



WESTERN RECORDER

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WMU Kentucky Notes

See insert

FOR THE RECORD

- Baptists**
Study finds only 1 in 10 SBC churches are healthy. *Page 2.*
- Stanton**
Pastor sees impact of cross-state partnership. *Page 3.*
- Financial Forum**
Checklist offers what to do, avoid between ages 35-60. *Page 4.*
- Editorial**
Barna study offers "roadmap" for ministry. *Page 5.*
- Graham in L.A.**
Evangelist returns to site of 1949 event that brought acclaim. *Page 9.*

Survey shows trans-Atlantic religious divide

London (RNS)—Great Britain and the United States might be allies, but they appear to be more than a sea apart when it comes to religion and values.

Sharp differences in religious practice and views on hot-button social issues were revealed in a recent survey commissioned and published by The Times newspaper of London.

The survey sampled 1,504 British adults and was compared with results of a national exit poll conducted Nov. 2, Election Day, in the United States on behalf of major media outlets. The surveys showed:

■ While 58 percent of Bush and 41 percent of Kerry voters said they went to church weekly, only 10 percent of British voters did.

■ Whereas 69 percent of Americans voting for Bush thought there should be no legal recognition of same-sex couples, this was an attitude shared by only 29 percent of British voters, roughly the same proportion as those voting for Kerry (30 percent).

How do citizens of the two countries derive their values? The survey didn't address that question. But a separate Times survey found the British find their local pub, not their local church, a far more important focus of the community.

Asked which one place within a community contributed most to social interaction and developed interpersonal skills, 58 percent nominated the local pub, making it the top answer, while 14 percent said the church, the third most popular answer.

Mission field: India



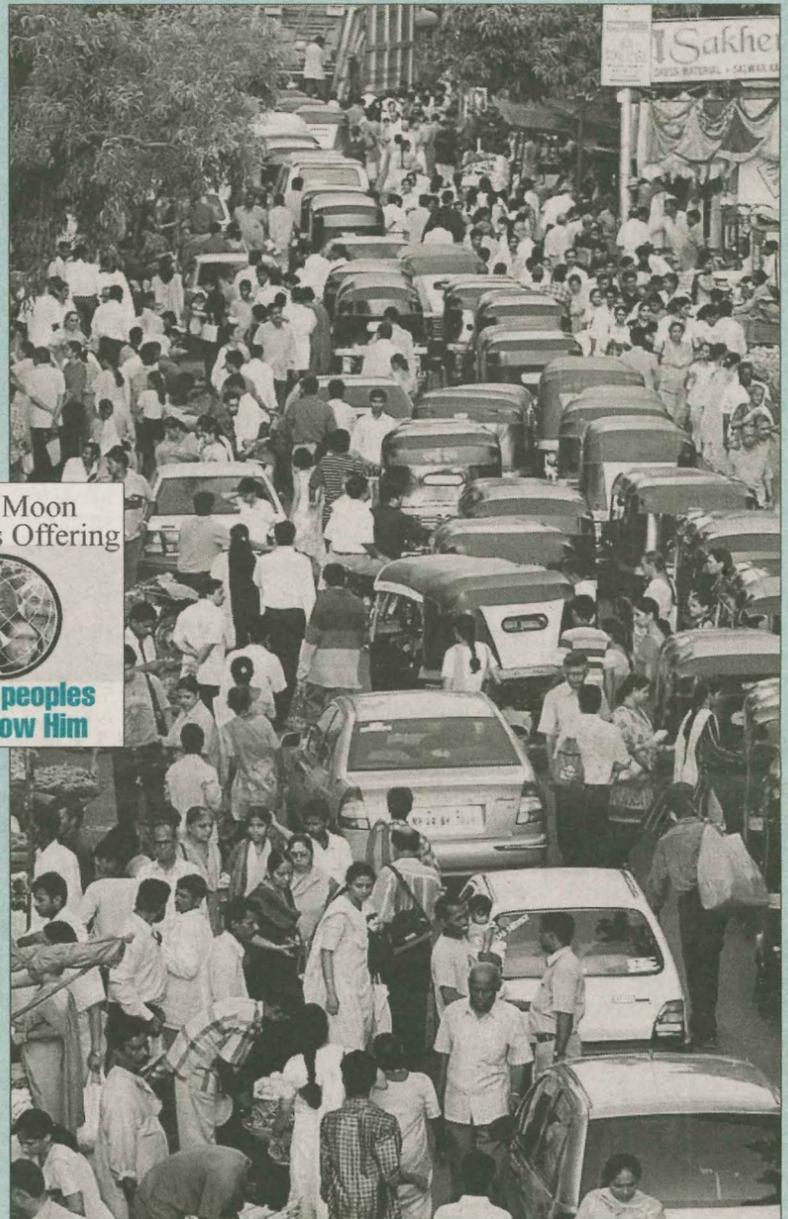
Lottie Moon Christmas Offering



That all peoples may know Him

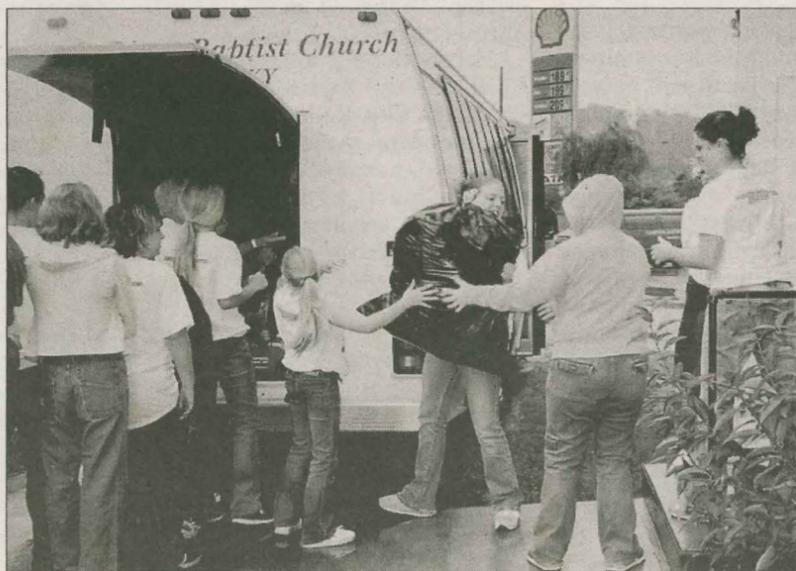
MISSIONS EDUCATION

This week marks the Week of Prayer for International Missions, a seasonal emphasis for most Kentucky Baptist churches that includes the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering to support Southern Baptist missionaries throughout the world. This week's Western Recorder features a look at one of the largest mission fields in the world: India, which has a population of 1.07 billion residents. **Right:** Throngs pass through the open markets, shops and restaurants near the rail stations of Mumbai (formerly Bombay). **Above:** India boasts nearly 20 million evangelicals, such as this member of Andheri Baptist Church. Yet the country's residents are 80 percent Hindu. (IMB photos by Matt Jones) **Story on page 6.**



E. Kentucky partnership project survives youth minister's death

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, December 1



WINTER DONATIONS Youth from Little River Baptist Church in Herndon unload coats and toys at Stanton Baptist Church in Eastern Kentucky. The youth ministry began collecting items for needy children and families under the direction of their youth minister, Mark Mason, who died in September. The students said the fall trip to Eastern Kentucky was a way to honor his memory and finish some of the work he began. (Photo courtesy of Little River Baptist Church)

By Dannah Prather
Partnerships Editor

Herndon—The Red River Partnership will always have special meaning for the youth of Little River Baptist Church in Christian County Baptist Association.

The partnership, which links churches in Eastern and Western Kentucky, has united Christians to strengthen churches, especially in Eastern Kentucky's Red River Baptist Association, which serves some of the least-churched counties in the nation.

Through the partnership, the people of Eastern Kentucky had a profound impact on Little River's former youth minister, Mark Mason, who was killed earlier this year in a tractor accident.

His concern for the children and families living in Red River led Mason to involve his youth in the partnership.

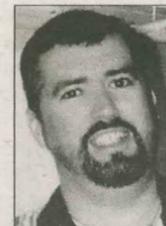
"He just fell in love with Eastern Kentucky," said Mason's widow, Teresa.

The bivocational youth minister's involvement with Red River began in 2003 at an Experiencing God weekend at Campton Baptist Church in Wolfe County led by leadership of the Christian County congregation of Pembroke Baptist Church.

After the trip, Mason urged members of his church to collect toys for needy children in Red River. When he delivered the donations prior to Christmas 2003, he saw additional needs. "He saw homes that were using blue tarps for walls," Mrs. Mason said. "That's when he thought of a coat drive."

In March 2004 Mason brought some of his youth to Red River to volunteer during a week of partnership revival services.

□ See Eastern Kentucky ... Page 3



Mark Mason

BAPTIST
DIGEST

Malcolm Yarnell announced Nov. 23 that he will not become president of Louisiana College in January but instead will return to his position at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. The school's trustee board has been divided between the conservative majority and a moderate minority, and is under investigation by its accrediting agency, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. In an e-mail to the school, Yarnell said he and the board of trustees had failed to reach a contract agreement. "After accepting the presidency at Louisiana College, governance issues which would significantly impact my ability to lead the school were fully disclosed during the subsequent negotiations over the contract which the board of trustees desired," Yarnell wrote. He said he and trustee leaders "have been unable to arrive at a 'meeting of the minds.'"

Molly Marshall has been elected president of Central Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Kan., effective Jan. 1, becoming the first female president of an accredited Baptist seminary. Marshall, 54, succeeds Thomas Clifton, who retired at the end of 2003 after 10 years as president. For the past nine years, Marshall has been professor of theology and spiritual formation at Central and currently serves as acting academic dean. A 20-year veteran of theological education, Marshall was associate professor of theology and associate dean at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville before going to Central Seminary. Central is affiliated with the American Baptist Churches U.S.A. and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

Study: Only 1 in 10 SBC churches healthy

New Orleans (BP)—A recent study has confirmed that approximately 30 percent of Southern Baptist congregations are growing—the same percentage reported 20 years ago.

The new study, however, found that only about one-third of churches experiencing numerical growth also would be considered healthy, growing churches.

The study, led by Bill Day, associate director of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary's Leavell Center for Evangelism and Church Health, also found that the number of declining churches has expanded from 17.6 percent in 1983 to 23.9 percent today.

Day ranked congregations in the Southern Baptist Convention according to frequently used definitions for growing, declining and plateaued churches. Growing churches are those whose total membership increased at least 10 percent over five years, while declining churches are those whose total membership decreased at least 10 percent over five years. A plateaued church is one that ranks in between the other two categories.

More churches declining

From 1978 to 1983, LifeWay Christian Resources found that 30.5 percent of churches were growing, 51.9 percent were plateaued and 17.6 were in decline.

In the years studied by the Leavell Center, 1998–2003, 30.3 percent of churches were growing. The number of declining Southern Baptist churches has increased by 6 percent

to 23.9 percent. Plateaued churches now comprise 45.8 percent of all Southern Baptist churches.

NOBTS President Chuck Kelley said the Leavell Center's study found a problem with the typical definition of a growing church. Just because a church records growth in total membership does not necessarily mean that church is healthy, he noted.

"Here's the reality: 1,409 churches in the growing category reported no baptisms in 2003," Kelley said.

Those churches account for 11 percent of all "growing" churches. After removing those churches from the growing category, there are still "growing" churches that have a member to baptism ratio of more than 1,100 to one. Kelley's interpretation of this statistic: "That's shuffling Baptists from one church to another church."

Day, who also is associate professor of evangelism and church health at NOBTS, said he was shocked "to learn that a definition of a growing church that our denomination has been using for over 20 years had such serious flaws. It became obvious to me that a new definition was needed."

Day outlined a potential new standard for a healthy, growing church during a recent meeting of the Southern Baptist Research Fellowship:

- A 10 percent total membership growth over five years.
- At least one baptism for the first and last years of the study.
- A member-to-baptism ratio of

no higher than 35-to-one in the final year of the study.

■ Conversions accounting for at least 25 percent of the total membership growth during the final year of the study.

Using the proposed definition, only 11 percent of all Southern Baptist churches (just over 4,600) qualify as healthy and growing.

Church size & age matter

The study also looked at church size, church age, church location and pastor tenure to identify any effects they might have on church growth. Only 7.3 percent of churches with 100 members or fewer qualified as growing. However, of churches with between 101 and 5,000 members, between 13 and 14 percent were growing. As for church age, approximately 30 percent of SBC churches 10 years old or less are experiencing healthy church growth. This percentage declines steadily with increasing age until only 9.1 percent of churches over 50 years old are in this category.

"Church location was found not to influence whether a church is experiencing healthy church growth," Day said. "It is a misconception to think that only metropolitan churches are growing. Churches are experiencing healthy church growth in all types of communities."

The length of a pastor's tenure, though, was found to have a direct correlation to a church's health. A church's likelihood to be healthy was much greater when the pastor had served there five to 20 years.

Baptists take diverse actions on 2000 BF&M

The 2000 Baptist Faith and Message was among issues messengers addressed in recent state Baptist convention meetings across the nation. Messenger actions include:

Florida Baptist State Convention. Messengers voted to tighten the Florida convention's bylaws to enforce the "theological integrity" of member churches and associations. The change requires each Florida Baptist church to adhere to the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message doctrinal statement "or any other declaration of faith which parallels the tenets of our historic Baptist faith."

"Any church or association which undertakes questionable theology, faith, practice or polity shall be subject to having fellowship withdrawn by the Florida Baptist State Convention," the bylaw amendment reads.

In other business, messengers voted to back amendments to the state and federal constitutions to ban gay marriage and to work with other denominations for their passage.

Illinois Baptist State Association. Despite concerns that too much power is being concentrated in the hands of fewer leaders, messengers to the Illinois Baptist annual meeting approved a constitutional change to reduce its board of directors by more than half.

The board currently has 72 members chosen from throughout the state. Under the new model, that board will be reduced to 33 members over the next three years. Twenty-four board members will

come from six regions, four from each region. Nine others will be at-large members.

Randy Grace, pastor of Hurricane Memorial Baptist Church of Herrin, said a larger number of board members provides stronger representation and promotes better ownership.

Larry Richmond, the former association president who oversaw the board-reduction plan, told messengers "history has proven" large boards are not an effective model of governance.

