

February 15, 2005
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FOR THE RECORD

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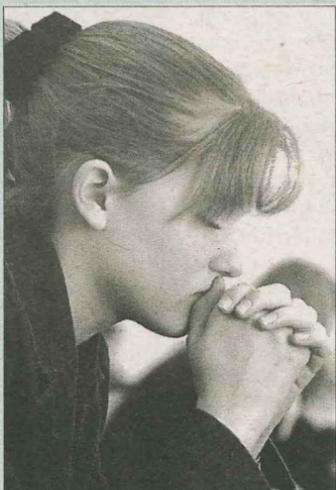
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TEEN FAITH Researchers found that most youth say religion is important, but many don't know much about their faith. (RNS photo by Lynn Ischay)

Survey: Religious teens tend to be more academic, confident, chaste

By David Briggs
Religion News Service

Chapel Hill, N.C. (RNS)—The most comprehensive survey ever done on faith and adolescence finds a teen nation where more than four in five youth say religion is important in their lives.

But the new survey of more than 3,000 teenagers and their parents also indicated that many teens know little about their religion.

Many other activities compete for their time, but among religiously active teens—those who attend services weekly and belong to a youth group—their faith appears to significantly impact their behavior.

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Equestrian ministries

Enthusiasts using passion for horses to share gospel

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

Salem—After 22 years as a minister of music and youth pastor, Chris Clarke is rarely in church on Sunday.

He still preaches the gospel. But instead of coats, dresses or ties, his audience wears jeans and cowboy boots—customary fare for weekend horse show enthusiasts.

Clarke, who founded Happy Trails Ministry a year ago, hosts worship services for people who attend horse shows.

"A lot of people travel around to the same shows," Clarke said. "One couple told me several times how much they appreciate what I do."

"Our ministry is similar to what happens at NASCAR tracks and the professional bass (fishing) circuit," he added. "We're a spiritual presence."

Clarke is part of a growing equestrian ministry movement throughout Kentucky and beyond.

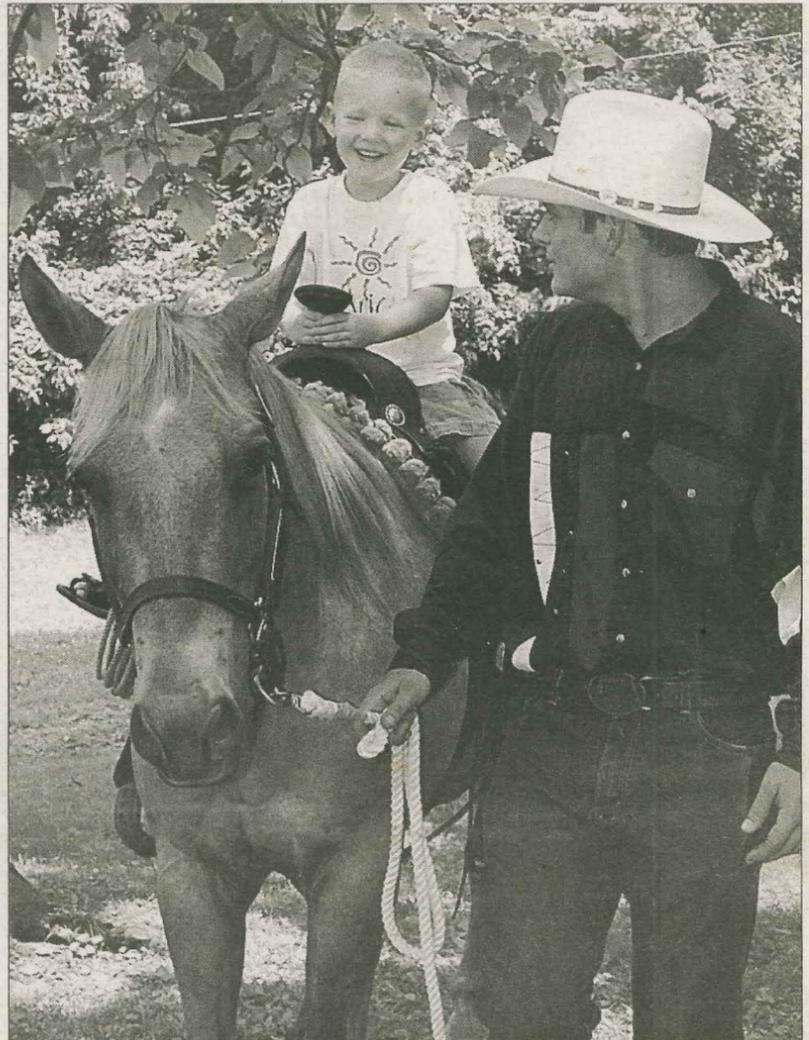
Last year Clarke conducted or assisted in 21 "cowboy church" services, with an average attendance of 34 worshippers.

The Mission Service Corps missionary is active during the week, too. Using a donated facility, Clarke teaches 28 riding students.

Most are under age 18, and half come from non-church back-



Chris Clarke



PONY RIDE Wayne Harden, a recent graduate of Asbury College, leads a child's horse ride during an event sponsored by Asbury's chapter of Equestrian Ministries International. The organization, which was founded 10 years ago, has 16 horse-related ministries throughout the commonwealth. (Photo by Renée Frantum)

grounds. All receive take-home activity sheets, including two pages of Bible activities. Most students complete the questions, he said.

Clarke, a member of Salem Baptist Church, got involved in equestrian ministry because of his

daughter's and sister's involvement in horse shows.

Because of his church staff position, Clarke had to use vacation time to occasionally attend weekend events.

□ See Equestrian ministry ... *Page 3*

KBC-Poland partnership wraps up but ministry impact continues

By Jessica Perkins
Kentucky Baptist Convention

Louisville—While Kentucky Baptists' six-year missions partnership with the Polish Baptist Union has officially ended, the positive effects of the effort are expected to linger for years to come, according to Kentucky Baptist Convention officials and others who worked with the partnership.

A total of 812 volunteers participated in mission trips coordinated through the Kentucky Baptist Convention's partnership missions department. The volunteers represented 214 churches, 48 associations and 13 other states.

Ross Bauscher, the KBC's partnership missions director, said he feels the volunteers had a positive impact on the nation of 38 million people.

While most of the population claims affiliation with the Roman Catholic Church, he noted that years of communist repression of religion and official atheism—combined with the new market-driven, consumer-based economy—has taken its toll on the nation.

"Catholicism is still strong, but the Polish people are becoming more accepting of Baptists," he said.

"The common belief used to be that Baptists were heretical. Most Baptist churches include 'Christian Baptist Church' in their names."

Joy Lindsey, a former coordinator for the partnership, said Poland is a very "religious" country but that the people's affiliation with Christianity is more cultural than spiritual.

□ See Poland partnership ... *Page 6*



POLAND Most of Poland's 38 million citizens claim affiliation with the Roman Catholic Church, but years of communist repression of religion and official atheism combined with the new market-driven, consumer-based economy, have taken their toll on the faithful. Today Poland is a very "religious" country but people's affiliation with Christianity is more cultural than spiritual. (KBC photo by Davy Bell)

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Draper to retire as LifeWay president in February 2006

By Chris Turner
LifeWay Christian Resources

Nashville (BP)—James Draper, president of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention since 1991, announced last week that he plans to retire Feb. 1, 2006.

LifeWay trustees immediately will begin the search for Draper's successor. Bill Henard, pastor of Porter Memorial Baptist Church in

Lexington, was named to the eight-member search committee chaired by Rick Evans of Alabama.

"For many years I have asked God to make clear to me when I need to retire," Draper told board members. "My prayer has been that He'd allow me the strength to finish well, serving Him until He sees fit to bring me home. In that regard, retirement from LifeWay is simply a transition from one ministry opportunity to

another. I believe there are exciting days ahead for both LifeWay and for me."

The search committee will begin accepting resumes and recommendations immediately. The deadline for sending applications to Evans is April 15.

Draper said he hopes the trustees elect his successor at their next meeting in September. He plans to work with the president-elect until he retires next February.

"I am looking forward to this process and to a smooth transition of leadership," he said.

Draper, who will be 70 in October, told trustees his decision to retire is borne out of his "love for LifeWay" and his "commitment to do what is best" for the organization and its ministry.

"We are seeing a great response in our effort to connect with younger leaders across our denomination," he said, "and we need a younger man who can lead this organization to continue that trend. The younger leaders are ready to be Kingdom leaders, and LifeWay should reflect a full commitment to partner with them as they follow God's call.

"We need a younger man with great vision, one who will not rest upon the great resources of this organization and maintain the status quo. We need a younger man who sees future possibilities through God's eyes. We need a younger man who can guide LifeWay to be a relevant resource for the church for decades to come as the church faces tumultuous cultural times. One thing is certain: We cannot become what we need to be by staying the way we are."

Draper cautioned trustees to diligently seek God's direction in filling the position, saying many people

will "tell you they know who ought to be here and what you ought to do. Listen graciously to them, but realize that the decision is yours alone. None of you should have a personal agenda, and do not entertain the agenda of others."

Draper, president of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1982-84, served 16 years as pastor of First Baptist Church of Euless, Texas, before being elected LifeWay president. He is a graduate of Baylor University in Waco, Texas, and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort



James Draper

Worth, Texas.

Recounting how reluctant he was to leave the pastorate when approached about taking the president's position, Draper said the greatest job in the world is being the pastor of a local church.

"Find somebody who has no ambition to be here, and when you come across someone actively pursuing this position, run from him," he told trustees.

"These are serious times and there is a desperate need for serious organizations staffed by serious people," he added.

Draper said he has no desire to retire to a life of leisure. "Listen, don't cue the sunset and launch into a verse of 'Happy Trails to You,'" he said. "As a minister, I will never retire. I cannot retire from ordination, the call to preach or the compulsion of the Holy Spirit to work and witness as a Christian minister.

"I don't intend for this last year to be a farewell tour," he noted. "I don't intend to back away from getting in there and mixing it up. We must aggressively pursue the ministry opportunities God has placed before us by being the most efficient business possible."

LifeWay approves condo plan, elects two VPs

Nashville (BP)—LifeWay Christian Resources trustees have approved a resolution to establish four for-profit corporations that will develop and manage condominiums and townhouses at LifeWay conference centers at Glorieta, N.M., and Ridgecrest, N.C.

