neighborhood, but that hasn't stopped members from reaching out to the community with Thanksgiving and Christmas gifts and occasional dinners to feed needy people in the poor neighborhood and listen to their concerns.

A recent dinner attracted 60 area residents.

### Existing to serve the neighborhood

Warren, 29 and the father of four children, said drugs and crime stop when adults stand up and become a voice in their neighborhood. “When we start doing something, we can change this area,” he said.

“There is always going to be someone to come up against you, but you've got to be ready to go through that.”

## After Sept. 11, pacifist school seen as unpatriotic

By Rich Preheim  
Religion News Service

Kidron, Ohio—Central Christian School does not display the stars and stripes above other flags or play the national anthem before sporting events. The Mennonite school also does not have as many students or employees as it did two years ago.

The latter is connected to the former, said Central Christian School Superintendent Fred Miller. In the charged political and social climate following Sept. 11, 2001, his school is seen as unpatriotic, even though it's merely trying to adhere to its pacifist religious beliefs.

The school actually recorded an all-time high enrollment of 410 students during the 2002-03 school year, the year after the terrorism attacks. Central's enrollment fell though to 357 the following year, then this fall dropped even further, as 333 students enrolled in preschool through grade 12. Miller gave several reasons for the drop, such as the cost of attending a private school.

But also contributing to the decrease, he said, has been Central's adherence to its faith-based peace

position.

Miller estimated that about one-fourth of the students who withdrew from Central did so because of the absence of the Star-Spangled Banner. And there is no way to determine how many potential students chose not to attend.

Central's peace stand had not generated much criticism before the terrorist attacks.

“It's fine until you get into a patriotic frenzy,” Miller said. “Where there isn't a war or there isn't an issue, it doesn't matter if you're a pacifist.”

### ‘We serve a world community’

The school is affiliated with Mennonite Church USA, a Christian denomination that adheres to pacifist beliefs. Central is not un-American, Miller said, but following biblical teachings to not kill, to love enemies and to pursue justice means not lifting the United States above others.

In the Central gym hangs the U.S. flag, as well as about 30 other flags representing the home countries of students who have attended the school since it began in 1961.

Warren welcomed neighbors to give the church a try. “I am here so you guys will know we are not the average church, because we care about the community.”

Warren said three people committed their lives to Christ during the recent revival.

“We want to get involved in people's lives,” Dotson said. “It's really just a matter of igniting the flame, motivating people to want to do things for their neighbors and the Lord.”

As for the strip club, Warren said he wishes it weren't in the neighborhood. Churches can object to strip clubs and taverns within 500 feet of their property if the church was there first. But state records show the license for Wild Things was released from escrow three months before Church Without Walls opened.

Apparently, the close quarters are not a problem for Wild Things. “We haven't had any problems with them lately,” said Pinkston, who works in maintenance and as a DJ at the club, among other things. “And we haven't filed any complaints against them.”

“It was a different kind of music to what we have here. ... It was relaxing.”

John Pinkston, an employee at the Wild Things bar near the church

“There are consequences to faith, and sometimes you don't know what they all are.”

Fred Miller, superintendent of Central Christian School

“We acknowledge that we serve a world community,” Miller said.

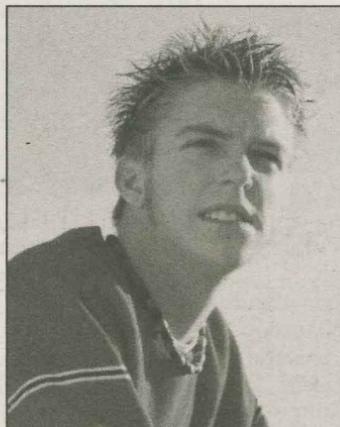
Such lofty inspiration has not spared the school. As a result of the decreasing enrollment, Central this year had to trim its budget by about \$350,000, including cutting the equivalent of eight full-time administration, faculty and staff positions.

There have been other repercussions, as well. The Veterans of Foreign Wars blitzed the school with critical letters. A local newspaper noted that school supporters do not stand for the national anthem when Central plays away games.

“That's part of being faithful,” Miller said. “It's a matter of following the gospel, of following Jesus as you understand that call. ... There are consequences to faith, and sometimes you don't know what they all are.”

He said the backlash has not been against other ways Central enacts its peace beliefs, such as Bible courses, school newsletter articles or its “restorative” approach to student discipline, which emphasizes restoring the relationship between the offender and the victim.

"I'm glad God sent me to you. I'm a different person, and hopefully I can lead the rest of my family to God."



-- Joe, a teen-ager who came to Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children with bruises on his face, arms and hips and scratches and cuts down his back

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Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children.  
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