Tom Rains, a spokesman for the constitution and bylaws committee, said the smaller board will mean a savings of at least \$12,000 annually in meetings expenses.

Mississippi Baptist Convention. For the first time in its 169-year history, the Mississippi Baptist Convention elected a Hispanic as an officer. Messengers also avoided an effort to make the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message the convention's doctrinal statement.

Joel Medina, bivocational pastor of Iglesia Internacional Las Americas in Carthage, was elected second vice president without opposition. Gene Henderson, pastor of First Baptist Church of Brandon, was re-elected president.

Responding to a motion introduced last year by Lowell Ingram, the chairman of the constitution and bylaws committee offered an alternative on behalf of the committee.

"I move that the Mississippi Bap-

tist Convention reaffirm their historical position that the Word of God is our standard of faith and practice, and recognize that the 'Baptist Faith and Message' can serve as a guide for understanding and teaching Baptist doctrine," said Ken Anderson, pastor of Parkway Baptist Church, Clinton. Ingram spoke in favor of Anderson's motion and the measure passed.

Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma. Oklahoma Baptists made history when messengers elected a woman to one of its three top offices.

Marty Odom, a member of Quail Springs Baptist Church in Oklahoma City, was elected second vice president without opposition. Bob Green, pastor of Arrow Heights Baptist Church in Broken Arrow, was elected president in a run-off election by 55 votes—320-265—over Buddy Hunt, pastor of First Baptist Church of Perry.

Nine resolutions approved by messengers included support of the U.S. military, support of those in authority, the Federal Marriage Amendment, spiritual awakening, sharing the good news of Jesus through a renewal of evangelism and missions, commending those who worked in the campaign to defeat gambling, expressing opposition to abortion and embryonic stem cell research and encouraging tithing and gifts to the Cooperative Program.

Compiled from reporting by Associated Baptist Press and Baptist Press

Cleveland named
NAMB Strategic
Focus Cities site

Alpharetta, Ga. (BP)—Cleveland has been selected as one of two Strategic Focus Cities for the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board in 2006-07.

Officials with the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio and NAMB announced the church planting and evangelistic outreach initiative during the convention's annual meeting.

Cleveland becomes the 10th city in North America selected as a Strategic Focus City, joining Vancouver, British Columbia, announced earlier this year as a 2006-07 focus.

"Each census and population study shows us again and again that North Americans are moving to large cities," said NAMB President Robert Reccord. "By working through partnerships and bringing a concentrated focus to specific cities, we have an opportunity to impact cultures that will influence our entire continent."

"Just as Cleveland has experienced an economic and cultural rebirth in recent years, our prayer is for the people of Cleveland to experience a spiritual rebirth that will transform lives and forever change the human landscape of this great city."

Baptist state convention officials in Ohio said they look forward to partnering with Southern Baptist churches across North America to help share the gospel with the 2.9 million people who call the greater Cleveland area home.

Cleveland encompasses people with roots in 117 nations, said Randy Chestnut, director of missions for Greater Cleveland Baptist Association. "What excites me the most is for us to see something only God can do."

Chestnut said starting new churches, many of them ethnic congregations, will be a major focus of the emphasis in Cleveland. With 39 Southern Baptist churches for the 1.7 million residents in the three-county Greater Cleveland Baptist Association, there is only one Southern Baptist church for every 43,000 people. By comparison, the population-to-church ratio across the Southern Baptist Convention is 6,400 to one.

Since the SFC initiative began in 2000 with efforts in Chicago and Phoenix, other campaigns have been held in Boston, Las Vegas, Seattle and Philadelphia. Miami currently is in the midst of a two-year SFC effort. An SFC initiative in New York City called New Hope New York is in its first year of a three-year emphasis.

More than 47,000 professions of faith have been recorded through SFC initiatives, and more than 300 churches have been started.

Stanton pastor sees impact of cross-state partnership

By Dannah Prather
Partnerships Editor

Stanton—If any congregation can attest to the power of God, a miracle and the Red River Partnership, it is the Mill Knob Mission of Stanton Baptist Church located in Powell County.

Mill Knob is among the churches in Eastern Kentucky's Red River Baptist Association that have partnered with churches in the Christian and Little Bethel Baptist associations in Western Kentucky.

The partnership has linked congregations and Christians from two ends of the state to strengthen churches, especially those in Red River, whose counties are among the most unchurched in the country.

Volunteers have helped Red River Association churches with vacation Bible schools this past summer, and preachers from churches have exchanged pulpits and preached revivals at partner churches.

While everyone involved is calling the partnership a huge success, Johnny Hurt has his own success story that he credits to both God and the help received from the partnership.

Only two years ago, Hurt was leading a Bible study in a barn for a group of seven people. There was no heat and no plumbing. They used kerosene heaters to stave off the cold.

Today, the mission draws 40 to 60 people each week and is building its first facility.

Simple obedience

A pastor in northwest Indiana for more than 22 years, Hurt said he moved to Powell County simply to be obedient to God.

"The Lord just told me to move here."

He and his wife relocated to Appalachia planning to operate a small grocery store as well as start a ministry.

He said they knew the need was great for an evangelical church in the area. "Cat Creek Church of Christ is the only other church in five miles," Hurt said.

God had plans that did not involve a grocery business, he said. The growing Bible study relocated to the commercial space and more people began attending.

Wendy Campbell was one of the newcomers. A resident of Stanton, Campbell's last church membership was in Winchester.

"I wanted to find a church closer to home," she said. She was also looking for a place where she could



STEP OF OBEDIENCE Utilizing a Powell County creek, Bill Boldt, pastor of Stanton Baptist Church, baptizes a girl following revival services near Mill Knob Baptist Mission. During this summer's revival, made possible through the Red River Partnership, Mill Knob baptized 12 new believers. Johnny Hurt is the mission's pastor.

serve. "I started working with children."

Campbell said many of the boys and girls who come to Mill Knob do not have parents who attend church.

"Our children come from homes where the parents may be on drugs (or alcohol)," she said. Some of the children have a parent who is deceased or the family is in some kind of crisis. "These are kids who need love," she said.

Watching an accident

Until recently, when a van was donated to the church, Campbell made as many as three trips in her own vehicle on Sundays to pick up children and bring them to church.

One of her regulars was 8-year-old Dustin. Campbell said Dustin and his sister enjoyed Bible lessons and prayed every week that their parents and older siblings would attend church and become Christians.

One Saturday, Campbell said she received a call from Dustin's family informing her that the children would not be coming to church the next day and that Campbell did not need to stop to pick them up.

Campbell said Dustin's home is on her way to church. Instinctively, she glanced up the hill toward the house as she passed on Sunday. She noticed Dustin in the yard by the family truck.

"I thought maybe he had changed his mind about coming to church," she said.

Campbell turned her vehicle around. As she drove closer, she saw the truck in motion and Dustin running after it, as if trying

to stop the vehicle.

Later, she learned that the boy had been listening to the truck's radio and had knocked the vehicle into gear.

Campbell said she tried to warn Dustin to stop chasing the truck, but by the time she reached him, he had slid beneath the rear tires of the vehicle.

"I saw no movement out of him," Campbell said. "He was turning purple. I could get no response."

"Like he had already died"

Campbell ran into the house, calling to the boy's parents who were still asleep, thinking Dustin was also in bed.

Emergency services were notified. Dustin's father moved the truck. Desperate prayers began, Campbell said. The boy was still unresponsive.

"It was like he had already died," she said.

Then, "he started coughing," Campbell said. "Blood came up out of him and a cry."

Dustin was transported by helicopter to the University of Kentucky Medical Center. According to Campbell and Hurt, X-rays and other tests revealed no fractures or internal damage.

"Not one broken bone," Hurt said. "That boy should have been a goner."

"He just had some skinned places and bruises," Campbell said. "It was a miracle. The Lord brought him back."

The miracle did not end with Dustin's body.

The partnership revival, led by Will Stone, pastor of Casky Creek Baptist Church in Christian County

said Jessica Phaxton, one of the Little River youth.

"Every day we went door to door. It has made me more open to telling people about God."

After the spring break trip, Mason made plans to return with his youth in the fall to deliver coats and toys.

On Sept. 10, he was killed when the tractor he was driving was struck from behind by another vehicle. He was 34 years old.

Phaxton said Little River had just recently acquired a bus for the youth ministry and that earlier in the day Mason received his license to drive the vehicle that would take them back to Red River.

Mrs. Mason said that when her husband started the Little River youth program, there were approximately five students involved. Today, as many as 30 young people participate regularly.

"Mark planted a seed in every

Partnership associations



Association, "was just fantastic," Hurt said. "We ran over a hundred every night."

In one night, Hurt and Bill Boldt, pastor of Stanton Baptist Church, baptized 12 people in the creek beside the revival site.

Among the new believers were five members of Dustin's family, including his parents.

Partnership's perfect timing

The partnership between Christian County, Little Bethel and Red River associations had not come at a better time, according to Hurt.

The daytime Bible clubs for children and the evening revival services were tailor-made for residents who rarely, if ever, attend traditional church services, he said. "A lot of them have never been in church," he added.

Campbell describes the Mill Knob mission as a "come as you are" congregation. "People are just sent to us," she said. "You can just feel the Lord around."

Connecting with people comes naturally to the Hurts. "We just hook up with people in the hollers," he said. "Mostly making friendships and then asking them to come to church."

In one year, Mill Knob baptized 27 new members, bringing its total membership to 42 with no signs of slowing growth. "People are getting excited about going to church," Hurt said.

Mill Knob members hope to be in their new facility, near the site of this summer's revival, next spring. Volunteers are performing much of the construction.

Mill Knob members are contributing generously, along with members of its sponsoring church, Stanton Baptist. Red River, Little Bethel and Christian County associations also are contributing financial help to the building.

Months after the miraculous summer of revival, the enthusiasm for sharing and receiving the gospel message has not faded, Hurt said. "There's a revival state of mind. It's happening to all the churches around here."

one of them," she said.

During the recent fall break, Little River youth kept Mason's promise to return to Eastern Kentucky with coats and toys for children in need.

Phaxton said she and her friends are looking forward to spending another spring break in Red River in 2005. "I think when we go we sort of give their church revival and get them up," she said. "That's just awesome."

Red River region overview

Red River Baptist Association is comprised of churches and ministries located in the counties of Breathitt, Lee, Menifee, Morgan, Powell and Wolfe.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the per capita income of the six-county area is between \$10,500 and \$13,500. More than 30 percent of the population lives below the poverty level and fewer than 58 percent of men and women age 25 and older have graduated high school.

Menifee County has the lowest unemployment rate in the association with 8 percent. Breathitt County has the highest, 10.6 percent.

The diversion of prescription medication for illegal use continues to be a major concern in Kentucky, according to the National Drug Intelligence Center and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration.

The center reports that the number of treatment admissions in Kentucky for abuse of oxycodone—mostly OxyContin and Percocet—increased 163 percent from 1998 through 2000.

Limited competition and isolated geography make Eastern Kentucky an ideal place for metropolitan drug dealers to set up shop, according to the DEA. This year the administration calculated a huge jump in the number of illegal methamphetamine labs seized in Kentucky by law enforcement—from 104 in 2000 to 476 in 2003. The DEA also reports that Eastern Kentucky's Daniel Boone National Forest continues to be a favorite place to cultivate marijuana.

Eastern Kentucky partnership project continues after youth minister's death

Continued from page 1

"Those kids took their spring break to do this," said Jack Studie, pastor of Pembroke Baptist Church and one of the revival leaders.

The Western Kentucky youth did door-to-door surveys, sang and shared their testimonies at revival services and helped prepare a former boarding school, Hazel Green Academy, to receive other volunteers during the year.

"We had a really good time,"

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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Wanted: bridge-building leaders

By James Draper

Nashville (BP)—John Roebling believed expanses were made to be crossed, and believed the most efficient way of getting from one side to the other was by bridge.

Roebling was the genius who proposed and designed the Brooklyn Bridge, the world's longest suspension bridge at the time. Roebling died unexpectedly shortly before construction was to begin and the consensus was that his son, Washington, would do it. Washington had some experience as an engineer building bridges for the Union Army during the Civil War, but nothing compared to the sizeable challenge of completing one of the greatest engineering feats the world had known to date.

He took his father's designs and daily made adjustments for years until the bridge was finished. There may have been some doubts in the beginning about Washington Roebling's experience—he was in his early 30s when he took over—but there was no doubt when the signature landmark was completed. Its use continues more than 115 years later.

"Frog" follow-up

I wrote a lot about frogs, tadpoles and kettles and the Southern Baptist Convention over the summer. The columns scratched the surface and revealed an entire generation-plus of ministers frustrated with the SBC, its politics, its loss of evangelistic focus and its exclusion of many younger ministers from positions of leadership.

And I heard from you, loud and clear!

What I found was that "younger ministers" is a misnomer. I received messages from men and women, fully funded and bivocational ministers and laypeople. I've gone from saying, "younger ministers" to "emerging leaders," since there is

such a great diversity. The consensus among you is, "Yes, something needs to be done, but what?"

That's where you, the emerging leaders, come in. You are the SBC's Washington Roeblings of today and of tomorrow. I said in the "Frog" columns that we older guys need to quit preaching at you and start listening to you. Well, that's what I'm

doing, and hopefully in a way that effectively connects with the techno-savvy. I am launching an electronic bulletin board this week, at www.lifeway.com/emergingleaders. I'll be very active on the bulletin board through Friday, Dec. 3. I'll continue to interact as much as possible in the weeks that follow and I'll have some help from others who are working with me on this. I want to hear how we can bring your energy and your ideas to bear on the challenges we face as a denomination.

I'll be the first to admit I don't have all the answers. That's one reason we need you in the bridge-building business. We need access to what you bring to the table.

Solutions for the future

Another purpose of the bulletin board is so you all can network and exchange ideas with each other. I don't feel the need to control this thing, but I do want to provide a forum for us to get together and corral ideas. It is easy for us to criticize all that isn't working. What we want to do is rise above that and come up with solutions and directions for the future. I've said that we don't need to be building the SBC of tomorrow; we need to be building the SBC of 10 years from now. I'm offering you an opportunity to be on the design team.