In other actions, trustees approved John Kramp and Jerry Rhyne as new LifeWay vice presidents.

Mike Arrington, corporate affairs vice president told trustees that Ridgecrest and Glorieta both have excess land that is unnecessary for current and future ministries.

The properties will be developed over the next five years, with 70 condos at Glorieta and 100 townhouses at Ridgecrest, pending approval of the for-profit subsidiaries by the Southern Baptist Executive Committee. The issue is on the committee's Feb. 22 meeting.

Trustees also approved selling 12.5 acres of land for the project to Glorieta Condominium Development, Inc. Condominiums will be pre-sold before construction will begin on each phase. The land will feature three phases of construction, the first of which is set to begin in October.

The projected pre-tax profit of \$1.32 million earned through this project will support LifeWay's \$27 million revitalization of Glorieta and Ridgecrest that trustees approved during their meeting last September.

Once construction is completed, management corporations will enable LifeWay to oversee the facilities and also to sublease unoc-

cupied units to conference center guests.

Arrington assured trustees the new housing would meet the moral and quality standards of the conference centers' core campuses.

"We'll place every covenant we possibly can to ensure there is a protection of the spiritual environment we have on our conference center campuses," he said.

Arrington reported that LifeWay also is seeking to sell nearly 140 acres across the interstate from Glorieta conference center. The property is not in the company's long-term ministry plans. Trustees must approve a final sale.

Among the two vice presidents approved Feb. 8, Kramp will become vice president of LifeWay's church resources division effective March 1, after serving as interim vice president since August 2004. Rhyne will serve as chief financial officer and vice president of the finance and business services division, succeeding Jim Carter July 1.

Kramp, who has served at LifeWay nearly 13 years, will direct the operations of the LifeWay division that produces Sunday School curricula, discipleship materials, church training events, vacation Bible school materials, music, audio and video products.

He also will work to develop LifeWay's relationships with external networks and partners such as state conventions, associations and seminaries.

Rhyne currently serves as director of finance and corporate controller. He will take the helm of the finance and business services division after 32 years at LifeWay.

WMU endorses mission goals

Birmingham, Ala. (BP)—New missions initiatives that include an emphasis on families were highlighted during national Woman's Missionary Union's Jan. 15-18 board meeting.

Wanda Lee, executive director of national WMU, underscored families as a gift from God to treasure. "Families make it possible for us to be the Christ followers we have been called to be," she said.

Much of the meeting was devoted to discussion of long-range goals and a framework of how to best grow God's Kingdom by further engaging Christians in service.

Executive Board members ap-

proved recommendations from a projected 2010 task force as "God's vision" for the organization, including intergenerational approaches to involve families in missions and a focus on multicultural resources.

WMU also will continue to emphasize church-based learning experiences and hands-on missions opportunities to serve in hands-on missions experiences.

Board members also approved Caroline Jones as missions innovator for national WMU. Jones previously served as consultant for national WMU's multicultural resource team. She succeeds Sylvia DeLoach who retired Jan. 31.

CBF considers cap on partner funding

Atlanta (ABP)—A plan under consideration by the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship would cap CBF funding of outside organizations, which could reduce CBF support for some traditional ministry partners by as much as 31 percent.

The proposal from CBF's Partner Study Committee would limit Fellowship funding to 20 percent of any partner's revenues. Based on recent revenue figures, that would cut CBF funding for Associated Baptist Press from \$132,119 to \$91,784 (a 31 per-

cent cut) and for the Baptist Center for Ethics from \$81,555 to \$61,380 (25 percent).

Other partners would be less affected. Funding for the Baptist Joint Committee on Religious Liberty would drop slightly, from \$203,888 to \$201,680, while the Baptist World Alliance and Baptists Today news-journal would be eligible to receive more money.

None of the theological schools funded by CBF is close to the planned 20 percent ceiling.

Rising costs prompt NAMB to cut medical benefits for future retirees

Atlanta (ABP)—The Southern Baptist North American Mission Board has eliminated some benefits for retiring employees in order to cut costs.

The move has prompted some of the agency's 1,100 insured employees and missionaries to retire sooner than planned rather than lose benefits they expected.

Similar retirement benefit reductions have been implemented by the Kentucky Baptist Convention and other Baptist entities.

Most affected by the changes are NAMB employees who retire early. NAMB now requires 15 years of service, instead of 10, to retire early, and the minimum age was raised from 50 to 55. Early retirees will no longer qualify for any NAMB medical insurance. They would qualify for Medicare and a supplement when they reach normal retirement age.

NAMB said 360 employees and missionaries eligible for early retirement were notified of the changes late last year. Fourteen employees opted to retire under the old benefit system, which was

available until Dec. 31. Missionaries have until March 31 to decide if they want to retire under the old benefits.

Lowell Ashby, leader of the KBC's business services team, said most employees who are jointly funded by KBC and NAMB will not be affected by the change since they receive their medical benefits through the state convention rather than NAMB. Additionally, he said, NAMB will continue to provide an insurance cost reimbursement for such employees.

The changes could affect NAMB-related missionaries across the state, however, who work in conjunction with local associations or other Baptist entities.

Ashby said comparable policy changes by the KBC that took effect Jan. 1 are due primarily to increasing medical insurance costs.

"It's a priority of funding programs for ministries and missions instead of increased benefit costs—just trying to control expenses," he said.

With additional reporting by Editor Trennis Henderson

Mission trip results in E. Kentucky equestrian ministry

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

Partridge—Mitch and Christie Schumacher always felt called to missions.

But until they visited Meridzo Ministries in Lynch last March with their church, they didn't imagine that would involve running a horse farm.

A few months after coming to Harlan County with a group from Montgomery, Ala., the Schumachers sold their home and moved to southeastern Kentucky to start The High Mountain Equine Outreach.

Even before they agreed to move, friends on the mission trip were recognizing how well the ministry opportunity matched their passions and calling, Mrs. Schumacher said.

"People from our mission team were saying, 'So you're going to quit your job tomorrow?'" she recalled. "They said, 'Can't you see this is what God has been leading you to?'"

The couple's search began seven years ago, when they expected to move to Colorado and make horses a hobby.

A job offer there never materialized, but they bought two horses and kept them despite occupational changes that moved them to three states.

Still searching for direction, in the summer of 2003 they attended a spiritual retreat where they developed a vision statement. They envisioned a ministry that would combine horses with Mitch's skills

in the outdoors and on guitar.

Having studied "Experiencing God," which advises people to look for where God is working, Mrs. Schumacher said they saw God moving powerfully in Lynch.

"We saw such a need, and God started breaking our heart over the need," she said. "We were almost speechless the whole time we were here."

Seeing the opportunity

Meridzo Director Lonnie Riley told the group that the ministry had received several horses and 10 acres of property in neighboring Letcher County. But they didn't have anyone to manage the animals.

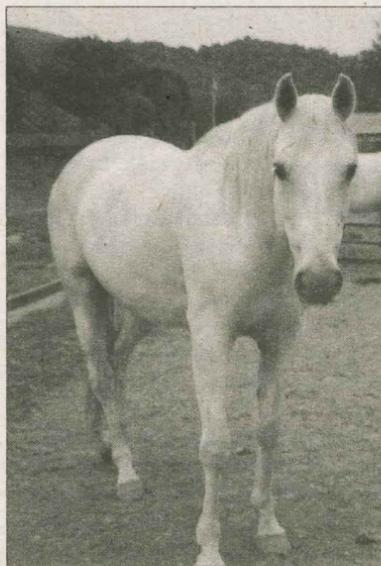
Despite the apparent opening, Mrs. Schumacher said her husband reacted grumpily at first. Then, she said, he prayed and asked God why he was feeling that way.

"If this job had a \$30,000 salary attached to it, you'd be jumping at it," she said the Lord responded. "You have to decide whether you're going to trust Me."

Since moving to the area last June, the Schumachers have been busy developing the ranch, which adjoins the Cumberland River and frequently floods.

Improved drainage is one of many improvements planned at the site, which needs additional fencing and completion of a round pen and horse show arena.

Current facilities include a 12-stall barn and a small outbuilding.



CHIQUITA This quarter horse is among the donated horses at the horse ministry of Meridzo in Letcher County.

The couple hope to add a tack room onto the barn, which would include a small office and refreshment area.

This year they expect to offer riding classes for area youth. They've talked to a physical therapist about doing hippotherapy, a relatively new form of physical therapy using horses.

Horse clinics, therapy for outreach

Schumacher said they plan eventually to hold clinics for barrel racing, calf roping and other kinds of training, including natural horsemanship.

Cumberland launching 3-city conference in honor of Owen

Williamsburg—Cumberland College will sponsor the inaugural Franklin P. Owen Conference on Missions and the Church in three cities this April.

The conference, featuring author Calvin Miller, will be held on Cumberland's campus in Williamsburg April 4 before moving to Fort Mitchell April 5 and Louisville April 6.

Miller is professor of preaching and pastoral studies at Beeson Divinity School of Samford University in Birmingham, Ala.

The conference is supported by an endowment given in honor of Franklin Owen, former executive secretary of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, and by Cumberland College.

Registration, which costs \$35 is limited to 75 people per site. For more information, contact Bob Dunston at (606) 539-4227.

Equestrian ministry leaders want more projects in Kentucky

Continued from page 1

He said he often thought, "Someone needs to be ministering to these people," never dreaming God would summon him for the task.

Increasing numbers of Kentucky Baptists are following a similar path, according to Larry Martin, who helped establish Equestrian Ministries International.

Founded 10 years ago, the interdenominational organization has 500 members in 28 states and three countries. Sixteen states, including Kentucky, have statewide chapters.

"It's a sleeping giant of a ministry," said Martin, a consultant to the Kentucky Baptist Convention's missions growth team. "There's unlimited potential for individuals, churches and associations to be involved."

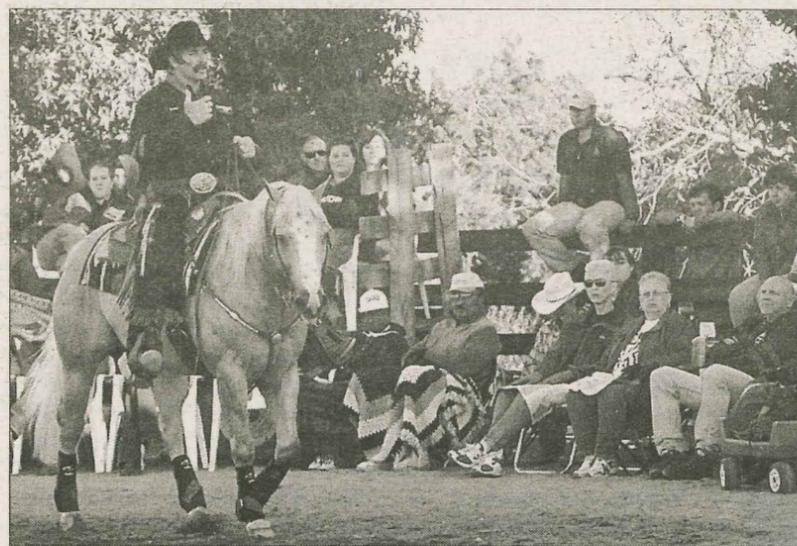
Such opportunities include helping build new Christian camping facilities that use horses, developing trail ride ministries, evangelistic outreaches and praying for missionaries such as Clarke.

In Kentucky, leaders are aware of 16 horse-related ministries at nine camps, horse farms and stables.

In addition to providing chaplains for trail rides, horse farms and race tracks, Baptists are involved in such endeavors as distributing New Testaments and a Christ-centered video, riding with drill teams and staging clinics.

Horseback riding will also be a key component of Christ Outreach for the Blind, a camp slated to open this summer near Mount Vernon.

"Winston Churchill said there's something about the outside of a



GOSPEL PRESENTATION Lew Sterrett, who works at Miracle Mountain Ranch, a camp in Pennsylvania, compares working with horses to biblical truths during a show at Asbury Farm, on the campus of Asbury College. His show was sponsored by the school's chapter of Equestrian Ministries International. (Photo by Renée Frantum)

horse that's good for the inside of a man," Martin said. "Even manual labor is a joy to someone who loves horses. It's very therapeutic."

Not to mention a fruitful area for conversions and outreach.

Harold Rainwater, a physical education professor at Asbury College in Wilmore, said he saw several people accept Jesus as Savior last year as a result of equestrian ministry events. One student was baptized in a horse trough.

Another student who works with homeless people in nearby Lexington brings some to Palisades Farm, home to the college's equestrian program. The people clean stalls to learn work skills and earn a free

meal.

"We found a horse was a great bond between the richest of the rich and the poorest of the poor," said Rainwater, who founded Asbury's equine center in 1997 and is in his second year as president of Equestrian Ministries.

Twenty students are studying for minors in equine management. Past graduates have used those skills in such areas as operating summer camps and residential homes for troubled youth that utilize horseback riding as part of therapy.

About 15 students are members of Asbury's Equestrian Ministries chapter. The group sponsors such activities as free pony rides for chil-

dren at community events, Bible distribution at horse shows and Christmas caroling on horseback.

Rainwater, who got involved in the organization because of an invitation from Martin, likes its interdenominational flavor.

"I think that makes it more effective," Rainwater said. "It doesn't matter what your affiliation is as long as you love God."

During 2005, Martin hopes to develop or strengthen five local fellowship groups around the state, along with campus chapters at Campbellsville University, Georgetown College and the University of the Cumberlands.

Clarke, who leads the fellowship in Western Kentucky, has personally benefited from such groups.

When he initially considered leaving the pastorate, he first talked to Bob Morrison, director of missions for Little Bethel Baptist Association and a founding member of Equestrian Ministry International.

"He gave me a lot of courage and confidence I wasn't stepping off the deep end," Clarke said.

And, after praying recently at the horse barn with a young woman who received Christ as her personal Savior, the Salem resident is confident God directed him into this ministry.

"It's real neat to see people you don't think are active in church ... get excited about God and what God's doing and verbalize that," Clarke said. "To see God moving in people's lives is exciting."

For more info

To learn more about equestrian ministry opportunities throughout Kentucky, contact:

■ Larry Martin, larry.martin@kybaptist.org.

■ Harold Rainwater, harold.rainwater@asbury.edu.

■ Mitch and Christie Schumacher, thehighmountain@iglide.net

■ Chris Clarke, (270) 988-2876.

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

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Gambling: What would Jesus do?

By Hershael York

If no passage of Scripture explicitly forbids it, can we with confidence claim that gambling is wrong, a moral evil, sin?

With good reason, Christians are hesitant to label sins that the Bible doesn't mention, yet we often have to distill principles from the Bible that we apply to contemporary situations. Pornography, computer hacking or cheating on tests aren't mentioned in the Bible either, yet believers who want to live like Jesus know intuitively and correctly that these behaviors run counter to the will of God. While biblical texts may not mention them explicitly, biblical principles speak to them directly.

In the same way, the ethics of Scripture clearly teach that gambling is wrong and a sin against God, not for one single reason but for many. The slot machine, casino or poker table are not for believers submitted to the Lordship of Christ.

Many Christians object that if they budget a certain amount of their discretionary entertainment beyond that, what's the harm? After all, Christian people waste money on all kinds of diversions.

Far from convincing me that gambling is not necessarily wrong, this particular argument actually confirms it in my mind, because it reveals a complete disregard for what one's participation in gambling does to others. This argument reveals a self-centeredness and lack of concern for weaker brothers and sisters that believers ought to find disturbing (Romans 14:21). In reality, even Christians who are not personally hurt by it are not free to participate in an industry that preys on the weak and the poor.

The Bible is full of references to God's view of economics. In the garden of Eden, even before sin entered the world, God established a work

ethic by which humanity was to exist (Genesis 1:28-30). Part of God's creation of man in His own image was that man would work for his food.

While God provided it, Adam and Eve had to exercise "dominion" over the plants and animals and till the soil, working for their sustenance. After they sinned, work changed to a more laborious task, but it remained the way God provided for them. In other words, God's way is that we should earn what we get.

Think about these reasons why gambling violates Christian principles:

Working and investing for a living is based on a win/win scenario, but gambling is always win/lose. God put His stamp of approval on commerce and work. When a carpenter builds a cabinet and gets paid, both parties win. One of them gets the cabinets she wanted, and one of them gets the money he desired. They both can feel good about the transaction. Not so with gambling. Someone always loses and pays a price.

Gambling is motivated by greed. Let's be honest and admit that greed lies at the heart of all gambling. The desire to get something for nothing is really another name for covetousness (Exodus 20:17; Proverbs 21:25-26).

Gambling is a wasteful use of the Lord's money. I doubt that many Christians who gamble also tithe, but even if they do, New Testament Christians understand that God doesn't have the right to only 10 percent of our money, but all of it. Even though I am a tither, I still am required to be a steward of all I have because it belongs to God. I am no freer to gamble with God's money than I am with anyone else's. Others might waste the Lord's money on equally frivolous things, but their sin doesn't excuse mine.

Gambling shows a lack of love

for my neighbor. If I really love my neighbor, I want only what is for his good (Matthew 22:39; 1 Corinthians 10:24). When legislators talk about putting casinos on the state line so we can prey on the greed and weakness of our neighbors, they reveal the harmful assault that gambling really is. Can I in good conscience support something that preys on the weaknesses and indulges the worst instincts of the precious people around me?

Gambling fails to consider innocent families. We might be tempted to think that if a person gambles away all of his money, then that is his problem and serves him right. But what about his 10-year-old son who can't afford school supplies? What about his wife who has to work to pay off the credit cards she didn't even know she had? What about his ailing parents who cannot count on his help in their senior years? What about his daughter's college education? Proverbs 15:27 says, "A greedy man brings trouble to his family," and nowhere is that more obvious than in the gambling industry.

Gambling shows no concern for God's glory. A Jesus follower should seek to glorify in everything (1 Corinthians 10:31), and use his or her money to accomplish good for the Kingdom (Matthew 6:19-21, 24).

Gambling is not an act of faith but a game of chance. Paul wrote, "Everything that is not of faith is sin" (Romans 14:23). The Christian life is to be lived in dependence on God to meet all needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19).

Jesus wouldn't do it. Can you picture Jesus sitting at a slot machine with a cup full of quarters? He was interested in doing His Father's business, alleviating suffering and grief, not contributing to it.

Hershael York, president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, is pastor of Buck Run Baptist Church in Frankfort and a professor and associate dean at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville

Outstanding Evangelism Conference planned

The 2005 Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference will be held Feb. 28-March 1 at Valley View Baptist Church in Louisville. An outstanding conference has been planned with much prayer and consideration of congregational needs.

Valley View will provide a warm evangelistic atmosphere and inspirational music from bluegrass to traditional, including Southern gospel and praise music.

Dan Garland, leader of the KBC's church development and evangelism team, has put together an outstanding array of speakers. They represent deep biblical insight, outstanding communication and preaching skills, effective leadership, and passion for the church and her mission.

Two popular former Evangelism Conference speakers—Herb Reavis of North Jacksonville (Fla.) Baptist Church and Joe Brown of Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C.—will anchor the program.

Another highlight will be Robert Smith, professor of Christian preaching at Beeson Divinity School in Bir-

mingham, Ala. He is an outstanding scholar and preacher.

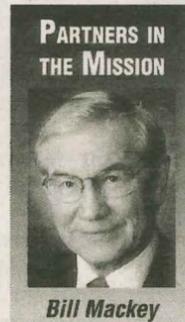
Three authors will provide great spiritual insight and instruction from the Bible. David Morgan is a pastor who led his former church from the point of closing its doors to 10 years of great growth. He is author of "Share the Vision, Build the Team," featuring 10 principles on how to build a healthy church.

Another attraction will be Brian McLaren, author of "The Church on the Other Side." McLaren recently was named by Time magazine as one of the most influential evangelical Christians in the nation.

Ken Hemphill, a former pastor and seminary president, also will speak. He always has a word of wisdom.

Thomas Hammond, director of direct evangelism for the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, will provide an excellent challenge on personal witnessing.

In addition to hearing these outstanding speakers, participants can choose from 23 conferences at 8:30



Bill Mackey

GIVING

Charitable giving can proceed even after one's death

By Laurie Valentine

There are a variety of ways to make gifts to Baptist causes at your death.



The most common way is to include a bequest to your church or other Baptist cause in your will or

living trust. Bequests can take the form of a gift of a specific amount or asset, or a gift of all or a portion of the residue of your estate.