But this is just the beginning. I also said in the "Frog" columns that I wanted to spend time talking face-to-face with you, and we're going to do that too. I have the privilege of preaching in churches of all

sizes across our denomination. It can sometimes be a rigorous travel schedule, but it is exciting to be so close to the heartbeat of who we are as a people. I'm going to coordinate opportunities to meet with you when I travel to an area so we can speak together personally. The logistics are still being worked out.

Seeking to break a cycle

Just a quick word to you "old" guys over 40. I value your opinions as well. I know a lot of you have been faithfully blowing this same horn for years. Jump in this dialogue! I feel I can address these "under 40" emerging leaders without offending you because I know you wish somebody had listened to you when you were that age. We're trying to break a cycle, so I appreciate your support and I know you've got good ideas as well. Let's hear them.

Malcolm Gladwell wrote a book a couple of years ago called, "The Tipping Point." The subtitle is: "How little things can make a big difference." He dissects epidemics and how they happen and how lasting change comes about. I'm excited because I really do see us trying to string together some related little things that can make a big difference, and that difference has eternal consequences.

Both John and Washington Roebling offered something unique that enabled them to overcome an engineering challenge. They were intensely focused on completing that task. If they can focus like that to build a bridge, I passionately pray that we can focus like that to build God's Kingdom. Let's bring together all the little things that make a big difference. Let's "tip" this thing and just watch what God can do when we bring our resources together for a single cause: Lifting up the name of Jesus.

See you on the bulletin board this week.

James Draper is president of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention

Supporting international missions

The theme for the Week of Prayer for International Missions and Lottie Moon Christmas Offering is "That All Peoples May Know Him." I encourage you to use this time to

focus on the various ways we as Kentucky Baptists participate in international missions through the Southern Baptist International Mission Board and the Kentucky Baptist Convention partnership missions department.

Last year, Kentucky Baptists reached a new record in giving to international missions through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. Our gifts exceeded \$3.8 million, which was a 13.5 percent increase over the previous year.

Clyde Meador, vice president of the International Mission Board, said the record giving last year to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering from throughout the SBC exceeded the previous year's gifts by \$15 million. This made it possible for all missionaries who had been waiting to be appointed to be sent to their assigned fields.

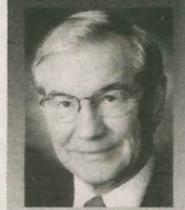
The spiritual results of this additional giving also can be seen in the lives that were changed. According to reports from the IMB, the number of baptisms this year through international missions will exceed last year and may come close to 600,000. This is exciting to hear!

Kentucky Baptists also are involved in international missions through our own partnerships. Ross Bauscher, director of the KBC partnership missions department, has a special burden for the KBC partnership with the Federal District and the Piaui Baptist Convention in Brazil.

Kentucky Baptists will have many opportunities to share their faith in Brazil. Although the official launch of the partnership will not be until 2005, several projects already have been conducted and hundreds of decisions for Christ registered.

Kentucky Baptists also will continue the partnership it has with the International Baptist Convention in Europe for one more year. We also are continuing to participate

PARTNERS IN THE MISSION



Bill Mackey

in projects in Greece in coordination with the New England Baptist Convention.

We recently closed out the six-year partnership with Baptists in Poland. This partnership produced bountiful fruit. We are especially grateful for the financial support and personal encouragement by Dr. M.A. Winchester of Sterns, which enabled the Baptist Seminary in Warsaw to survive and thrive.

Although our official partnership in Poland is ending, it is likely that Kentucky Baptists will continue participating in projects in Poland for years to come through the individual relationships that have formed between churches. This is what has occurred in Russia and other locations where the KBC has had partnerships in the past.

Please pray for our missionaries and others who are in harm's way, including our soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan. Remember to give sacrificially to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and continue strong support of the Cooperative Program, which includes all KBC and SBC missions, ministries and evangelism.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

STEWARDSHIP

Checklist details financial issues for ages 35-60

By Don Spencer

As I noted in a previous column, certain basic principles of Christian financial planning apply throughout life. Since financial needs at each stage of life change,

however, there are different priorities for each age group.

There also is a tendency of each age group to make certain financial errors.

We previously looked at financial issues for young adults and next month we'll examine senior adult issues. This week includes a checklist of financial issues typically to be considered by people in their mid 30s through their 50s.

This list is not meant to include everything one should consider but can serve as a starting point.

What to do for ages 35-60:

- Continue building education funds for children.
- Evaluate and update retirement goals and plans.
- As needed, update your wills and discuss other estate planning issues.
- Continue to make tithing a priority.
- As needs change, modify your financial record-keeping system and budget (spending plan).
- Evaluate your savings plan. Move toward 10 percent of income if you are not yet at that level.

What to avoid for ages 35-60:

- Overuse of credit—a major problem for many people.
- Failure to update insurance coverages.
- Failure to have a goal and plans for retirement.
- Failure to properly manage increased financial needs.
- Failure to provide funds for major replacements.
- Unrealistic expectations about what Social Security and company retirement plans will provide.

What to accomplish:

- Evaluate financial goals and make adjustments as needed.
- Savings plan should be well established.
- Retirement plan contributions and investment choices should be evaluated.
- Basic estate plan should be established.

Don Spencer is a certified financial planner and directs the Kentucky Baptist Convention's annuity department



Bible provides words of hope even amid grief over suicide

Q: One of my cousins recently committed suicide after years of alcoholism and depression. His pastor said at his funeral that he was a Christian. Are there any scriptures that speak to this subject? I really want to know that he is with the Lord.

When someone makes the terrible decision to take his own life, that person is not himself; it generally is the depression, alcohol or other problems that have taken over. It's as if that person does not have the strength of mind to reach out to those most able to help, even to God.

Remember the words of Jesus about His sheep: "I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one" (John 10:28-30, NIV).

When a Christian does not have the strength of mind to hold on to God, God still has the strength, desire and love to hold on to him. I believe God received your cousin, even with his broken mind and poverty of spirit, into His loving arms, just as any loving father would for a broken and desperate child.

Again Jesus speaks in John 6:39-40, "And this is the will of Him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that He has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in Him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." The resurrection that Jesus promised is for everyone who has "looked to the Son" and who has believed.

Your cousin's pastor testified that he did just that. The disease of mental illness (depression) and the disease of alcoholism tragically took his life. But regardless of how he died, God was there to receive him. The promise of resurrection is his as well as ours. This is a comfort to those who are left (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

Gather with your family and be the presence of Christ to one another during this difficult time. Name your emotions and share them together. And if anyone is in need of the comfort of God's Word, point them to the encouragement that is there.—James Stillwell

Q: With Thanksgiving behind us and Christmas ahead, how can I teach my child to be truly thankful?

Helping children develop thankful hearts might be one of the greatest challenges facing today's parents. Most children have so much that they take things for granted and forget to be thankful.

Beyond prompting children to say "thank you" when they receive a gift or a compliment, the goal should be to help children develop an "attitude of gratitude" that permeates all of life.

Show genuine gratitude yourself. Model a thankful heart. Make sure your children see and hear you expressing thanks for small kindnesses and courtesies as well as big gifts and huge favors. Be sincere. Children will know if your words are merely a formality or truly heartfelt.

Say thank you. Take your child to the store and help him or her pick out a box of thank you notes. Encourage your child to think of one person each week to write to: a teacher, minister or coach; the person who fixes Wednesday night meals at church; the friendly neighbors who let him or her play in their yard; the mailman. Help your child see how saying thank you can be a witness for God.

Help your child memorize 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18. Teach your child that God expects us to be thankful all the time, not just when things are going our way.

Don't forget to give thanks for your food. Mealtime blessings can become hurried rituals, or they can be special moments that carry great meaning. Pause and acknowledge God; give sincere thanks for the food, and for those who have provided or prepared it. Express thanks for other blessings of the day as well, and be specific.—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.



Barna study offers 'roadmap' for ministry

With "Kentucky Baptists Connect" officially underway, one of the major challenges facing Kentucky Baptists is how to transform the plan's five-year ministry goals into reality.

As Kentucky Baptist churches and individuals pursue evangelism, discipleship, church starts, leader training and other emphases, a detailed study by the Barna Research Group offers a sobering assessment of the challenges ahead.

The 54-page report, "Growing Kentucky's Churches from the Outside In," was commissioned by the Kentucky Baptist Convention to give leaders a deeper understanding of the unchurched in Kentucky. Details of the study were presented by Barna Vice President David Kinnaman during the recent KBC annual meeting. The full report is available at www.kybaptist.org/barna.

Among key findings are that 32 percent of Kentucky's adult population is unchurched and 81 percent of the state's unchurched are "de-churched," including 42 percent of that group who formerly attended a Baptist church.

"We've had our chance with the vast majority of these people," Kinnaman pointed out. "It's not a failure of evangelism; it's a failure of discipleship."

On the positive side, the research found that 67 percent of unchurched adults in the state say they have made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ that is still important in their life, 87 percent say they are moral and 56 percent have a favorable opinion about the Christian faith.

However, the majority also say Christians are judgmental (61 percent), hypocritical (57 percent) and intolerant of others' beliefs (52 percent).

Overall, the study reveals that Kentucky Baptists have a tough road ahead as we seek to reach the unchurched with the gospel while also developing disciples and strengthening churches.

Describing the Barna research as "a roadmap to the hearts and minds of unchurched Kentuckians," Kinnaman said the report is designed to "find effective,

genuine ways of connecting with those people outside of Kentucky's churches."

Noting that "a majority of the people who are believers when they turn 18 will be long gone from Christian churches and Christian commitment by the time they are 30," Kinnaman urged churches to realize "when tired traditions and meaningless allegiances fade away, real spiritual vitality can take place."

In addition to the Barna research, a recent study by New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary's Leavell Center for Evangelism and Church Health confirmed a 20-year-old study that found 70 percent of Southern Baptist churches are plateaued or declining. The current statistics also found that the percentage of declining churches (a membership decrease of at least 10 percent over five years) had expanded from 17.6 percent two decades ago to 23.9 percent today. The study revealed that a mere 11 percent of Southern Baptist churches are considered healthy.

Amid those realities, Kentucky Baptist churches are being challenged to increase baptisms by more than 40 percent by 2010 and maintain at least 80 percent of those additions as active members.

How? The Barna study encourages churches to have "a clear and compelling vision," "re-evaluate the effectiveness of the discipleship process," "enhance a variety of approaches to evangelism" and "re-evaluate what it means to show 'genuine interest' in the unchurched."

Calling Kentucky Baptists to combine "prayer, Scripture knowledge, research, experience and instinct" in ministry efforts across the state, Kinnaman said the long-term goal is for churches "to make favorable changes to the spiritual landscape ... that will help Kentuckians experience a deeper, more vibrant faith in Christ."

If that happens, Kentucky Baptists Connect will make a valuable contribution to Kingdom growth in Kentucky and beyond.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

Is World AIDS Day something to celebrate?

By Dale Hanson Bourke

Dec. 1, 2004, marks the 17th anniversary of World AIDS Day. It hardly seems fitting to say "Happy AIDS Day." Nor does "merry" come to mind.

But despite the fact that another 3 million people have died from AIDS since last year, and at least 5 million are newly infected, there are some reasons to celebrate this day. Just the fact that you are reading this article is one of them.

After 17 years, the average American is beginning to know a little something about the enormous impact AIDS is having on the world. At first, we worried mostly about ourselves. Could we become infected from casual contact with an HIV-positive person? Should our children share a classroom with an infected child? As the epidemic in our own country was identified and largely contained, we began to relax. As HIV-positive individuals began to respond to drug treatments, we applauded.

And then we lost interest.

AIDS, it seemed, was someone else's problem. We were sorry for the Americans who had lost their lives, but glad it did not seem to be spreading throughout the general population. Most people were careful to express sorrow publicly, but

privately were relieved to learn that if they weren't gay or using IV drugs, they could relax.

And if AIDS was running rampant throughout the developing world, could we really do anything about it? As one man said to me as I was doing research for a book on AIDS, "Maybe this is a good thing. Aren't there too many poor people in the world anyway?"

As politically incorrect as his question might be, he reflects a certain unexpressed honesty that many Americans share. That view, in summary, is that AIDS is not our problem, is brought on by bad choices, is mostly a problem among people we don't need to worry about, and will eventually run its course without bothering most of us.

So in honor of this year's AIDS Day, perhaps we can consider a few simple facts.

First, if AIDS does not affect our lives today, it will surely affect the lives of our children and grandchildren. The global crisis is nowhere near its peak.

Second, there are more women than men infected with AIDS worldwide. It is not primarily a disease of homosexuals.

Third, the disease is spreading most rapidly in India, China and Russia, countries in which we have

considerable economic interests and where the destabilizing impact of AIDS could quickly become a national security risk, according to the CIA.

In African countries we cannot ignore the orphans who are becoming an astounding percentage of the total population.

So what's to celebrate?

Churches, synagogues and mosques across this country will mark AIDS Day with not only a solemn witness to lives lost, but also an increasingly determined plan to prevent, treat and care for individuals, even those whom they may never meet.

Schools are educating their students about AIDS, not just as a personal health issue, but also as a global force that will affect almost any career they choose.

And individuals are beginning to realize that being educated about AIDS is not optional. For those in developing countries, education is the first step in preventing the transmission of HIV/AIDS.

For those of us in the developed world, education is necessary to combat the ignorance that can allow AIDS to spread unabated.

AIDS is our problem, whether we are personally at risk of being infected or not.

Dale Hanson Bourke is the author of "The Skeptics Guide to the Global AIDS Crisis" and founder of the AIDS Orphan Bracelet Project

India: Full of surprises

1 billion residents make up diverse mission field

IMB by the numbers

Field personnel under appointment (as of July): 5,403.

Field personnel appointed last year: 943.

Volunteers in 2003: 25,099.

Overseas baptisms in 2003: 510,357.

New churches in 2003: 16,721.

Total overseas churches as of 2003: 87,419.

Total overseas church membership as of 2003: 7.04 million.

People groups engaged as of February: 1,317.

Number of people groups in "Last Frontier" countries: 4,992

Population of "Last Frontier" peoples: 1.6 billion.

World population: 6.3 billion.

Lottie Moon Christmas Offering receipts for Christmas 2003: \$136.2 million.

Lottie Moon goal for Christmas 2004: \$150 million.

International Mission Board budget for 2004: \$258.9 million.

World hunger and disaster relief receipts in 2003: \$6.2 million.