Naming your church or other Baptist cause as beneficiary of a life insurance policy on your life is another way to make a charitable gift at your death.

If you own the policy at the time of your death, the value of the life insurance will be included in your estate for death tax purposes, but your estate will be entitled to a charitable estate tax deduction for the value of the amount distributed to charity. If you transferred ownership of the policy to the charity at least three years before your death, the value of the policy is not included in your estate in determining death tax liabilities.

You also can make charitable gifts at death that will provide benefits both to your family and Baptist causes.

One way to do that is to make a bequest to charity directing that a charitable gift annuity be established for your spouse, child or some other individual. This type of gift provides the non-charitable beneficiary (your spouse, child, etc.) with an annuity for life. The annuity amount will depend on the age of the annuitant at the time of your death.

Bequests establishing charitable remainder trusts or charitable lead trusts are other ways to use a single gift at death to benefit both non-charitable and charitable beneficiaries.

Charitable remainder trusts provide a designated stream of income to one or more non-charitable beneficiaries for life or a term of years, with the remainder passing to your church or other charitable causes when the non-charitable beneficiaries' interests end. Charitable lead trusts provide an income stream to charity, with the remainder then passing to non-charitable beneficiaries.

Accomplish God's purposes for distribution of your possessions at death by including a gift to one or more Baptist causes in your estate plan.

Laurie Valentine is trust counsel for the Kentucky Baptist Foundation

Assure children of God's love in the midst of tsunami news

Q: Amid the ongoing news coverage of tsunami relief efforts, how should parents talk to children about the tsunami?

Incredible disasters, such as the recent tsunami, often prompt difficult questions from children: Why did this happen? Could something like this happen to me? Could God have kept it from happening? As always, consider a child's age and developmental maturity as you answer. You can talk to an 11-year-old in a different way and at a different level than a 6-year-old.

Children need to understand that bad things happen, and they sometimes happen to good people. In the midst of such uncertainty, God's love and presence remain constant. As David said, "Even in the darkness and danger of the valley, I know God is with me." Remind children of this tremendous truth.

Children might not be able to understand the difference between God allowing something bad to happen and God causing it to happen. Adults struggle with this concept too. Emphasize that God feels sad and suffers when His people are sad and suffer.

Listen for fear's and reassure your child of their safety. Talk about how you can help those who were hurt, perhaps by giving money or sending clothing or medical supplies.

The tsunami reminds us that the world sometimes can be an unfriendly place. Hope comes from remembering that God promises a new heaven and a new earth where nature will be our friend. The lion will lie down with the lamb; the wind and the waves will bring delight, not destruction.—David Garrard

Q: I watched my parents' marriage fall apart when I was a teenager. I am now 36 and a little worried about my own marriage. How can I keep my marriage from ending up like my parents'—in divorce and with a lot of hurt and anger?

You make choices. Every day of your marriage you can make choices that treasure your marriage and honor your spouse.

MARRIAGE

Luke reminds us, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." If you took the time to catalogue all your actions and all your spoken communication in a day and then created a formula to calculate the percentage of that data invested in caring for your marriage in a positive way, what is your guess on your percentages?

If you choose to say thank you, someone may feel appreciated. If you choose to say I love you, someone may feel loved. If you choose to hold your tongue when offended, someone may not feel rebuked. If you choose to share a need you have, someone may feel welcomed into your life. If you choose to speak affirmation, someone may feel good about who they are as God's creation.

Debbie Cherry, who has written a book about treasuring your marriage, offers the acronym TREASURE. In order to treasure your spouse:

Think positively about your spouse.

Respect your spouse.

Enjoy your spouse.

Attend to your spouse.

Shield your spouse from harm.

Understand your spouse's needs.

Romance your spouse.

Edify your spouse.

These ideas are not complicated or difficult. They are what one does with a treasure. Too many people treat the gift of marriage as garbage, neglected, abused and trashed. Marriage is a gift God gave for a husband and wife to treasure. If you desire to grow a healthy, beautiful, biblical marriage, you must choose every day with every action to treat your spouse as a treasured gift and not trash.—Valerie Vincent

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



African-American Baptists pursue unity

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity!" Psalm 133:1 declares.

But in the reality of our fallen world, even Christian brothers and sisters often build artificial barriers that disrupt unity among individuals, families, congregations and denominations.

Setting aside those barriers, four African-American Baptist conventions recently gathered in a refreshing display of Christian unity.

Representing more than 15 million Baptists throughout the nation, participants from the National Baptist Convention, USA; National Baptist Convention of America; Progressive National Baptist Convention; and National Missionary Baptist Convention of America held a four-day joint dialogue last month in Nashville.

No ordinary gathering, this was the first joint meeting involving any of the denominations since the National Baptist Convention of America parted ways with the National Baptist Convention, USA, 90 years ago over a disagreement about control of the denomination's publishing house.

In 1961, the Progressive National Baptist Convention split from the NBCUSA due to differences over civil rights and denominational leadership, with the new group giving Martin Luther King Jr., a platform at annual meetings. Finally, in 1988, the National Missionary Baptist Convention of America was formed in the wake of additional internal squabbles.

While a formal merger wasn't the focus of the recent meeting, many participants talked about the possibility of merged goals and agendas.

The gathering was designed for leaders "to participate in collective dialogue about the issues that are important to the survival of the African-American community," noted a press release from the four groups.

According to William Shaw, president of NBCUSA, "One of the affirmations of this gathering, to me, is

that the things that divided us were not things that were really central to who we are as bodies in Christ."

"The Master Surgeon has operated on us and the cancer is out," Gardner Taylor, past president of the Progressive National Baptist Convention, declared in the conference's closing keynote message. "There will be people who would ask, 'What is the program? What are you going to do?' Well, the patient is healthy and will go on to the responsibilities that health enables."

Immediately after the meeting, leaders of the four conventions issued a joint statement expressing their opposition to the war in Iraq and opposition to government funds for scholarships to parochial and other private schools as well as calling for elimination of mandatory minimum prison sentences.

While it would be virtually impossible for Southern Baptists to find common ground on such issues even as a single denomination, we historically have been able to rally around such common themes as missions and evangelism.

Imagine the message it would send the world if such diverse Baptist groups as the American Baptist Churches USA, Baptist World Alliance, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and Southern Baptist Convention were willing to set aside differences and meet together to celebrate our unity in Christ.

While such a meeting sounds unrealistic, the same was true of our African-American brothers and sisters in the recent past.

As SBC leaders seek to promote "Empowering Kingdom Growth" and other ministry initiatives, it is obvious that the work of God's Kingdom extends far beyond Southern Baptists—and it will take all of us working together to make a significant spiritual impact.

Until then, let's at least applaud African-American Baptists for demonstrating what it means to pursue biblical unity.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

True Love Waits deserves annual focus

By Richard Ross

Fort Worth, Texas (BP)—Almost every Sunday morning I'm in a different pastor's office. Often the ministers gather for prayer before I preach that morning.

Before we pray, here is what they often say:

"Bro. Richard, we are just thrilled with what God has done through True Love Waits. What a powerful movement that literally has brought positive change to the U.S. and now to the world."

(So far so good, but then comes the following:)

"In fact, we so believe in True Love Waits that we provided a beautiful promise ceremony here three years ago."

Though I keep a smile on my face, thoughts whirl through my mind. Three years ago? During that span, teenagers who entered puberty at 11 or 12 have reached ninth grade with no opportunity to proclaim publicly their promise of purity. Seventh graders fascinated with oral sex have gone all year with no invitation to promise purity to God. Eighth graders who go to parties where the girls give the boys "rainbows" (don't ask) have gone yet another year with no promise. High school juniors who are gloriously saved graduate with no opportunity to stand tall for purity in a worship celebration. Families with teenagers join the church, but then wait three years before they are challenged to

slip a promise ring on their teens' fingers.

Perhaps church leaders shy away from an annual promise ceremony because they don't want to ask a

student to sign six commitment cards before they graduate

from high school. They have missed the point. We never ask teenagers to make multiple promises. In fact, it often offends Christian students when they are asked to promise again. In their minds, their original promise was a promise to God and that promise stands to their wedding day and beyond.

The annual invitation to participate in a promise ceremony is made to middle schoolers who are being promoted into the student ministry, to all students who have made commitments to Christ in the previous year, and to students who have joined the church and have no background with True Love Waits. But students who have made promises in previous years participate in Bible teaching on purity and attend the ceremony to support the first-timers—no one places another card in their hands.

Few churches highlight international missions only once every few years. Few would decide to offer vacation Bible school only once every few years. Churches give annual attention to those initiatives because they have Kingdom importance. Those initiatives matter in

people's lives—in the same way that a lifestyle of absolute sexual purity matters.

We all are thankful that many schools are giving more attention to abstinence. Two or three health classes that present the advantages of waiting are far better than what was done before. But that is no substitute for True Love Waits.

At school, students make a promise to a program. At church they make a promise to God Almighty. At school Christian students can feel alone in their lifestyle choice. Through True Love Waits they lock arms with several million peers who live as they do.

After the unit in school, no one offers much help until the following year. Through True Love Waits, parents and youth leaders provide instruction, warmth and encouragement year-round.

During the recent Valentine season, thousands of churches provided beautiful, moving services and ceremonies built around promises of purity. Many other churches didn't. When churches go more than a year without inviting their teenagers to settle this issue before God, they are placing those kids at risk.

Maybe someone should place a focus on True Love Waits on the agenda for the next church staff meeting.

Richard Ross, a spokesman for the international True Love Waits campaign, is a professor of student ministry at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas

Poland partnership ends but ministry impact continues

"Kentucky Baptists were a big part of what God was doing in Poland every day."

Joy Lindsey, former coordinator of KBC partnership with Polish Baptists

Continued from page 1

"The Polish people were very puzzled that missionaries were serving there," said Lindsey, who served with her husband, Larry, in Warsaw. The Lindseys' job was to mobilize Kentucky Baptist volunteers to complete evangelistic and community service projects in partnership with international missionaries and local Baptists.

"Kentucky Baptists were a big part of what God was doing in Poland every day," she said. "They offered encouragement to the Polish Baptists who were sometimes intimidated. Kentucky Baptists helped the Polish Baptists see that they were a part of something big—something worldwide. They gave them the momentum to evangelize."