Costs to support a Southern Baptist missionary for a year: \$36,238.

For a day: \$99.28.

For an hour: \$4.14.

For a minute: \$.07.

Source: SBC International Mission Board

By Erich Bridges

SBC International Mission Board

Mumbai, India—Where can you find thousands of millionaires—and nine of the world's richest billionaires? India.

Who makes more movies than Hollywood?

India—by far. "Bollywood," the vast film industry based in Bombay (now Mumbai) churns out about 1,000 pictures a year, roughly twice as many as Hollywood.

Which nation boasts the world's biggest democracy?

India.

Which country now counts more than 24 million Christians—nearly 19 million of whom are evangelicals?

India.

Which country has a middle class that numbers 300 million—larger than the entire U.S. population—and a booming economy that was forecast to grow 8 percent this year?

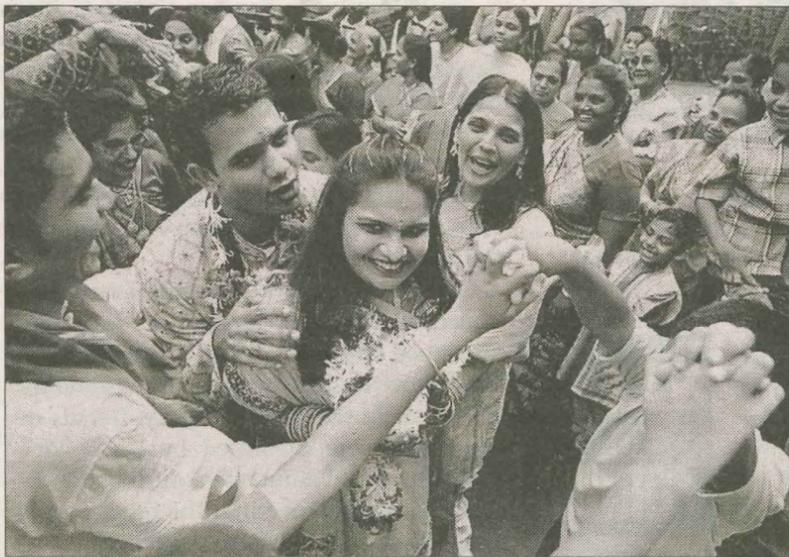
You guessed it.

Make no mistake: India still faces enormous problems of poverty and need. About 300 million people still live on less than a dollar a day. But India has made amazing progress on many fronts—economic expansion, education, technology. Expectations are soaring.

"Diversity is India"

Here's a tip to avoid cultural schizophrenia in India: Realize that you can find anything you look for there. Staggering wealth and appalling squalor. Showbiz fantasy and harsh reality. High-tech companies and age-old cottage industries. Mega-cities and remote forests. The latest trends and ancient traditions. Holy men and atheists. Intense spirituality and crass materialism. Hindus, Muslims, Jains, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, tribals.

Hundreds of India's ethnic, religious and caste groups live in geographical or social isolation from each other, looking at the rest of this vast "nation of nations" with curiosity or suspicion. Many a south Indian, if set down somewhere in



INDIAN CELEBRATION Weddings in Mumbai (formerly Bombay) are times of great celebration. Festivities begin with a parade through the streets that can last up to two hours. A small band plays while family and friends dance, march, laugh and enjoy each others' company. (IMB photos by Matt Jones)

the north, would be as bewildered by the customs and languages as someone from the U.S. heartland parachuting into Scandinavia.

"Diversity is India," observes a leading Christian strategist who lives there. "You could pour a thousand lifetimes into India and never exhaust it."

But even a thousand lifetimes dedicated to spreading the gospel won't make a real dent in India—unless they are lives focused on multiplying disciples and churches. India's 24-million-member Christian community is growing, but remains a small minority of the 1.07 billion residents.

As India goes ...

The three global "giants" standing between the body of Christ and the fulfillment of the Great Commission in our day are China, Islam and India—each with a population of more than 1 billion.

Two of these three meet in South Asia: India—and the nearly 400 million Muslims living primarily in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

"As India goes, so goes the Great Commission," contends the Christian strategist. "And how is India doing? Not that well, quite frankly. Not because it's inaccessible—because it's neglected."

"If this is truly the last of the giants, God is giving it to us on a silver platter," the strategist adds. "There is no excuse for not getting the gospel out here. I'm overwhelmed at the openness."

In the cities, at least, Christ followers can readily gain a hearing in the noisy Indian marketplace of ideas. In the more traditional and resistant villages, growing numbers of believers are boldly proclaiming the good news.

"We've seen so many people come to Christ, so many churches started," the strategist says. "We just need more people implementing church-planting movement strategies. That means moving from planting an individual church and bringing a few people to Christ to saying, 'What's it going to take to see a movement that sweeps

through a people?'"

It's already happening in some places, like the huge north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, where more than 5,000 house churches have sprung up in less than two years. It will happen in many more places, because wherever the light of Christ is lifted up, He draws people unto Himself.

"Our job," says a believer, "is to turn on the light, turn on the light, turn on the light!"

Fast facts

■ India's 1.07 billion people—second only to China—are 80 percent Hindu. But more than 130 million Muslims call India home (some estimates range above 150 million). That rivals the combined population of all countries in the Arab Middle East.

■ Indian teenagers spend \$3 billion a year on fashion accessories.

■ Massive rural-to-urban migration will likely double the population of India's cities within two decades. That's equal to "all of Europe, all of a sudden, needing water, sanitation, drainage, power, transportation, housing," says an Asian Development Bank official.

■ Want to tap into a youth movement of gargantuan proportions? No fewer than 555 million Indians are under age 25.

■ Indian universities produce more than 1.5 million graduates each year.

■ India has 200 million English speakers. The nation's vast collection of people groups also speak several hundred other languages and dialects.

Lottie Moon Christmas Offering



That all peoples may know Him

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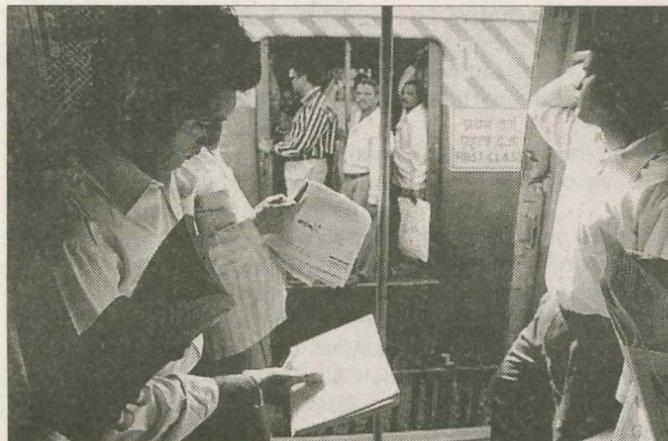
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MUMBAI TRAINS Six million people travel by train each day in Mumbai. First-class trains (foreground) usually are a little less crowded than the packed second-class train.



KENTUCKY NOTES

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That all peoples
may know Him:
Go in God's Power

Season of
International Missions
Nov. 28-Dec. 5, 2004
Study: Mexico

National Goal for
Lottie Moon
Christmas Offering
\$150 million

Kentucky churches gave
\$3,826,079
in 2003-2004

Winter 2004



Christ Followers 2005 Kentucky WMU Annual Meeting April 8-9, 2005 First Baptist Church, London

- Sessions: Friday morning, afternoon, evening; and Saturday morning
- Keynote speaker: Barbara Joiner, WMU author and speaker from Columbiana, Alabama
- Missionary speakers, WMU testimonies, drama, music, and other special features in each session
- Missions displays from Eastern Kentucky ministries
- Friday Box lunch by preregistration
- Missions event for Girls in Action / Children in Action (Saturday)
- Baptist Nursing Fellowship Luncheon (Saturday)
- Acteens / Youth on Mission Fellowship (Saturday)
- Ministry Project: Bring a pair of new shoes to donate



From the opening song to the closing ceremony of lights, you will not want to miss a minute of the 2005 Kentucky WMU Annual Meeting

Additional information will be sent to WMU directors in early 2005



**Thank you,
Anna Mary
Byrdwell
for serving the
Lord at KY
WMU from
1967-2004!**

We know that God will continue to use you in your retirement.

Join us in thanking Anna Mary at this year's KY WMU Annual Meeting



A Personal Word

Five years ago, I was welcomed by an incredibly positive, fun-loving WMU leader. She slipped in my office, winked at me, and said something like, "Now I want you to take care of yourself and do a really good job here. I don't want to have to break in another Executive Director." With that, Anna Mary Byrdwell, who I already knew from working with her at various national WMU events and meetings, became my friend and coworker.



Joy Bolton
Executive
Director-
Treasurer

And indeed, Anna Mary has broken in a few of us. Anna Mary came to Kentucky WMU as the Sunbeam Director (1967-71). She has since served as Acteens Director (1971-76), Baptist Young Women Director (1976-79), Baptist Women Consultant (1980-85), BYW/BW Consultant (1985-97, which became Women on Mission in 1995), and General WMU Consultant (1997-2004).

Anna Mary has served faithfully with six executive directors: Mrs. George Ferguson, Mrs. Katherine Jasper Akridge, Mrs. Delores "Dee" Gilliland, Mrs. Kay Trisler, Miss Brenda Price (interim), and now with me. Each of us has enjoyed Anna Mary's good cooking, many "wild" ideas, and above all, the encouragement of her faith.

Anna Mary is motivated by one driving passion—to serve the Lord. Her service to Kentucky WMU is seen "as unto the Lord." Countless people across this state share a WMU testimony that starts out, "I got into this because of Anna Mary Byrdwell. She saw something in me and encouraged me to get involved."

During the recent Fall Retreats, I led a conference on "Women and Leadership." I reminded participants that leadership is not about position or title. It is about servanthood and influence. As I have studied leaders in the Bible, there are all kinds, both upfront and behind the scenes leaders. One of my favorites is Barnabas, an encourager. Anna Mary Byrdwell has been a Barnabas to many people in Kentucky and beyond.

Anna Mary plans to retire at the end of December. She recently purchased a house and in making this transition takes a day off from time to time. She calls us and says, "I'm practicing retirement today." We tell her that retirement is acceptable only if she continues to practice her famous recipes on us, especially in the weeks just before the State Fair.

We will honor this great servant of the Lord at the 2005 Kentucky WMU Annual Meeting. Make plans now to be in London, April 8-9, and honor Anna Mary Byrdwell with your love and presence at her retirement reception.



Information for WMU Directors



Christ Followers

We begin the second quarter of this new WMU year featuring *Christ Followers* as our emphasis. If you attended **World Missions Unlimited** or one of the **Fall Retreats** you have been introduced to the theme and had an opportunity to purchase a "Christ Follower" T-shirt. Interested in purchasing a shirt for \$7 plus tax and shipping? Call us at 1-888-254-5726 to see what is available.

Poverty is now our Project HELP emphasis. Poverty is the root cause of so many of the needs faced by individuals and families. It is defined as *the condition of a person lacking financial resources to provide for adequate diet, housing, clothing, health care or transportation for themselves or their family*. Challenge your church to study the needs in your area, then develop a plan to break the cycle of poverty. See the current *Year Book*, page 67, or Missions Leader, for activity suggestions during *Focus on WMU*.

I AM RETIRING

When I joined Mrs. Ferguson, Mrs. Gunther, Rosa Fiechter and Sydney Portis as a member of the Kentucky WMU Staff in June 1967, I had no idea of the miles I would travel, the people I would meet, the missions causes I would get to promote, and what a blessing God gives when we passionately follow His leading! Now that I am "old" (66) I can "wear purple," and spend time being WMU director in my church, cooking, enjoying my "new" house, entertaining friends and "filling in the gaps," when needed by Kentucky WMU. My retirement will leave opportunities for others to find exciting ways to use their ideas and talents to lead Kentucky women in missions education. This is NOT saying "Good-bye" but sharing with you that as I "change schedules," the work of Kentucky WMU will always be of great importance to me and I will continue to be very much involved!

—Anna Mary Byrdwell

Adults

Hallelujah, Thine is the Glory! The 2004 WMU Fall retreats were a blessing! Over 600 women attended the retreats. Our God is an awesome God! Who else could have brought this many women together to worship and praise Him? Andrea Mullins and Judy Murray were inspirational as they encouraged women to be *Worthy of Honor and Praise*. The music was inspirational and encouraging. Many thanks to Lisa Hussung with Mandy Guss and Laura Weems, REJOICE! from FBC Mt. Washington and Shannon Thomas from FBC Paris. The missionaries and workshop leaders led our sessions and workshops with such enthusiasm and encouragement. God was in the house! Thanks to all of you who attended. Without you, we would not have even had the retreats.



If you have photos of one of the retreats that you are willing to share, please e-mail them or send via snail mail. A scrapbook of the retreats will be kept to take to next year's retreats for all to look at and reminisce. Also, it will be displayed at events and hopefully this will encourage others to attend in years to come. In advance, thanks!

Be ready for next year. There are only two retreats. This is because there is a national event at Ridgecrest the last week of September and if you can attend that event, you are encouraged to do so. You will read more about that closer to the event.

Now is the time to ready yourself for the next year!

January brings our emphasis book in the Round Table Discussion Groups. She

Walked With Jesus is an incredible book. If you have not read it yet, please do not wait. I couldn't put it down, because the women who were among the early Christ Followers were like you and me ... ordinary women called to do extraordinary things. They were willing to risk everything for Christ.

They truly denied themselves, took up the cross and followed Christ daily.

I am blessed to be a part of a mission's ministry though Kentucky WMU. This has been a good year. You have been instrumental in the goodness I feel I have received. I wish and pray for each of you a blessed and Christ-filled holiday season.

Peace, Joy and Blessings to you all!

—Wanda Walker

Youth

God "Revealed" Himself at Youth on Mission Night 2004 held at the Baptist Student Center at Western Kentucky University. Bill and Linda Egbert, missionaries to Costa Rica, shared some of the ways in which God reveals Himself to us. Students from WKU led in worship, games and small group seminars. Everyone participated in mission projects on Saturday. Thanks to the Egberts, Tommy Johnson, and Nora Hubbard for their help in putting the weekend together.

Rebecca Gardner represented Kentucky Acteens at the Kentucky Baptist Convention on November 15. Rebecca opened the worship service with prayer. Thank you, Rebecca, for doing such a great job.