Practicing English

Jack Studie, pastor of Pembroke Baptist Church, and his wife, Judy, were among Kentucky Baptist volunteers who went to Poland on short-term missions trips. Mrs. Studie went twice, once in January 2003 and again in the summer of 2004. Her husband joined her for the summer 2004 trip.

Mrs. Studie and her volunteer team helped lead a winter break camp in the city of Bialystok during the 2003 trip. More than 110 people attended the camp, some coming by sled, she recalled.

The Americans were the main attraction, she added. The Polish people came early to the camp each day, just to have an opportunity to speak to the Americans and practice their English.

"I think they'll never forget us," Mrs. Studie said. "We brought



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY Many partnership missions volunteers led camp and vacation Bible school activities in partnership with local Baptist congregations. Hundreds of children heard Bible stories, created crafts, sang songs and played games under the enthusiastic leadership of Kentucky Baptists. (KBC photos by Davy Bell)

them God's Word, but we brought them love."

During the summer trip, the Studies and their eight-member team helped lead a week-long summer camp in Olsztyn, a city in northeastern Poland. The group partnered with Olsztyn Baptist Church, a local storefront congregation.

The volunteers led Bible study, games and crafts, plus a carnival at the end of the week. The team gave away toys and hygiene items they had collected and brought with them from home. The Kentucky Baptist team worked alongside members of the Olsztyn Church, many of whom were university students.

Stodie said he took time during the week to have personal conversations with each of the students.

"When I talked to students about their salvation experience, they always said a fellow student led them to the Lord," he noted. "God is preparing them and raising them up to lead their country. God is at work in Poland, and calling out leaders for the future."

Kentucky Baptists also sup-

ported the Polish Baptists through leadership training seminars. These seminars were developed for pastors to equip them to be more effective ministers.

In addition, the Polish churches have begun to implement vacation Bible school, youth camps, and senior adult and orphan ministries. Much of that was made possible through the support of Kentucky Baptists.

Partnership volunteers also helped construct a new chapel for the Polish Baptist Seminary, provided medical conferences at the seminary and offered English classes in the schools, often providing open doors for evangelism.

Karey Kilgore, a former Southern Baptist International Mission Board Journeyman to Poland, witnessed the importance of the work

done by Kentucky Baptist volunteers who served alongside her.

"Their role was vital to the missionaries in Poland," said Kilgore, who is now a student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. "We would never have been able to lead all of the English classes that they led. We would never have been able to reach that many people without their help."

Needs, opportunities remain

Though the partnership officially has ended, many needs remain and several additional trips are planned for 2005. The partnership missions office plans to send five or six teams per year to work alongside John and Jan Strimple, who now serve as missionaries in Wroclaw, Poland.

Bauscher also encouraged Kentucky Baptists to continue supporting the Polish Baptists and missionaries through prayer.

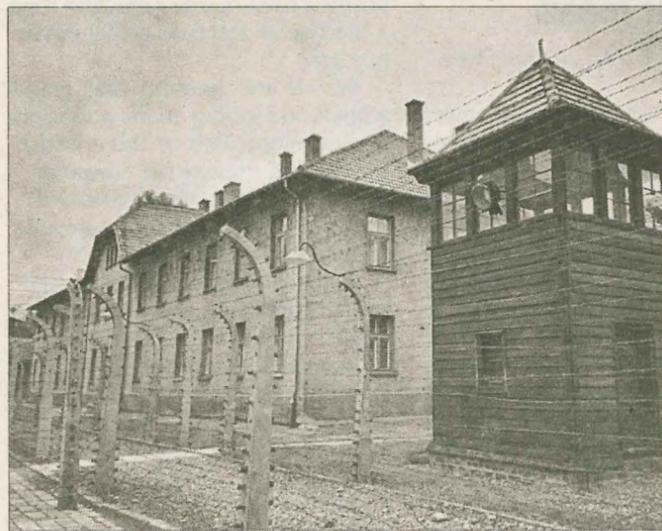
"Pray for the missionaries. Pray for more converts. Pray for more gospel awareness. Pray for more inroads into the culture for the missionaries there," he urged. "The Polish people are receptive to the gospel, but it requires relationship building."

Jack and Judy Studie noted that the volunteers also benefit from working alongside career missionaries and local Baptists.

When you have had a "drink out of a well, worshipped in churches, ridden in vehicles that Lottie Moon money paid for," your commitment to missions changes, Studie said. "It seems like once you go on a partnership missions trip, the bug kind of bites you."

"I would do it again. I'm praying about where to go next," Mrs. Studie said. "It's hard work but it's rewarding."

AUSCHWITZ Many Kentucky Baptists included a solemn pilgrimage to the former concentration camp as part of their partnership missions experience.



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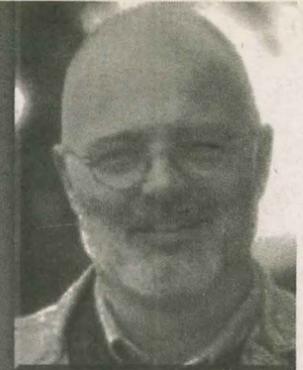
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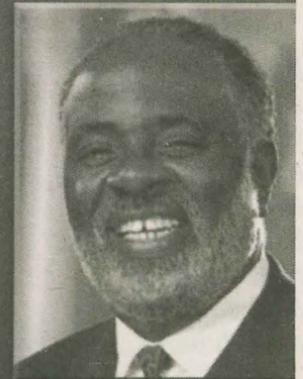
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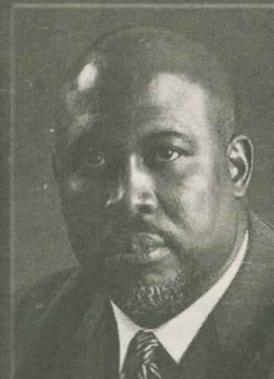
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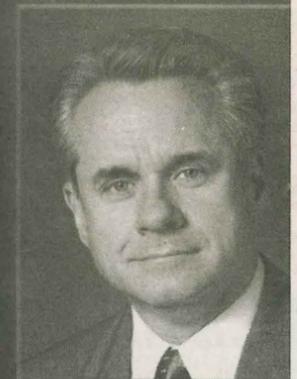
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Smiles & tears

Relief volunteers report seeing pain behind smiling faces in Sri Lanka

By John Hall
Baptist General Convention of Texas

Dallas (ABP)—Sri Lanka looks like the aftermath of a fatal car wreck, according to relief volunteers who have returned.

The bodies are gone, they said, but the devastation remains as a vivid reminder of a series of tsunamis that slammed the island.

Empty land is all that remains along a coast once populated with villages, said Texas Baptist Men volunteer Matt Patterson. Homes are damaged, as are many other structures. The industrial infrastructure is largely gone. Landmines that cover some areas of the country are one of the few signs of civilization along the coast.

People wear smiles, but pain lies just beneath them.

"People were killed, but people are smiling," said Patterson of Plano, Texas. "It's a feeling that is hard to explain because you don't feel it every day. You don't want to feel it every day."

Volunteers regularly were told stories of children rushing to their deaths just before the tsunamis hit. As the waves neared the shore, water along the coast receded quickly and exposed pockets of fish that flopped on the sand. Children ran to grab them, only to be slammed by surges of water.

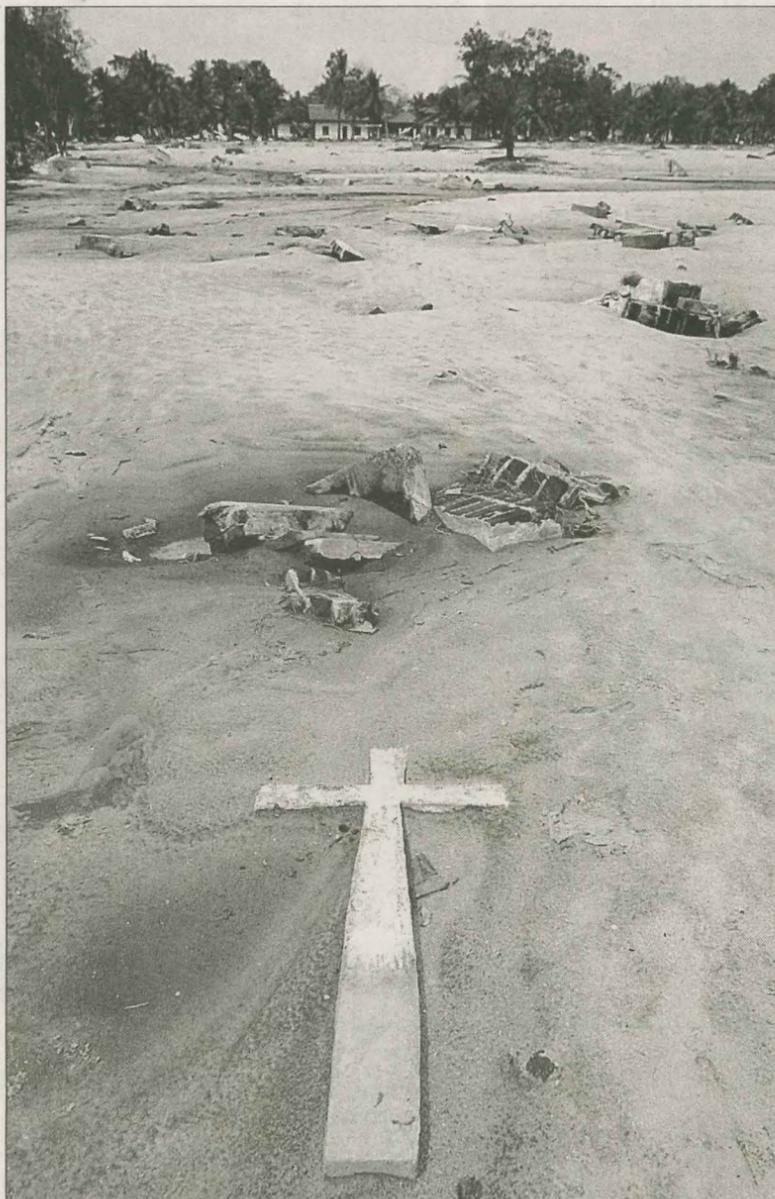
Another man said he went to town and returned to find his wife and kids gone. "His heart will never be the same," said volunteer Larry Blanchard of Lindale, Texas. "We just loved on him, hugged him."