We have a group of 8 Acteens and leaders headed for metro New York City next

summer. Please be in prayer for them.

You'll want to plan a "Road Trip" to Exalt 2005 at Georgetown College. All girls in grades 7-12 are invited to Exalt. Ashlee Wheeler, 2000 Georgetown College grad and former journeyman to Africa, will be our speaker. Everlife will be in concert. You can check them out at www.everlifeonline.com. This year, we are going to have a new feature, Exaltpalooza. What is Exaltpalooza? I'm going to keep you guessing until the brochure is mailed out. All I can tell you now is that it will be a lot of fun.

—LaRaine Dail

Preschool

Preschoolers can learn more about Jesus and His mission through Mission Friends! During the winter quarter:

- Involve preschoolers in the **International Mission Study** in December. The study, which focuses on missions in Mexico, can be found in the *International Missions Study 2004 Preschool Teaching Guide*.

- Observe **Focus on WMU**, February 14-20, to help your church recognize Mission Friends as a part of WMU. Plan with the church WMU director for this special emphasis. Ideas are in the *2004-2005 WMU Year Book*, pages 58-59.

- Begin preparing for the **North American Mission Study** coming up in March! Now is the time to set a date to have the study. The study for preschoolers will NOT be included as an insert in the Spring 2005 issue of *Start*. However, it will be on the Mission Friends Web site (www.missionfriends.com) in March 2005.



Children

Exciting adventures in missions education await the children in your church! Provide the opportunity for them to participate in the **2004 International Mission Study for Children**. Children will discover how missionaries are partnering with Bible translators to get a Bible translated for the Zapotec people of Mexico. Through the study they will experience the taste, sights and sounds of Mexico. Encourage members of Girls in Action, Royal Ambassadors and Children in Action to attend. Use this special time to invite boys and girls who are not involved in missions education.

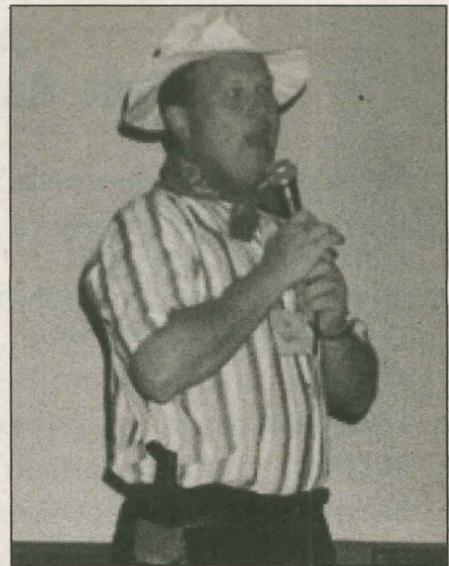
Aware (for GA leaders) and *Missions MatchFile* (for Children in Action directors) are great resources as you plan for your meetings each week. But do you read the articles in the front of each issue? Please take the time to do so. They are designed to



help you as a leader by providing planning tips, encouragement, and much more.

Girls and boys in Girls in Action and Children in Action are invited to the **GA and Children in Action Missions Event** on Saturday, April 9 during the WMU Annual Meeting at First Baptist Church, London. This is a special time for children and leaders to meet missionaries, make new friends, sing and have lots of other fun. The cost is \$2.00 per person attending. No preregistration for the event is required. Those attending the event can be involved in a ministry project by bringing pairs of new socks for children or adults. The socks collected will be distributed to programs for the needy in eastern Kentucky. For further information contact Kentucky WMU.

—Brenda Price



Bill Egbert, missionary to Costa Rica, shares the adventure and heart of missions with youth at Youth on Mission Night.



President's Perspective

Here we are in the midst of Christmas preparations. It's not too late to schedule a special program for your church's international missions emphasis. Our Lottie Moon offering is crucial to the work overseas. Encourage your church to go over its goal!



Cathy Chinn
Kentucky WMU
president

Now is the time to begin planning a trip for your women to the WMU Annual Meeting in London, April 8-9. Our featured guest speaker will be Barbara Joiner, my very favorite WMU speaker! The meeting will feature some ministries in Eastern Kentucky during our Friday evening session. You will not want to miss any of the sessions this year. Thanks to all the folks at London First Baptist for the work they will be doing to get ready for us.

Our new partnership with the WMU of Piaui, Brazil is going to be very exciting. It will go hand in hand with the Kentucky/ Brazil that begins in 2005. I met with the president and executive director of their WMU while I was in Teresina, Brazil this summer. They seemed very pleased and excited that Kentucky women would be willing to come to Brazil and enter into this partnership with them. We feel there will be several trips during this partnership. So, be alert to notices about applying to go.

It is hard to believe that our Anna Mary will not be found behind her desk in the WMU office when the new year begins. She was an encourager to me in the 70's when I was first becoming involved in WMU through Baptist Young Women. She has never stopped encouraging me and I hope she never will. Hats off to you, Anna Mary! Red hats, that is!

—Cathy Chinn

Cedar Crest Improvement Project begins



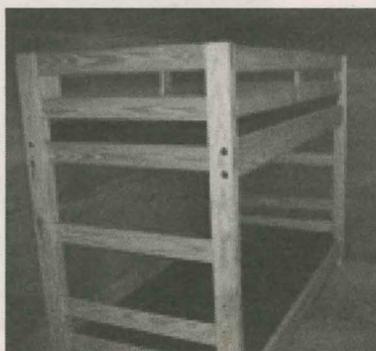
The Cedar Crest "face lift" is underway! Thanks to over 95 volunteers who have helped to clean, paint, make repairs, make and install new curtains, put in new tables and chairs, plant daylilies on the hill up to the chapel, and set up new bunk beds in three cabins. The new chairs were color coordinated with the curtains and have given each cabin a new look.

The job is not yet finished. We need to raise money for new bunk beds in the remaining eight cabins. Each bunk including mattresses costs a little less than \$450. Total to replace all the beds will be nearly \$3,600 per cabin or \$28,800. Repairs on the Martha Ware Chapel were started, but the major task of replacing the roof still is before us. An additional \$15,000 is needed for the roof. Once the roof is replaced we will look at new windows, doors, and carpet as funds are available.

You can be a part of the Cedar Crest improvement project . . .

• **As a volunteer:** Come help us plant day lilies, landscape, trim trees and make mulch. A licensed electrician is needed to replace the circuit breaker boxes in the cabins. We need to replace the guttering on the cabins. Donation of the labor and use of the machine to make the gutters

would be a great help. We need some volunteers to take down the old beds and assemble the new beds as we are able to order them. There is some painting to do.



Cedar Crest still needs money to purchase bunk beds for eight more cabins.

• **Through your donations:** Donations for bunk beds, repairs to Ware Chapel, or to be used as needed will help us continue the Cedar Crest improvements. We ask that any donations for Cedar Crest not take the place of gifts to your church, gifts through the Cooperative Program, or any of our special missions offerings (Eliza Broadus, Lottie Moon, Annie Armstrong, or associational offerings). Rather, this is an opportunity for WMU to give added support for missions camping at Cedar Crest.

Brazil WMU Partnership

In conjunction with the Kentucky Baptist Convention partnership with the Piaui Baptist Convention of Brazil, Kentucky WMU has been invited to partner with the WMU there. Piaui is the least evangelized of all Brazilian states. The new Brazil partnership officially begins in 2005. Cathy Chinn, our state WMU president, met with the Piaui WMU president

and executive director this past August during a pre-partnership trip. We have been asked to provide training for WMU leaders and members, as well as to send teams for a prayer-walk.

Our first Kentucky WMU partnership trip will be in February 2005. More will be planned as we have the

opportunity to get to know the Piaui WMU leaders, lead training, and pray with them for God's direction.

If you would like to participate in a Kentucky WMU team going to Brazil, please contact Cathy Chinn or Joy Bolton. We will add your name to the list of those wanting to go. As teams are being formed, we will then contact you as to your availability. Teams will be

formed based on the particular project request and availability of persons to participate. Team members must provide their own travel expenses and will need to complete a KBC partnership application. Approximate cost of a mission trip to Brazil is \$2,000.



Hotels for Annual Meeting April 8-9, London

First Baptist Church is located off I-75, Exit 38. Please take note of exit number when selecting a hotel. Special rates will be available at most motels, but were not available at press time. We recommend contacting the hotel using the local number rather than the national reservation number to inquire about any special conference rate.

- ◆ Best Western - Harvest Inn
I-75, Exit 41, Ky. Hwy. 80
800-528-1234 or 606-864-2222
- ◆ Comfort Suites
I-75, Exit 38, Hwy. 192
800-228-5150 or 606-877-7848
- ◆ Days Inn
I-75, Exit 38, Hwy. 192
800-329-7466 or 606-864-7331
- ◆ Hampton Inn
I-75, Exit 38, Hwy. 192
800-426-7866 or 606-877-1000
- ◆ Holiday Inn Express
I-75, Exit 38, Hwy. 192
606-862-0077
Use code: KWMU
Cut off: 3/8/05
Rate: \$69.95 + tax (King/Queen)
- ◆ Park Inn
I-75, Exit 41, Hwy. 80
800-670-7275 or 606-878-7678
- ◆ Ramada Inn & Suites
I-75, Exit 38, Hwy. 192
888-298-2054 or 606-877-3400
- ◆ Red Roof Inns
I-75, Exit 41, Hwy. 80
800-THE-ROOF or 606-862-8844
- ◆ Sleep Inn
I-75, Exit 41, Hwy. 80
800-753-3746 or 606-877-9700

Giving for the Future of Kentucky WMU

We are grateful for your financial gifts in support of Kentucky WMU. Gifts to the Kentucky WMU Heritage Fund (6/1/04- 8/31/04) include:

In Honor Of:

Clowns 4 Christ

Lincoln County WMU
Ella Ritchey Flynn

Donor:

First Baptist Church,
London
Irma Woodrow
Grace Baptist Church

In Memory Of:

Thelma Mengedoht
Reba Price
Ray Mullendore
Evelyn Wilson
Martha Hedges
Mary Jane Thurman
Nella Wadlington

Donor:

Carolyn Simpson
Buck Grove Baptist Women
Brenda Price
Anna White
Ann E. Moffett
Maribeth Hambrick
Grober-Parrish Baptist
Women



Camp 2005

Mission Adventure Camp for Girls at Cedar Crest

Get ready for an exciting summer of missions *and* adventure! Girls who have completed grades 3-6 can participate in a weeklong camp or express camp. Girls who have completed grades 1-3 may attend an overnight with their mothers. Church chaperones are also invited to attend a week of camp in 2005.

The summer of 2005 offers a new adventure for girls who have completed grades 6-10. Girls will participate in ministry projects in nearby communities. You won't want to miss this opportunity!

Dates

June 13-17	Grades 3-6
June 17-18	Mother/Daughter Overnight, Grades 1-3
June 20-24	Grades 3-6
June 24-25	Mother/Daughter Overnight, Grades 1-3
June 27-July 1	Grades 6-10
July 6-8	Express Week, Grades 3-6
July 8-9	Mother/Daughter Overnight, Grades 1-3
July 11-15	Grades 3-6

Cost

Weeklong Camp	\$155 before April 4, 2005
Express Week	\$80 before April 4, 2005
Mother/Daughter Overnight	\$42 before April 4, 2005

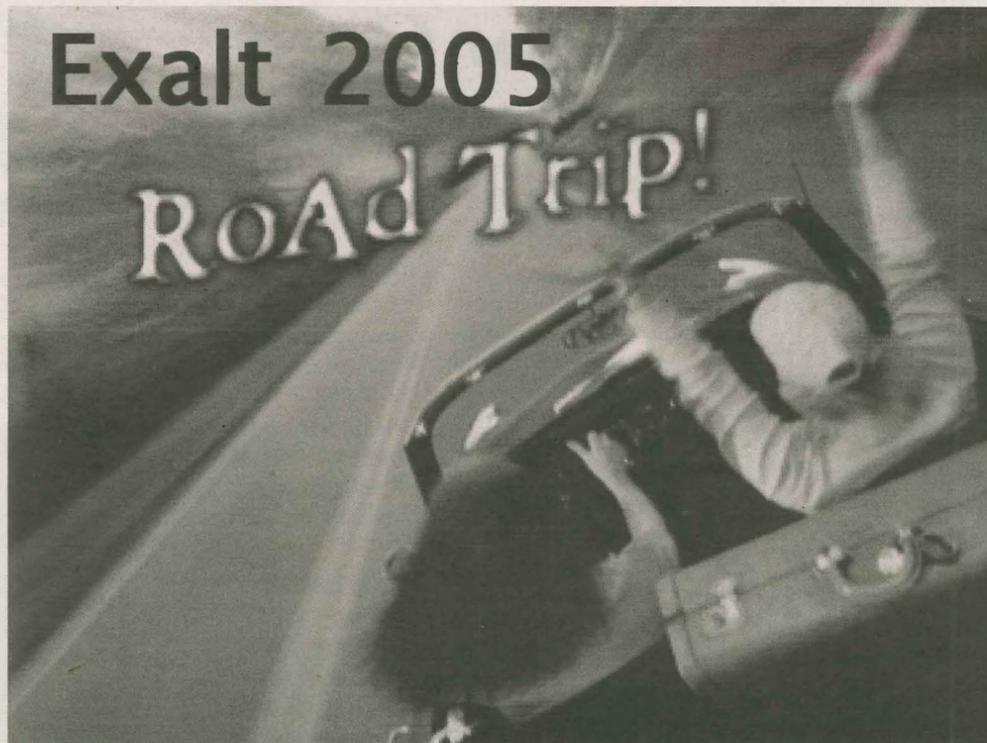
Overnight Camp at Jonathan Creek

June 25-26	Mother/Daughter Overnight (grades 1-3 & moms or mom substitute) GA Overnight (grades 4-6 & chaperones) Acteens Splash (grades 7-12 & chaperones)
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Cost:

\$35 for Mother/Daughter Overnight (includes meals & lodging)
\$38 for GA Overnight (includes meals & lodging)
\$43 for Acteens Splash (includes meals, lodging, & waterfront activities)

The 2005 camp information is available and will be mailed to church leaders in January. For further information, contact the Kentucky WMU office at (888) 254-5726.



April 15-16 ♦ Georgetown College

Ashlee Wheeler, Speaker Everlife in Concert

Experience the Summer of a Lifetime! Join the Camp Staff at Cedar Crest!