A shoulder to cry on

That experience is typical of some of the help that Texas Baptist Men brought with them. Chaplains were part of the teams, but anyone who would listen was helpful.

"(A) lot of these people need a shoulder to cry on," said David Beckett, a missionary in Sri Lanka who recently was named director of Children's Emergency Relief International's work in the country.

Texas Baptist Men also brought



STONE CROSS A stone cross lies in the sand after the tsunami displaced it from its tomb in the graveyard in the town of Pandiruppu on Sri Lanka's east coast. Much work remains to be done, including cleaning wells and rebuilding houses, according to volunteers who recently returned. (RNS/Reuters photo by Kieran Doherty)

help in the form of supplies. After some initial struggles, volunteers perfected a way to clean wells contaminated by salt water. Ten water purifiers were cleaned about 25 wells a day.

As the teams moved through Sri Lanka, children and adults began leading them from well to well. They communicated with TBM volunteers as best they could, relying mostly on hand gestures. That was good enough. The volunteers trained Sri Lankans to clean the wells.

The teams gave pumps and supplies to local pastors who can use them as tools to share the Christian message. Recovery will move faster with more people cleaning wells, leaders said.

Texas Baptist Men also set up a mobile kitchen that has fed thousands near Batticaloa. The teams attempted to set up a kitchen in a refugee camp, but the Sri Lanka government told them to stop because it wants people to return to their villages rather than stay in the camps.

The men's ministry organization provided a washer and dryer to get a Sri Lankan hospital functioning again. The institution had run out of clean linens to use for its patients and was afraid of spreading infections.

The volunteers are altering many Sri Lankans' image of Americans and especially Christians, workers reported. Residents commonly told

the teams they did not expect Christians to help without trying to trick them. Those conversations opened witnessing opportunities.

Much work remains. For the people to return to their villages, the wells must be cleaned. Homes will need to be built. The industry infrastructure needs to be recreated.

"There's literally thousands of wells to do down there," Blanchard said. "You say, 'How could we make a difference?' Well, to those who needed water we made a difference."

Workers from Texas Baptist Men also are building a model frame for houses that can be duplicated across the island. After the Sri Lankan government approves the metal frame design, residents will be trained in how to weld them together.

Initially, residents can throw tarps across the frames for temporary housing, but over time they will be able to build walls out of cinder blocks or other materials, Smith said.

Training Sri Lankans gives residents skills they can use later, Smith noted. It also provides a continuing boost to the economy as Texas Baptist Men continues buying supplies in Sri Lanka.

"I think we've just touched the surface of the opportunities available to us," said Dick Talley, TBM logistics coordinator. "We need to stay faithful in everything we promise

Southern Seminary team to perform relief work in April

Louisville (BP)—Students and faculty at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary will send a team to assist with tsunami relief projects in the Pacific Rim during the seminary's spring reading days in April.

Details of the trip are being determined by seminary administrators with personnel from the Southern Baptist International Mission Board.

"Southern Seminary has many graduates serving in the part of the world that has been devastated by the tsunami, and we are grateful for these and others who are already in place to serve the victims and their families," said Twyla Hernandez, Southern's director of Great Commission ministries.

"The destruction and the loss of life has been overwhelming, and our prayers are with those who have (suffered) and who continue to suffer. We are currently in the process of discussing with frontline personnel how Southern Seminary can best respond to these urgent needs."

Students and faculty discussed the extent of the destruction in southern Asia along with possible relief efforts at an information session on the Louisville campus Jan. 19.

Students and faculty discussed the extent of the destruction in southern Asia along with possible relief efforts at an information session on the Louisville campus Jan. 19.

Wilson, the IMB's regional personalization consultant for the Pacific Rim region who spoke at the session, said the death counts could be much higher as debris is removed and more victims' bodies are recovered. IMB personnel in the region "say that what you see on CNN doesn't even compare to the reality of being there," Wilson said. "It's very, very bad."

Conducting relief efforts in Indonesia is particularly challenging because many militant Muslims in the country don't want Christian relief workers in Aceh, she said.

Despite the challenges facing relief workers, Christians must come to the aid of affected areas because of the tremendous physical and spiritual needs in the Pacific Rim, she said.

The people of the Pacific Rim "are very open, and they are asking lots of questions," Wilson said. "They are very receptive to the gospel at this point."

Although the need for work in the Pacific Rim is particularly pressing currently, Southern Baptists must remember that there will be a need for continued work in the region for many years to come, she said.

"Five thousand people die in Indonesia every day, and 90 percent of them have never heard the gospel. ... We have a chronic catastrophe in the Pacific Rim," Wilson said. "It is anticipated that relief projects could provide outreach opportunities for the next two to three years."

Residents commonly told the teams they did not expect Christians to help without trying to trick them. Those conversations opened witnessing opportunities.

How to help

The following Baptist-related agencies are collecting funds for earthquake and tsunami relief:

■ **International Mission Board.** Gifts designated "Asia Earthquake Disaster Relief" can be mailed to the International Mission Board, Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230. Or visit www.imb.org.

■ **Woman's Missionary Union Foundation.** Funds can be sent to HEART Fund-Tsunami Response, Box 11346, Birmingham, AL 35202-1346. Or visit www.wmufoundation.com.

■ **Baptist World Aid.** Donations designated "Asian Tidal Wave Appeal" can be sent to Baptist World Aid, c/o Baptist World Alliance, 405 N. Washington St., Falls Church, VA 22046. Or visit www.bwanet.org.

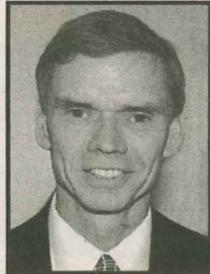
■ **Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.** Checks designated "#17016 Asian Relief" can be mailed to Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, Box 101699, Atlanta, GA 30392.

■ **Samaritan's Purse.** The ministry is accepting donations through www.samaritanspurse.org.

When you get past all the starry-eyed talk about big dollars, it really is common sense.

What's right is actually quite simple

Over the past three years, The Family Foundation, as a public policy organization, has thoroughly researched the issue of expanding gambling in Kentucky and has concluded that there are four aspects of society that will absolutely be changed forever – and *not* for the better. Here are our conclusions:



Kent Ostrander is the executive director of The Family Foundation

I. FAMILY: Expanded gambling targets families. Corporations can't gamble, nor can businesses, institutions, schools, churches, nonprofits, clubs, nor civic organizations – only moms and dads, and a few singles. In other words, all the BILLIONS of dollars that they say will be raised over the years through gambling is just a shift of assets FROM the hands of the family INTO the hands of the gambling industry. The government gets its share simply by heavily taxing the money as it changes hands. The bottom line is that family picks up the whole tab, and tragically, government, charged with protecting families, maneuvers to "get in on the action."

II. BUSINESS: Once families lose, businesses lose. After the losses, parents can't afford to take the family to eat out, buy their children new clothes for school, purchase a new refrigerator, or _____ (You fill in the blank.) In other regions of the country where casinos/raquinos have opened, the losses to business have been clearly documented. Further, jobs that gambling expansionists often boast will increase, do so only briefly (2 to 3 years). At that point there is an overall loss of jobs because only the gambling

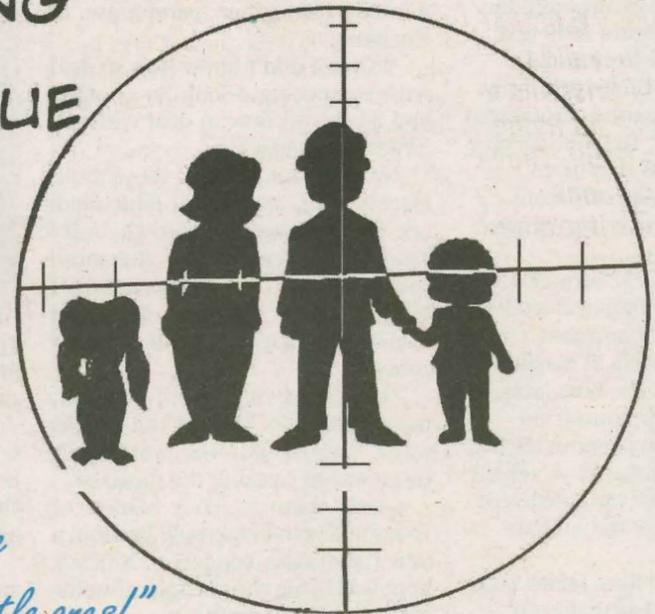
The bottom line is that family picks up the whole tab, and tragically, government, charged with protecting families, maneuvers to "get in on the action."

industry, and newly opened pawn shops, continue to prosper.

III. GOVERNMENT: Government will be corrupted. This is scary, folks.

ourselves, if government comes under the heavy hand of gambling interests, how likely is it to escape that corruption of values?

HUNTING FOR REVENUE



"Aim for the tall ones... we don't care about the little ones!"

Shelton

Think about it... With literally billions of dollars going into the hands of the gambling interests, who will become the greatest contributor and most influential group in the political process?

If our legislature is "gambling friendly" today, how much more "friendly" will it be ten years from now, when all of its members have received sizeable legal contributions from the gambling interests? And how easy will it be for them to "replace" anti-gambling legislators?

Now, imagine that there's a debate, as Nevada had, as to whether to legalize prostitution in order to embellish the "good times" at the gambling sites. What about making strip bars and pornography more available? If gambling interests want it, what will the legislature do?

The gambling world is all about two things – "A good time" and "the bottom line." "Good times" demand prostitution and strip bars, and of course, when good times go awry, you'll need abortion to be readily available. "Nice" legislators that will vote for gambling today will themselves be replaced within ten years by pro-gambling legislators that will not care one iota about family values. We must ask

IV. THE VULNERABLE: There will be some human beings, those poor in spirit, as well as poor in financial assets, whose lives will be totally destroyed – suicide, spouse abuse, divorce, child neglect and abuse, embezzlement, alcoholism, and crime (both victim and perpetrator). The family will be ravaged financially, but its fortunes will turn even worse as money pressures mount and the *individuals* in that family are hurt by the one who is ensnared and who flails like an animal caught in a trap.

Kentucky citizens are not clamoring for expanded gambling – only the gambling interests are. Legislators might see "taking it to the people" as the easy way out, but it certainly isn't the high road.