You'll have the opportunity to share the love of Jesus with young girls. You'll learn more about missions and be involved in missions at Mission Adventure Camp for Girls.

Positions	Length of Service	Qualifications	Application Due
Unit Leader	6 weeks	College age	Jan. 28, 2005
Lifeguard	"	"	"
Cabin Leader	"	"	"
Kitchen Coordinator	"	"	"
Assistant Cabin Leader	5-6 weeks	High School, Junior or Senior	Jan. 28, 2005

For more information, contact Stacy Nall at Kentucky WMU
Stacy.Nall@kybaptist.org; 502-244-6485 or 888-254-5726



Baptist Nursing Fellowship needs your help with the Spring Ministry project: To provide an educational, spiritual renewal and fellowship weekend retreat to pregnant teens that would not otherwise have this opportunity. The following items are needed for donation to help make this an unforgettable weekend:

- ◆ Baby shower gift items for twelve girls (blankets, diapers, bottles, baby lotions, baby shampoo, sleepers, baby wipes, newborn toys, etc)
- ◆ Door prizes for Baby shower
- ◆ Bibles to give to participants
- ◆ Financial sponsorship for teenagers to participate (approximately \$2000 is needed)
- ◆ Make-up, facial cleaners, etc for Extreme Make-Over sessions
- ◆ Prayers

For more information, contact Wanda Walker

Scholarships Available

Kentucky WMU has scholarships available mainly to Kentucky women who are ...

Preparing for a career in missions or social work

Preparing for a full-time church related vocation

Acteens members in their senior year involved in MissionsQuest, etc.

Some scholarship funds are available to women from outside Kentucky preparing for the above careers, and the recipient for one scholarship can be a Kentucky man preparing for a career in missions. Contact our office for a scholarship brochure or application.

Applications are due in our office by Feb. 1, 2005.

Calendar

November

- 1 Baptist Women's World Day of Prayer
- 16-17 Kentucky Baptist Convention Annual Meeting, St. Matthews BC, Louisville
- 28-12/5 Season of Prayer for International Missions & Lottie Moon Christmas Offering

December

- 11/28-5 Season of Prayer for International Missions & Lottie Moon Christmas Offering

February 2005

- 14-20 Focus on WMU
- 28/3-1 Evangelism Conference, Valley View BC, Louisville

March

- 4-5 Creative Ministries Festival and Youth Mission Workshop, St. Matthews BC, Louisville
- 6-13 Season of Prayer for North American Missions & Annie Armstrong Easter Offering
- 11-12 Creative Ministries Festival, and Youth Mission Workshop, Hillvue BC, Bowling Green
- 18-19 KY WMU Resource Team Training KBC East Bldg., Louisville
- 27 Easter

April

- 7 KY WMU Executive Board Meeting, London
- 8-9 KY WMU Annual Meeting, First BC, London
- 15-16 Exalt, Georgetown College, Georgetown

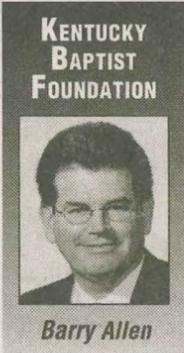
Accountability confirmed

Process affirms integrity for foundation and its audit

Long before the scandals in corporate America resulted in the requirement of organizations to have audit committees, your Kentucky Baptist Foundation established an audit committee of its board of directors.

The foundation's audit committee, which consists of five board members with experience in financial reporting, met recently with independent, external auditors to review the results of the operations for the fiscal year ended Aug. 31, 2004. I thought you would be interested in understanding how our process works.

The objectives of our audit committee are: (1) to ensure the annual audit is conducted in an efficient, cost-effective and objective manner, (2) to oversee the financial and control systems, (3) to recommend to the board approval of the audited financial statements, including the selection of appropriate accounting policies and practices and (4) to recommend to the board the appointment of the independent, external auditing firm, and the appropriate fee, for the next year.



Barry Allen

During the committee's meeting, it meets privately with the auditors, without any staff member present, to ascertain whether there are any concerns that should be brought to the committee's attention, such as (a) lack of cooperation or disagreements with staff, (b) attempts by staff to restrict the scope of the examination or (c) discovery of any misstatements or irregularities. The auditors reported there were no disagreements and no difficulties in dealing with our staff.

The committee also meets privately with the staff without any auditors present to ensure that staff had no concerns about the conduct of the audit by the auditors and we had no concerns.

So, I am pleased to report the auditors rendered an unqualified opinion that the foundation's financial statements present fairly its financial position, and the changes in net assets were in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles. That's accountability confirmed!

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

Kudzu



Doug Marlette

Church of the Covered Dish



Thom Tapp

Bible Crosswords

John H. Thornberg

Across

- 1 Shushan, per the NIV
- 5 ___ cake
- 9 "I therefore so ___, not as uncertainly; so fight I" (1 Corinthians 9:26)
- 12 Tore
- 13 The Syrians of ___ (2 Samuel 10, hired by Ammon's heirs to fight David)
- 14 "Love ___ another" (1 John 4:7)
- 15 Brother of Jacob
- 16 Brother of Cain
- 17 Fuss
- 18 History
- 20 Moses' mouthpiece
- 22 Friendship
- 25 Alto ___ (jazz instrument)
- 26 O.T. major prophet (abbr.)
- 27 Melchizedek, king of ___
- 30 "O sole ___"
- 33 Seth's sire
- 34 Bridle part
- 35 Together
- 36 Time of revival (abbr.)
- 37 "City of David" (Luke 2)
- 39 What CBS, for one, would like to do: ___ Fox?
- 40 Elemental particles
- 41 Shake violently
- 44 Window component
- 46 Crone
- 47 Like a funk
- 49 New Testament book

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12				13					14		
15				16					17		
			18	19			20	21			
22	23	24				25					
26			27	28	29			30	31	32	
33				34				35			
36				37				38			
			39					40			
41	42	43				44	45				
46				47	48			49	50	51	52
53				54				55			
56				57				58			

- 53 "Love worketh no ___ to his neighbour" (Romans 13:10)
- 54 Like a certain "ranger"
- 55 "But ___ found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Genesis 6:8)
- 56 Two-___, as tissue
- 57 Loose ___
- 58 Times long past
- 22 Slightly open
- 23 Darius the ___ (Daniel 11)
- 24 Middle Eastern country
- 25 Father of Enos (Luke 3)
- 28 Be a party to
- 29 American ___ (college course, abbr.)
- 30 Line that separates the earth's crust from its mantle (abbr.)

Down

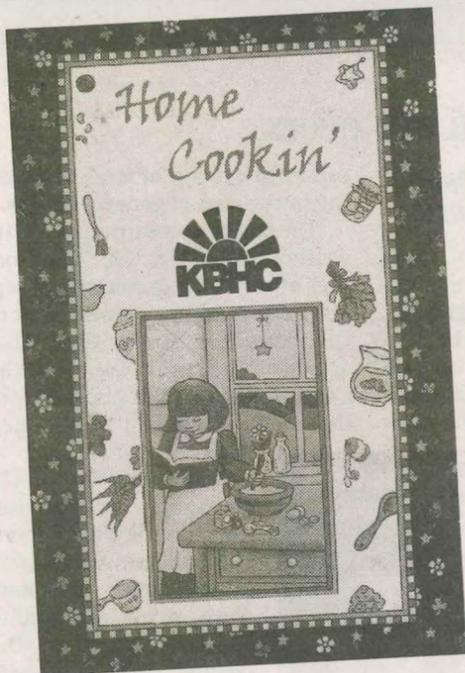
- 1 Compass direction
- 2 Moments of elation
- 3 "Let the ___ roar, and the fulness thereof" (Psalm 96:11)
- 4 One who votes
- 5 Peter, for one
- 6 "And they put on him a purple ___" (John 19:2)
- 7 Honest one
- 8 Son of Beor (Numbers 22:5)
- 9 Deafening din
- 10 Let go
- 11 ___ tetra (tropical fish)
- 19 Yiddish exclamations
- 21 Get rid of
- 31 Thing to be done
- 32 Units of electrical resistance
- 35 City near Jerusalem
- 37 Collection
- 38 ___ Cruces, NM
- 39 Conjunction
- 41 Single snack
- 42 "Then led they Jesus ... into the ___ of judgment" (John 18:28)
- 43 Unseen
- 44 "Here am I, ___ me" (Isaiah 6:8)
- 45 Mimics
- 48 Many moons
- 50 Dove ditty
- 51 Bituminous pitch
- 52 Pronoun

Last week's solution

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
S	H	Y	D	A	S	H	S	P	O	T
L	E	E	A	C	H	E	N	O	A	H
I	A	D	J	N	E	D	A	I	R	Y
P	R	A	I	S	E	H	I	P	S	
W	R	Y	B	E	S	P	E	A	K	
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A	N	V	E	N	U	S	B	R	A	D
P	A	T	I	E	N	T	G	E	E	
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T	O	E	O	P	E	N	O	N	E	

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Shipped in time for Christmas!

Just \$15 each, including tax & S&H.

Order today! All proceeds benefit the youth in Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children's care.

Order online at www.kbhc.org or call us at 1-800-456-1386.



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Some companies welcome red kettles after Target's ban

Why would some see an affiliation with the kettles as an advantage while others are coming to see it as a liability?

By Jeffrey MacDonald
Religion News Service

Alexandria, Va. (RNS)—For more than a century, the Salvation Army has been helping the needy during the holidays. But now the red-clad bell ringers are the ones getting some extra help to make sure their familiar kettles and donations of loose change don't vanish like Santa's sleigh.

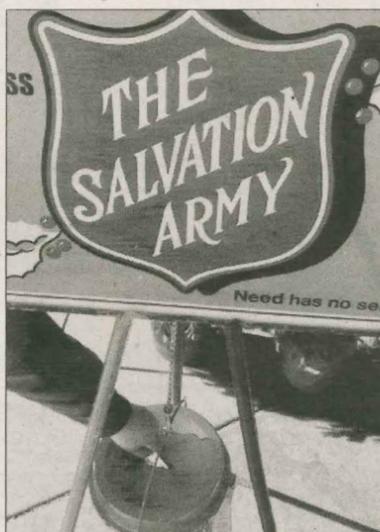
On the heels of news that coin-catching kettles no longer are welcome at Target stores, five retail chains are boosting the Salvation Army's presence at their stores.

AutoZone, BJ's Wholesale Club, Books-A-Million, Circuit City and Michaels Stores announced they will either introduce or expand existing red kettle programs.

The Salvation Army is depending on big business to open the door to thousands of small donations. Last year the red kettles at commercial properties collected \$93 million for local relief efforts. Organizers hope this year could bring in as much or more.

Non-solicitation policies have swept the kettles off many a national retailer's stoop in recent years, but some retail execs are seeing a fresh opportunity to align with what they regard as a quality brand charity.

"The Salvation Army was facing a fund-raising deficit, so we decided to expand our relationship," said Amy Russ, director of community relations for BJ's Wholesale Club. Before this year, BJ's had welcomed the Army's gift shopping program for needy children at its 154 shopping clubs on the East Coast, but not



its kettles.

The Salvation Army's recent gains and losses for kettle platforms are triggering questions about what's motivating businesses to move in opposite directions. Why would some see an affiliation with the kettles as an advantage while others are coming to see it as a liability?

The answer might have something to do with the Army's dual identity as a brand-name, well-respected charity on the one hand, and a fiery vehicle for saving souls through Jesus Christ on the other.

"As a result of the scandals, big companies are almost desperate to show they're about something more than making money," said Marc Gunther, senior writer at Fortune magazine and author of "Faith and Fortune: The Quiet Revolution to Reform American Business."

Keeping a well-known charity away might seem counterintuitive,

but some companies may be equally sensitive to other concerns, including brand-name image and religious sensitivity.

"It just shows you're getting different thinking within corporate America," he said.

Trying to make up \$8.9 million

According to Target spokesperson Lena Michaud, concerns about endorsing a religious project were not a factor in the decision to drop the kettles. The company has a long-standing policy of not allowing any solicitation on its premises, she said. This year it chose to end its traditional exemption for the Salvation Army, lest Target be accused of playing favorites.

Kettles at Target stores brought in \$8.9 million last year, or approximately \$10,000 per Target store

through the holiday season. To help make up the loss, the charity is steering potential givers to its Web site, www.salvationarmyusa.org, which generated \$1.6 million during the holidays last year.

As far as the charity's religious affiliation is concerned, "some (donors) may give for that reason, and others may not give for the same reason," said Theresa Whitfield, a spokeswoman for the Salvation Army's national headquarters in Alexandria, Va. But in the end, she said she expects a universal concern for those in need to win the day as a motivating force.

"The American public is generous," Whitfield said. "We think they will, in fact, want to give more (as a result of cutbacks in kettle stations). We think people will want to fill that void."

15-Passenger Van Safety is Big News these Days!

LifeWay Bus Sales has the solution—a 15-passenger mini-bus that meets Federal safety standards.



- 15 Passengers (No CDL)
- Center Aisle
- Low First Step
- Raised Roof
- Longer Wheelbase
- Dual Rear Wheels
- Steel Construction
- Also Larger Buses - up to 42 Passengers!

Buses are provided for LifeWay by

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SERIOUS CONCERNS

- How much financial liability can your church bear?
- Insurance rates are going up!
- Legal Advisers are saying, "Remove the last row of seats!"
- Some states have already put mandatory replacement deadlines in action!
- Charitable Organizations and Child Transportation Businesses are at Risk!

'I am sorry that I have to write this note'

Prayer and contributions from faithful friends keep Oneida's ministry going

From my very first days in this office, I became aware of the tremendous impact our faithful friends have on all that we do. Every day letters arrive in the mail, often with a financial gift that makes our work possible. I vividly remember Christmas in 1994 when I opened a letter that had two quarters inside. Those two quarters represented the annual gift a dear friend makes to our ministry nearly every year. I have never met her, and I know very little about her. She has no way of knowing how much those two quarters have impacted me and my appreciation for those who support our work.

Over the years I have received many letters with special donations inside. One person wrote that after receiving her Social Security check and paying all of her bills she had a few dollars left over and wanted us to have them. It is hard to imagine anyone having anything left over after paying the bills from a Social Security check!

Another letter came with some money in it and these words: "The enclosed currency was found in a parking lot." The person who found that money decided it was more important for Oneida to have it. You might remember reading in one of my articles about a widow lady in her late 80s who had been putting aside some money nearly all of her life for a "rainy day." Now, well advanced in life, she told me that she had never had a "rainy day" and she guessed she never would need the money, so she gave it to us.

Many vacation Bible school children through the years have given Oneida boys and girls their

offerings. Recently, two senior saints made one of their regular visits to our campus. The wife placed a jar on my desk that contained some change and currency. I was told that every time they went out to eat, were given gift certificates to eat out, or if their meal was being paid for by someone else, they placed money in the jar equal to the amount of the meal, including the tip. Now, one year later they were giving the jar and its contents to help our boys and girls. The business office told me later that the jar contained over \$1,300!

On and on I could go about dedicated, faithful friends who find unique opportunities to support this ministry. It is humbling to know we have so many friends who love us and support our efforts to help deserving young people.

When I opened my mail today, I unfolded a letter that had a check inside. This friend wrote in part, "I'm sorry to have to write this note, but our medical bills and insurance have gone up so much that we will have to discontinue our gift ... but you will still be in our prayers." The check was for \$10. Not much in the eyes of the world, but like the widow's mite, when given with a heart of love and sacrifice, it can accomplish great things. We will miss the monthly gift of these faithful friends, who have been supporting our ministry for over 20 years. However, knowing that they will keep us in their prayers will continue to be a source of encouragement to us.

I thank God for the many faithful and generous friends He has given to this ministry.

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

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

Affirmation from our peers

Clear Creek receives reports from accreditation agencies

A vital component to Clear Creek's mission is our relationship with accreditation agencies. The college is accredited by two agencies: the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the Association for Biblical Higher Education. These agencies provide a balance for us to be evaluated by typical liberal arts institutions and by Bible colleges.

The usual route to accreditation proceeds from applicant to candidate to accredited status. Institutions first receive a five-year affirmation and then a 10-year reaffirmation. During the past year, Clear Creek has worked to secure our first 10-year reaffirmation from 'SACS' Commission on Colleges. An off-site review committee received the college response to 74 specific requirements, standards and mandates covering 10 areas of college life. The committee noted "non-compliance" on only three issues.

An on-site committee of six educators visited the campus Oct. 4-6. They followed up on concerns of the off-site committee and closely examined a "quality enhancement plan" we submitted, designed to im-

prove the quality of student learning in the area of general studies.

The on-site committee issued its written report Oct. 22. "The findings of this visiting committee represent a preliminary assessment of the institution at this time; final action on the report rests with the Commission on Colleges. A copy of the entire report can be obtained from the institution."

We were very much encouraged by the visiting committee's report. The college was in compliance with all standards except our quality enhancement plan. The faculty and committees have four months to submit a response to specific recommendations related to this plan.

The Commission on Colleges will receive our response and make a final decision in June 2005.

This week we received good news from ABHE that "the distance education experience being provided for students at the Kingston, Tenn., location is qualitatively equivalent to the programming being provided for the associate's degree in ministry on the main campus in Pineville."

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

Graham still 'puffs' Jesus

Evangelist returns to area where 8-week crusade brought him national acclaim

By Marshall Allen
The Pasadena (Calif.) Star-News

Pasadena, Calif. (RNS)—At 86, Billy Graham moves a little more slowly. But his four-day California crusade revealed that the evangelist can still fill stadiums with his classic presentation of the gospel.

More than 312,000 people heard the evangelist preach during the Greater Los Angeles Billy Graham Crusade, Nov. 18-21 at the Rose Bowl. Crusade officials said 12,539 people committed their lives to Christ.

Experts in evangelism question the relevance and effectiveness of massive revival meetings. But Graham said people respond in greater numbers today to his invitations than they did when he started his ministry. In 1949, about 350,000 people attended the eight-week tent crusade near downtown Los Angeles that garnered the evangelist national attention.

"America's pastor"

Experts describe Graham's contribution to modern Christianity in superlatives. He's practically a Christian statesman and has been called "America's pastor."

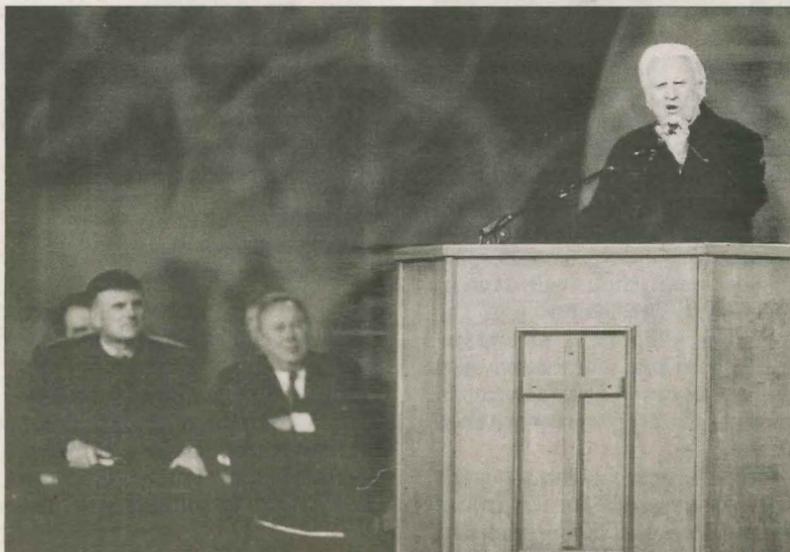
Graham has preached the gospel to 210 million people in person, more than anyone else in history, and has trained thousands of international evangelists to spread the gospel. He has been called the greatest evangelist since the Apostle Paul.

But in an interview in Pasadena, Graham said he does not even consider himself a leader in the evangelical movement. He refused to take credit for effective strategies, attributing his success to the work of the Holy Spirit.

"I think I'm just a sinner saved by the grace of God," Graham said.

During Graham's first Los Angeles revival in 1949, the young preacher attracted the attention of newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst.

Hearst's two-word memo, "Puff



L.A. CRUSADE Billy Graham preaches the gospel during the Greater Los Angeles Billy Graham Crusade, which ended Nov. 21 at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, Calif. Attendance totaled more than 312,000 for the four-day event, and 12,539 people committed their lives to Christ. (RNS photo by Lee Celano)



PURPOSE-DRIVEN PASTOR Rick Warren, author of "The Purpose-Driven Life" and pastor of Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, Calif., forsook his trademark Hawaiian shirts for a suit to lead a prayer. (BP photo by Tobin Berry)

Graham," caused editors in the national chain of newspapers to splash their front pages with Billy Graham headlines.

It also gave Graham the media attention he needed to extend the crusade beyond the expected three weeks. That crusade ended Nov. 20, 1949—55 years and one day before the end of this crusade, likely to be Graham's last in Southern California.



FOR ALL AGES The Christian rock band Jars of Clay, which typically performs during the Saturday night youth-oriented portion of Billy Graham crusades, sang on Sunday morning at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, Calif. (BP photo by Tobin Perry)

Sarah Berry, 66, of Silver Lake, Calif., was a little girl when she first saw Graham at the 1949 revival meetings.

Berry said Graham made a big impression on her. "He was very dynamic, very youthful," said Berry, a retired elementary school principal. "Dark, curly hair, a vibrant and tremendous voice, with a tinge of the Southern accent too. He spoke with such conviction about people finding Christ."

Graham is no longer the youthful evangelist who crisscrossed the globe preaching the message of Jesus Christ. He used a walker and the assistance of his son, Franklin, to make his way across the stage at the Rose Bowl.

Health issues

Franklin Graham now runs the day-to-day operations of the Charlotte, N.C.-based Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

Billy Graham suffers from Parkinson's disease and tires easily, so he was sequestered during much of his stay in Pasadena. In his heyday, Graham said he preached to more people on the street than in his revival meetings.

Graham's health has become a constant topic of conversation, and people ask which crusade will be his last. The evangelist spent most of the past year in bed after breaking his hip and pelvis in two separate falls.

When asked how he's feeling, Graham laughs and says: "I'm 86, and that's all I need to say. I'm 86."

He now preaches from a pulpit that allows him to sit down when he gets tired. He is scheduled to preach at one more crusade, in June in New York City, and said he might preach at another after that if his health permits.

"People have said this could be the last sermon I will ever preach," Graham told the Sunday evening Rose Bowl audience "And it may be. But I don't know. That's all in God's hands."

He then jokingly reminded the audience that his long-time friend George Beverly Shea—who had just sung "Softly and Tenderly"—was nearly 10 years older than he.

"And it is certainly not the last time he is going to sing!" Graham

More languages than ever

Pasadena, Calif. (RNS)—Evangelist Billy Graham has always gone to extraordinary efforts to communicate his message.

But his recent four-day California crusade was instantly interpreted into an unprecedented 26 languages, including sign language.

Ira Schipper, who has worked for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association for 34 years, said crusades have been translated since 1980, but none has been immediately interpreted into as many languages as this one.

Interpreters sat in individual booths wearing headsets. They listened to Graham's message in English then quickly interpreted it into another tongue. Each language was broadcast on a low-wave frequency. Attendees



NATIVE TONGUE Volunteers translated Billy Graham's messages into 26 languages at the Los Angeles crusade. (RNS photo by Lee Celano)

at the Rose Bowl heard the translated messages via headsets tuned to the appropriate frequency.

Schipper said it's important that each person hears the message in his or her "heart language."

"We believe that the message we have, that Mr. Graham's been preaching for all these years, is the answer to the problems of the world, if people would get right with God through Jesus Christ," he said.

The interpreters are all volunteers from local churches—just a few of the 20,000 people from 1,200 churches who are sponsoring the event.

On Nov. 18, the crusade's first day, Graham preached a simple message about the sins of man and the love of God to a crowd of about 45,000. It was the type of sermon that Graham, 86, has been preaching for 55 years in stadiums around the world.

Graham's sermon, delivered in a matter-of-fact manner, still has the ability to stir people's souls. When he invited his audience to come to the field and give their lives to Christ, they poured from the stands.

Officials from the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association estimated that 2,500 people came forward. Some held hands, others pushed wheelchair-users toward the stage. Almost the entire field filled with people.

"You've come to Jesus," Graham said to the group gathered before the stage. "He'll forgive you. He's willing to change you. But you have to allow Him."

Historically, Graham always has embraced the latest technology to communicate to an international audience. In 1995, during the Global Mission from San Juan, Puerto Rico, crusade organizers used satellite technology to beam tape-delayed messages in more than 100 languages to sites around the world.

"They estimate more than a billion people heard at least one of the programs," said William Martin, author of the Graham biography "Prophet With Honor." "Nobody had done it on that big of a scale."

said to an appreciative audience.

Health struggles and the realities of aging have not made Graham dwell on dying. He said in an interview he reflected on his mortality in 1934, at age 16, when he recommitted his life to Christ at a revival meeting.

"I'm happy to go," he said of dying. "I'm ready to go. I'm looking forward to it."

Graham's wife, Ruth Bell Graham, 84, no longer accompanies Graham to crusades. Graham said he is always eager to return to her.

"We have a romance in our 80s by looking into each other's eyes," said Graham. "She's been an invalid for many years and I love her more now, by far, than when I first married her."

With additional reporting by David Finnigan for Associated Baptist Press and Tobin Perry and Lauri Arnold for Baptist Press

PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following missionaries, ministries and workers in Brazil and the International Baptist Convention, where Kentucky Baptists have partnerships:

International Service Corps workers Hilton and Alice Olive as they seek God's direction for ministry among the English-speaking community of Bucharest, Hungary, through the International Baptist Church.

Baptist workers Steve and Celeste Brubaker in Germany request prayers for opportunities to share their faith this Advent season, so that residents decorating their homes will come to realize the true meaning of Christmas.

An "English Corner" ministry at a university in Fortaleza, Brazil. Missionaries Bruce and Cherise Wenger are working with a student ministries team to help teach conversational English and build relationships with students. "We meet every Tuesday and Friday morning at 10 a.m.," Bruce writes. "Pray that the relationship building will lead to opportunities to share the good news with each of our new friends."

Missionaries in Malta, who will meet soon to plan for ministries for the new year.

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **BARDSTOWN**—Bardstown Church's choir will present "Living Nativity" Dec. 19-22, 6-8 p.m. **Gerald Martin** is pastor.

■ **CENTRAL CITY**—Calvary Church will hold a benefit concert Dec. 4, 6 p.m., featuring the **DeArmond Family, Security** and **First Love for Dana Vincent**, a leukemia survivor, who is waiting to receive a double lung transplant. **Roger Skipworth** is pastor.

■ **COLD SPRING**—Christ Church recently called **Randy Coleman** as pastor.

■ **CROMWELL**—Green River Church will present "Night of the Nativity" drive-through Christmas scenes Dec. 3, 4, 10 and 11, 6-8:30 p.m. **Kelley Harris** is pastor.

■ **EDDYVILLE**—Eddyville Church's Teen Creative Ministries will present "365 Days of Christmas" Dec. 12, 7 p.m. **Tim Perdue** is pastor.

■ **ELIZABETHTOWN**—Severns Valley Church will present its Living Christmas Tree Dec. 9-10, 7:30 p.m.; and Dec. 11-12, 5 and 8 p.m. Contact the church office for tickets at (270) 765-7822. **Billy Compton** is pastor.

■ **FORT MITCHELL**—Fort Mitchell Church recently called **Janna Lusby** as interim minister of music. **Harold Pike** is interim pastor.

■ **GREENVILLE**—Second Church's adult choir will present "Christmas

Is Jesus" Dec. 11, 7 p.m., and Dec. 12, 6 p.m. The children's choir will present a dramatic musical Dec. 19, 6 p.m. **Ray England** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Beechmont Church's youth drama team/ensemble will present the musical "Christmas Conversations" Dec. 5, 6:30 p.m. The children's choir will present "Angel Alert" Dec. 12, 6:30 p.m. The adult choir will present "One of Us" Dec. 19, 6:30 p.m. The church also will host a candlelight service on Christmas Eve at 5 p.m. **Derek Yelton** is pastor.

Carlisle Avenue Church's adult choir will present "The Christmas Post" on Dec. 10-11, 7 p.m., and Dec. 12, 6 p.m. Contact the church office for tickets at (502) 363-2606. **Shawn Merithew** is pastor.