The bottom line? Government should stay within its financial boundaries. But if it *truly* needs money, let it pursue funding along the route that is lawfully authorized: through taxation. Certainly not through an unsavory partnership with the gambling industry that will fleece the people of Kentucky!

Kt

Please Act!

CALL the Governor's office SOON 502-564-2611 and in your own words leave a message asking him to . . .

"Take the lead against ANY expansion of gambling"

CALL the toll free message line SOON 800-372-7181 and leave a message for your legislators. (Ask the receptionist to "copy" your message to Senate leaders David Williams & Dan Kelly and House Leaders Jody Richards & Rocky Adkins.) Tell them to . . .

"Vote against ANY expanded gambling and AGAINST placing it on the ballot."

And . . .

Send a letter to the editor of your paper, sharing one point that you want to make, or borrow one from this article.

Sign up to help us in your community – the action item above is just the beginning. We'll keep you abreast.

Call us at: 859-255-5400
 Contact us via: www.SayNoCasino.com
 Mail to us at: TFF P.O. Box 22100
 Lexington, KY 40522
 Email us at: tffky@mis.net

Email us and we'll keep you updated during the session.

For more information, visit:

www.SayNoCasino.com

www.kybaptist.org The official web site of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

www.kentuckyleague.org The web site of The Kentucky League on Alcohol and Gambling Problems

KJ2000 Bibles top 1 million in print

The King James 2000 Bible, edited by Kentuckian Robert Couric, recently topped 1 million in print.

The Bible League recently completed a printing of 32,000 Devotional Study Bibles, which incorporate the King James 2000 text.

The Devotional Study Bibles primarily will be used throughout Africa. The Bible League reports that up to 200 million African Christians are without Bibles.

Couric, former dean of biblical studies at Mid-Continent University in Mayfield, edited the King James 2000 to remove old English pronouns such as *thy*, *thou* and *ye* as well as revise outdated verb endings and archaic words.

The King James 2000 Bible is available on many web sites, such as swordsearcher.com and spiritandtruth.org. Soft-cover Bibles and New Testaments are available at www.bibleleague.com.

Publisher aims TNIV & other products at young adults

By Charles Honey
Religion News Service

Grand Rapids, Mich. (RNS)—Even over latte at a coffeehouse, Andrew Apsite keeps God's Word close at hand.

At the downtown Urban Mill, the 18-year-old reaches into his backpack and pulls out "The Message Remix," a modern-language paraphrase of the Bible.

"When I don't know how to deal with something, I look for comfort and advice on how to deal with my issues," says Apsite.

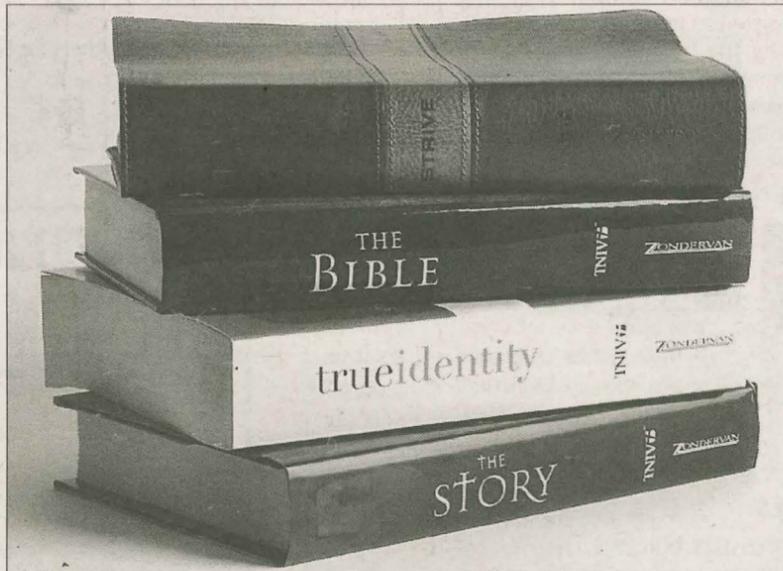
He and his friend, 21-year-old Marcus Hills, are serious Bible readers. They've wrestled with the lofty King James Version and the more contemporary New International Version. They welcome any new translation that will speak to their generation.

"It's the living Word of God, man," Hills says. "I know the lessons won't change. But the wording is just a way of relaying the message."

Count them as likely readers of Today's New International Version, a new translation Zondervan officials hope will bring the message alive for millions of 20-somethings.

The Grand Rapids publisher last week released an unprecedented burst of Bible products amid a \$1 million ad blitz.

Zondervan's prime target: 35 million to 40 million "spiritually intrigued" young adults from their



TODAY'S NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION The TNIV, a translation of the Bible aimed at readers from their late teens to mid 30s, is one of several products released recently by Zondervan. (RNS photo by Jon Brouwer.)

late teens to mid-30s. Polls show they believe the Bible is relevant but are the least active Scripture readers of any age group.

"There are so many who passionately believe the Bible has something to say to them," says Ben Irwin, Zondervan's product development manager for the 18- to 34-year-old Bible team. "The flip side is there's not much out there that's meeting that opportunity. We're hoping to reverse that."

Shipped to outlets from Fam-

ily Christian Bookstores to Barnes & Noble, Zondervan's nine new Bible products include:

- Today's New International Version, an updated, gender-inclusive remake of the best-selling New International Version.

- Men's and women's study versions of the TNIV.

- "The Story," a paraphrase in novel format with Tolkien-like maps.

- "Beginning the Journey," a kind of evangelism sampler containing

Genesis, Deuteronomy, the Gospel of John, Acts and Romans.

- An audio version of the New Testament.

These follow "Word on the Street," a playful, street-lingo paraphrase released last fall. Along with a reality-TV-style video and an interactive Web site (www.TNIV.com), Zondervan executives hope the products will prompt more in the coffeehouse crowd to crack open the Good Book—and more people of any age to dig deeper.

"We know we're not going to convince the agnostic or the atheist who has absolutely zero interest in the Bible or Christianity," Irwin says. "Our goal is to reach those who are searching."

Through Harris polls and focus groups at Christian colleges, Zondervan found one of the obstacles to Bible reading is sheer size. At 66 books and 1,000-plus pages, the Bible is off-putting to readers routinely plugged into the Internet and iPods.

"One of the problems with a 'big B' Bible today is there's never any sense of having finished or accomplished something," says Paul Caminiti, Zondervan vice president.

Thus "little b" Bibles such as "The Story," a 420-page tome with chapter titles like "Creation: Things Started Out Great." Its narrative flow and elegant artwork resonate with a generation raised on popular media, says Irwin, 28.

Meet Tim.

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

That's not all.

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

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

Call us to find out how you can help.



Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children

Life-Changing Ministries for Children & Families

1-800-456-1386

www.kbhc.org

Last best hope

Kentucky's Baptist colleges are worthy of your support

I was intrigued with Samford University President Tom Corts' lecture titled "The University, the Church and the Culture."

He acknowledged the age-old struggle for evangelical Christians between staying separate from the world, or becoming involved in the world to win the world for Christ. Generally speaking, he concluded that modern American culture had overwhelmed modern American Christianity. Evaluating the impact of "the church" standing against cultural trash, Corts sadly observed, "I had hoped the billions we have spent on Sunday schools, day schools and vacation Bible schools would produce a generation that has its values correct." But that has not happened. As the Barna Organization concluded, "People's faith does not make as much of a difference as might be expected."

The culture also threatens every Baptist college, university and their leaders. We Kentucky Baptists can be pleased the leaders of our colleges and universities are where they are because of deep personal

convictions and calling. They are committed to perpetuating and enhancing the distinctively Christian differences between them and the public universities. Regardless of the cultural biases against them, and there are many, they have a higher and holier calling. They are not accountable to the Chamber of Commerce, but to the Lord God of the universe.

You and I have a major responsibility to help our colleges and universities resist "the fiery darts of our culture," and to remain secure in their identity as Kentucky Baptist Christian education institutions. Each of us can encourage young people to attend, financially support them and prayerfully remember those who provide leadership.

Our churches have our young people, at best, just a few short hours a week. Could it be our Baptist colleges and universities are, as Martin Marty asked, "the last best hope for promoting the development of a vibrant personal faith strong enough to last?"

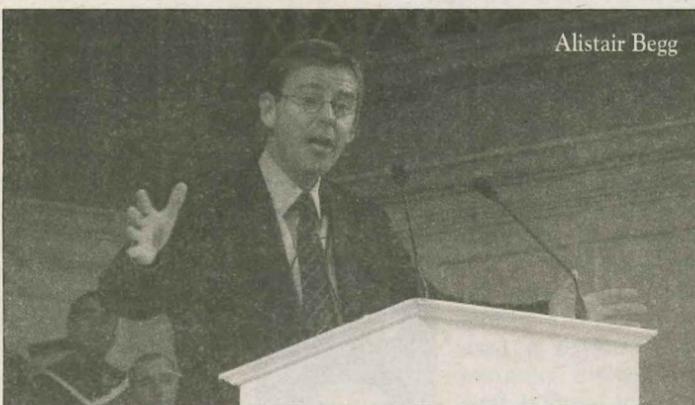
Barry Allen is president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, PO Box 436389, Louisville, KY 40253; (888) 254-5701; www.kybaptistfoundation.org

KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION



Barry Allen

POWER IN THE PULPIT



Alistair Begg

March 14, 2005

On the campus of Southern Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky

If you're looking to add power to your proclamation and passion to your preaching, Southern Seminary's Power in the Pulpit is just what you need.