Deer Park Church's adult choir will present Handel's "Messiah" Dec. 5, 10:45 a.m. **David Platt** is pastor.

Hurstbourne Church's music ministry will present "Journey to the Manger" Dec. 11, 6 p.m., and Dec. 12, 2:30 and 7 p.m. **Wesley Pitts** is interim pastor.

Parkland Church will hold a "Compassionate Friends" candlelight vigil Dec. 12, 5:30 p.m. The church choir will present "The Story of Christmas" at 7 p.m. **Tom Curry** is pastor.

68 IMB missionaries appointed to 'carry the light of the gospel'



TESTIMONY Karla Jackson shares a testimony about how God called her and husband to missionary service. (IMB photo)

Del City, Okla. (BP)—A group of 68 Southern Baptist international missionaries were appointed Nov. 16 during the closing session of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma's annual meeting.

During the service at First Southern Baptist Church of Del City, Okla., the new International Mission Board missionaries shared testimonies about how God called them to overseas service.

"An all-night festival for a Muslim saint was an opportunity to meet a young man who invited us



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December

13-14 KBC Mission Board meeting, Baptist Building, Middletown.

24-31 KBC Christmas Holidays, Baptist Building closed.

January

13-15 Shepherding the Shepherd Conference, Lexington.

25 Pastors' Forum, Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.

27-28 Quarterly Prayer Meeting for Spiritual Awakening, Maple Grove Baptist Church, Louisville.

28-29 Preschool/Children's Ministry Meeting, Trinity Baptist Church, Lexington.

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

Walnut Street Church recently hosted a retirement reception for **Billie Payne**, the church's minister of recreation and activities for more than 29 years. **Rusty Ellison** is pastor.

West Broadway Church's children's choir will present the musical, "How the Grouch Found Christmas" Dec. 5, 6 p.m. **Sherman Ramsey** is pastor.

■ **OWENSBORO**—Twelve senior adults from First Church recently traveled to New Orleans to participate in Mission Lab sponsored by New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Participants were involved in several ministry projects including Hope Haven, a facility for abused and neglected children; French Quarter Ministry where they handed out care packages to the homeless; and the Brantley Center, a shelter for the homeless. **Garry Baldwin** is pastor.

■ **PADUCAH**—Immanuel Church's choir will present "The Life of Christ in Living Pictures" Dec. 9-11, 7 p.m., and Dec. 12, 6 p.m. Tickets are available by contacting the church office at (270) 443-5306 or online at www.immanuel-paducah.org. **Jamie Broome** is pastor.

Mary Russell, whose husband, Charles, is pastor of First Liberty Missionary Church, died Nov. 6 at age 67. Mrs. Russell served as a Sunday school teacher and assistant Sunday school superintendent. In addition to her husband, she is survived by one son, one daughter, four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

■ **SOMERSET**—First Church will present its Living Christmas Tree Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m., and Dec. 12, 5 and 7:30 p.m. Contact the church at (606) 678-5106 for tickets. **Bill Haynes** is pastor.

to visit his family," said one couple. "Walking the dirt roads of a completely Muslim village, knowing that no one there had ever heard the gospel, our hearts were forever burdened to bring the truth to them."

The Scripture helped one new missionary understand God's desire for her to leave her circle of light and carry a candle into the darkness, she said.

"Five years ago, I started seminary, and there God opened my heart to think beyond my comfort

level," she noted. "Isaiah 49:6 taught me that I was thinking too small. God wanted me to be a light, to bring His salvation to the ends of the earth."

God expects all His people to help carry the light of the gospel, said another couple.

"Twelve years ago ... we were simultaneously called to missions at a conference," they said. "It was there we first realized that missions is simply ordinary people doing ordinary things for an extraordinary God."

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE: Church pews. Beautiful, high-quality hardwood pews (one 14-foot; one 20-foot; some 9-foot). Excellent condition. For more information, please call (859) 635-5725.

FOR SALE: Premium canvas artwork depicting high-impact nature scenes coupled with inspirational Scripture verses—great for gifts, home and church decorations. www.oceanalmimages.com.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music who can bring energy and passion to a traditional church with blended music styles. Fax resumé to (859) 299-2914, or send to Rosemont Baptist Church, 556 Rosemont Gardens, Lexington, KY 40503.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of music for Baptist church with combined traditional and contemporary services. Job description available upon request; salary and benefits package negotiable. Submit resumé to: Personnel Committee, Cecilia Baptist Church, 416 East Main, Cecilia, KY 42724.

SEEKING: Full-time, single-staff pastor (LaRue County). Send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, Barren Run Baptist Church, 3931 Airline Road, Sonora, KY 42776.

SEEKING: God's called man for full-time pastor of Temple Hill Baptist Church, 8427 Tompkinsville Road, Glasgow, KY 42141. Church resident membership: 395; worship attendance: 135; Sunday school attendance: 105. Please send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, 124 Siloam Road, Glasgow, KY 42141, or fax to (270) 651-6087.

SEEKING: Part-time music minister. Send resumé to: Palestine Baptist Church, 80 Church Lane, Campbellsville, KY 42718, or e-mail resumé to pbc@kyol.net.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor who loves pastoring, does scriptural-based expository preaching applicable to life, connects with all age groups, can lead in growth. Send resumé to: Bethany Baptist Church, 2319 Taylorsville Road, Louisville, KY 40205.

SEEKING: Full-time youth/associate pastor. Position 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 experience and education. Send resumé to: Cynthiana Baptist Church, PO Box 355, Cynthiana, KY 41031, Attn: Maribeth Thomas; or e-mail: waynespivey@bellsouth.net.

SEEKING: Full-time associate pastor with ministry focus on students and recreation for a vibrant First Baptist church in Southeastern Kentucky. Seminary training and youth ministry experience preferred. Please send resumé to: Search Committee, 201 North Main St., Barbourville, KY 40906, or e-mail to chsec@barbourville.com.

SEEKING: Assist the elderly. Provide non-medical companionship and home-care services for the elderly. No certificate required. Home Instead Senior Care, East Louisville. (502) 515-9522.

SEEKING: Full-time associate pastor/worship and music for FBC Cabot, Ark. Seminary; contemporary/traditional; technology; people-skills; plus experience. Music Search Committee, PO Box 1023, Cabot, AR 72023. Visit www.fbccabot.org.

SEEKING: Strong Southern Baptist church accepting resúmes for middle school minister. Must have a minimum of three years experience in youth work. Must possess a master's degree in a field of religion from an accredited seminary or university. Resúmes must be received by Dec. 15, 2004, to be considered for the position. Please send a resumé and salary history to: Middle School Search Committee, 2412 Chris Drive, Clarksville, TN 37043.

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Italian Baptists ask U.S. brethren to help end Iraq war

Washington (ABP)—Baptists in Italy are asking their American counterparts to help bring an end to the conflict in Iraq.

In a letter sent Nov. 12, the Italian Baptist Union's president, Anna Maffei, asked "all the Baptist conventions in the U.S.A." to join in efforts toward reconciliation rather than encouraging further military conflict in war-torn Iraq.

The letter was authorized by delegates to the union's general assembly Oct. 8-10.

The conservative government headed by Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi has joined Bush's "Coalition of the Willing" in support of the United States' efforts in Iraq.

Italian Baptists chose to address U.S. Baptists, Maffei said, "because we thought that our Baptist churches in the U.S.A., on account of their number and strength, could make a difference in the world and contribute a great deal, if they so wished, to develop peace strategies."

The letter asks U.S. Baptists to organize peacemaking "round tables" and other efforts and to lead prayer meetings "that God touches our leaders' hearts and those of terrorist and resistance leaders and that He brings them to repent, to change direction, to stop the fighting and open up a dialogue with their enemies."

Beyond gay marriage

Diverse coalition ready to tackle other moral issues

By Adelle Banks
Religion News Service

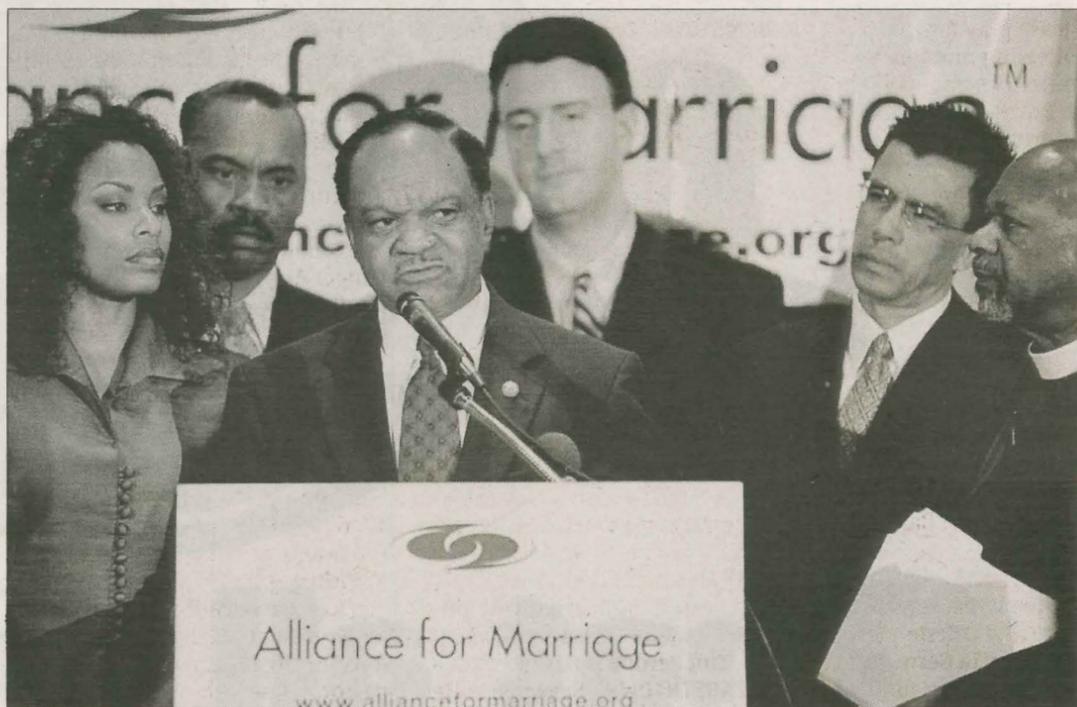
Washington (RNS)—Fired up by pre-election summits and rallies and invigorated by election results, some African-American and Hispanic religious leaders say they're ready to join their white evangelical brethren to support traditional marriage and work on issues ranging from judicial nominations to improved adoption procedures.

If successful, these racially diverse coalitions could influence the fate of a constitutional amendment on marriage as well as local, state and national elections for years to come.

As the presidential election illustrated, even small demographic shifts can make an enormous political difference. President Bush significantly increased his share of the Hispanic vote nationally, thanks in part to values-laden issues. In Ohio, Bush nearly doubled his share of the black vote from 2000, to 16 percent, pushing him to a narrow state and national victory.

Many analysts attributed the Ohio vote to black churchgoers' opposition to gay marriage, which Bush also opposes.

Yet while some religious activists are willing to cross racial and denominational lines to oppose same-sex marriage, many say they are not about to support other Republican positions, such as lower-



ing taxes and reducing the size of government.

These black and Hispanic leaders say the time might be right to focus on issues and values that uniquely energize their ethnic constituencies.

Not "carrying water"

Pastor Dwight McKissic of Arlington, Texas, traveled to Washington for a September summit that Traditional Values Coalition Chairman Louis Sheldon pulled together for African-American pastors to join the fight against same-sex marriage. But McKissic, a Southern Baptist, said the bipartisan "Not on My Watch" group he started with other African-American clergy will remain an "intentionally black" endeavor, seeking passage of both state and federal constitutional amendments banning gay marriage, but not joining white evangelicals on other causes.

"Many black pastors I know chose to make that effort independent of white evangelicals because they did not want to be seen as carrying water for the Republicans or white conservatives," he said.

Hispanic leaders, too, are taking different approaches to future alliances.

Conservatives promise to keep close eye on Specter and Judiciary Committee

Washington (RNS)—Conservative groups who tried to derail Sen. Arlen Specter's bid to head the Senate Judiciary Committee said they are disappointed he will get the post, but vowed to keep a close watch on him.

Specter, the Pennsylvania Republican, was forced to defend his expected chairmanship after he warned President Bush that judicial nominees who do not support abortion rights would have a hard time winning confirmation.

After he assured the White House and other GOP leaders that he would not block Bush's appointments, the nine Republican members of the committee said Nov. 18 that they would support Specter.

"Sen. Specter will be held to his word," said James Dobson, founder

of the Colorado-based Focus on the Family's Hispanic Voter Education Project, said the same diversity reflected in the campaign against gay marriage is needed to address issues such as embryonic stem cell research and judicial nominations.

"The future of these movements has to be diverse—Hispanic-American, African-American, Asian-American, all united," he said. "That's essential."

Walter Fauntroy, a longtime Washington pastor and civil rights activist, said new efforts to draw African-Americans like him into a grand coalition with a broad-based agenda aren't likely to succeed. He opposes gay marriage—and joins in the diverse array of faces at Alliance for Marriage events—but he would "part company with all of them" on tax concerns.

"I would educate my friends in ... the religious conservative movement that when this warfare of life is over, the question will not be how you voted on the gay marriage issue," Fauntroy said. "The question will be, 'When I was hungry, did you feed me?' ... I will not work on issues that penalize the least of these for the benefit of the wealthy few."

and chairman of the Colorado-based Focus on the Family, adding, "We will be watching Sen. Specter closely, and reporting on him fully."

Critics, led by the Washington-based Christian Defense Coalition, staged a "pray-in" on Capitol Hill Nov. 16 in an attempt to deny Specter the chairmanship.

The conservative Family Research Council said it also would keep pressure on Specter to allow a proposed constitutional amendment banning gay marriage to clear his committee.

Specter, who supports abortion rights, vowed to give a full and fair hearing to any nominee sent up by the White House.

He noted that he has voted for all of the president's nominees, even those with whom he disagrees.

WHAT'S NEXT? Walter Fauntroy, a Washington pastor and civil rights activist, takes his turn at the microphone at a 2003 press conference of the Alliance for Marriage. While many church leaders are ready to cross racial boundaries to work on issues like opposing gay marriage, some, like Fauntroy, draw the line at advocating for fiscal conservative issues. (RNS file photo)

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