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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary
2825 Lexington Road · Louisville, Kentucky

Kudzu

Doug Marlette



For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



Bible Crosswords

Janet W. Adkins

Across

- 1 Juliette Low's organization (abbr.)
- 4 Depot (abbr.)
- 7 _____ reliever
- 11 "The _____ state of that man is worse than the first" (Luke 11:26)
- 13 Desire
- 14 Competent
- 15 Theory
- 16 Old auto
- 17 Wild goat
- 18 Stinging comment
- 19 Welfare; benefit
- 21 "And _____ also the Jairite was a chief ruler about David" (2 Samuel 20:26)
- 23 Part of a day (abbr.)
- 24 One-_____ is a tithe
- 27 Righteous, symbolical name of Israel (var.)
- 32 One of Lamech's two wives (Genesis 4:19)
- 33 Conjunction
- 34 Late folk singer Laura
- 35 David's nephew (2 Samuel 13:3)
- 38 "Yet through the _____ of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs" (Job 14:9)
- 39 Certain therapist (abbr.)
- 40 Kitchen necessity
- 41 "Can two walk _____" (Amos 3:3)
- 46 "_____ it Romantic?"
- 49 Inter _____
- 50 On or upon (prefix)
- 51 Unit of weight in the Middle East
- 52 Practices fabrication

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 _____ Perce, North American Indian tribe
- 54 Heads
- 56 Center; source
- 57 Understand; realize
- 58 "_____ unto you, scribes and Pharisees" (Matthew 23:14)
- 25 People living in southern Nigeria
- 26 Feminine nickname
- 27 Patient and faithful sufferer
- 28 "But ye have an _____ from the Holy One, and ye know all things" (1 John 2:20)
- 29 Deli loaf
- 30 Footed vase
- 31 _____ a chance
- 36 Period
- 37 Site of Mars' hill
- 38 Thus
- 40 "In a race run all, but one receiveth the _____" (1 Corinthians 9:24)
- 41 Bath powder
- 42 Highly spiced stew
- 43 The _____ eagle (fowl not to be eaten; Leviticus 11:18)
- 44 "Among these nations shalt thou find no _____" (Deuteronomy 28:65)
- 45 Fencer's adjunct
- 47 Garbage _____
- 48 Mount _____, in the land of Moab, gateway to Canaan (Deuteronomy 32)
- 55 Compass point

Down

- 1 Speaking too easily
- 2 Actress Thompson
- 3 Tribe to which Anna the prophetess belonged (Luke 2)
- 4 Mideast country
- 5 Problem child?
- 6 "And he [Samson] said ... then shall I be weak, and be as _____ man" (Judges 16:11)
- 7 Matched set
- 8 French clergy member
- 9 Channel, Solomon, Hawaiian, et al., to Christophe
- 10 _____! (word heard in a queue)
- 12 Aka Dorcas (Acts 9)
- 20 Sounds of hesitation
- 22 _____ factor (group of antigens)
- 24 _____ Mahal

Last week's solution

E	T	C		L	A	I	C		S	A	M	E		
B	A	L		A	N	O		T	R	U	E			
E	R	E		B	O	O		N	R	I	D	E		
R	E	A		S	O	N		S	I	A				
			22	N	E	R		B	U	L	W	A	R	K
E	R	T		S	F	A	M	E	T	B	E	E		
R	A	W		S	O	R	E	S	U	N	E			
A	M	A		A	R	E	S		K	N	O	P		
S	A	Y		I	N	G	S		B	I	D			
			41	M	D	I		M	E	R	A	R	I	
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Michael W. Smith again tops nominees for Dove Awards

Nashville (RNS)—Longtime Christian artist Michael W. Smith topped the field of nominations for the Dove Awards, which will be awarded by the Gospel Music Association in April.

Smith received eight of the nominations announced Feb. 7. He was followed by the group Casting Crowns with seven, and lead singer/songwriter Mark Hall with six individual nominations.



Michael W. Smith

The Crabb Family also gained six nominations and its patriarch, Gerald Crabb, earned six nominations for his songwriting abilities.

Nominations include such varied genres within Christian music as pop, urban, rock, worship and Southern gospel.

"This year's slate of Dove nominees once again demonstrates that gospel knows no musical boundaries," said John Styll, president of the Gospel Music Association.

The GMA Music Awards ceremony will be held April 13 in Nashville. Nominations include:

Artist of the Year: Casting Crowns, MercyMe, Selah, Michael W. Smith, Switchfoot.

Female Vocalist of the Year: Bethany Dillon, Natalie Grant, Nicole C. Mullen, Christy Nockels, Joy Williams.

Group of the Year: Casting Crowns, The Crabb Family, MercyMe, Selah, Switchfoot.

Male Vocalist of the Year: Jeremy Camp, Jason Crabb, Mark Hall, Israel Houghton, Fernando Ortega.

New Artist of the Year: BarlowGirl, Building 429, Day of Fire, Bethany Dillon, Matthew West.

Song of the Year: "Blessed Be Your Name," "Dare You to Move," "Friend of God," "Glory Defined," "Healing Rain," "Meant to Live," "More," "Through the Fire," "Who Am I," "You Raise Me Up."

Southern Gospel Song of the Year: "A Picture of Grace" by the Gaither Vocal Band; "He Came Looking for Me" by the Crabb Family; "His Life for Mine" by the Talley Trio; "I Will Find You Again" by The Perrys; "I Wish I Could Have Been There" by The Perrys; "It Looks Like Love to Me" by CrossWay.

Survey: Religious teens more confident

Continued from page 1

The National Study of Youth and Religion, described as the most comprehensive research ever done on faith and adolescence, revealed that such teens are more likely to:

- Do better in school.
- Feel better about themselves.
- Shun alcohol, drugs and sex.
- Care about the poor.
- Make moral choices based on what is right rather than what would make them happy.

Researchers considered variables such as the possibility that more obedient youngsters are more likely to attend church, and still found that "religious faith and practice themselves exert significant positive, direct and indirect influences on the lives of teenagers, helping to foster healthier, more engaged adolescents who live more constructive and promising lives."

Benign "whateverism"

What religious groups have to worry about, the study found, is not teen rebellion, but a "benign 'whateverism'" that reduces their perception of God to more of a valet—someone meeting individual needs—instead of an authority figure.

The result is growing numbers of teens replacing traditional faith with an "alternative religious vision of divinely underwritten personal happiness and interpersonal niceness," said Christian Smith, the University of North Carolina sociologist who led the study.

Researchers talked to 3,370 adolescents and their parents in a national random telephone survey

in 2002 and 2003.

The study also involved in-depth personal interviews with 267 of the respondents from 45 states. The project was funded by the Religion Division of the Indianapolis-based Lilly Endowment Inc.

Several studies in recent years have found positive relations between mental and physical health and religious participation among adults.

But there is little research among adolescents. The first major findings of the new study have just been released in a book from Oxford University Press titled "Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers."

The study found that four in 10 teens attend religious services weekly or more frequently.

Homework, television and other media, jobs and sports increasingly compete for teens' time.

"Indeed, in many adolescents' lives, religion occupies a quite weak and often losing position among these competing influences," Smith wrote.

Bursting stereotypes on teens

The study bursts a few stereotypes of teen religion, foremost among them the idea that U.S. teens are alienated from or rebelling against organized religion.

More than half of the teens surveyed said religion was extremely or very important in their lives.

More than two-thirds of teens report attending services many times a year, and more than six in 10 teens say they would attend religious services regularly if it were

entirely up to them.

Nearly eight in 10 teens who attend religious services say they expect to attend the same kind of congregation when they are 25. Almost none reported having bad experiences with clergy or youth group leaders.

Teen religiosity is important, researchers said, because their study also shows almost universal positive outcomes related to active religious lives, from success in school to vastly reduced rates of teen pregnancy and drug use.

Kim Martin, a 14-year-old who attends Westlake United Methodist Church in Westlake, Ohio, said students in her school are approached almost daily to smoke cigarettes or do drugs.

"I think our relationship with God gives us more of a conscience, and gives us the power to say no," she said.

How might parents develop spiritual lives in their offspring? By being role models, the study indicates.

Among parents who said religion is extremely important to them, two-thirds of their teenage children said religion is extremely or very important in their lives.

In contrast, among the teenage children of parents who said religion was not very important, 48 percent said religion was not very or not at all important in their lives.

"They really do look to their parents," Smith said in an interview. "We'll get who we are, not what we tell them—not what we wish for, but who we are."

Our farm: A truly amazing ministry

Oneida's most important crop not hogs or corn, but the kids who work there

Friends and visitors often ask me questions about our farm. Do we raise all of our own food? How big is the farm? What crops do we grow? How many students work on the farm? Well, you get the idea. Guests often ask how much income is derived from the farm. I cannot help but smile and chuckle a little as I tell them that we not only do not make money on the farm, we actually lose money. And then it happens every time; they get a quizzical look on their faces and ask, "If you don't make any money with the farming operation, then why do you have it?"

There are some things about Oneida that are a little difficult to explain, but that question is never difficult. I simply tell them a story—or two or three—about the number of students who have had life-changing experiences working on the farm. Hostile and bitter attitudes are often changed with the support of the caring farm staff. Even students who are sent to the farm for a few days or two weeks for discipline often ask to be placed on the regular farm crew after their suspensions are completed.

We are providing a ministry on the farm that could be easily overlooked. Just a month ago "Cory" (not his real name) enrolled. He was a middle-school student from a neighboring southern state and had a little more southern drawl than even some Kentuckians have. A two-minute conversation with this young man would tell you quickly that he was a mountain boy as well. Cory was having some difficulties at home. There were some special circumstances

there that gave Cory the opportunity to respond in a negative way. His parents had divorced when he was younger, and he and his stepfather did not get along very well.

Cory's parents told me he could be defiant, and having a mother working outside the home did not help. It was believed that Cory was capable of doing well in school, but his grades were basically low average and he had some failing grades, too. Cory admitted he got on the nerves of some teachers, he was not doing his school work and he did not have many friends.

During the interview, when I asked Cory what he thought he would enjoy about being at Oneida, he smiled and said he wanted to work on the farm. He did not waste any time getting his job assignment and later joined the FFA. He told some of his farm friends that he came to Oneida because he had an "attitude problem." He also told them that he wanted to be a better person.

Cory enjoys working with the show steers and is looking forward to showing his steer this summer. He has made some real friends, both staff and students, on the farm and is really proud of his accomplishments so far. He recently said, "I would like to thank God for giving me a second chance."

Our farm staff are a critical part of the Oneida ministry. It would be easy to overlook the unique ministry they provide to our students. We have said for years that our most important crop on the farm is not hogs, cattle or corn; it is kids. I thank God for our farm and our farm staff!

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

Same mission, different assignment

After 27 years as pastor, Denton becomes chaplain

During 27 years' as a pastor of four churches, 1980 alumnus Dale Denton and his wife, Brenda, often believed God would use them in some type of mission work. "I had never considered that the mission field would be where we were already," Dale said.

The call began in Danville when a retired minister started a part-time chaplain program in the local hospital. Dale and a few other ministers volunteered to assist him. The program met a need, and the ministry became full time. Dale was approached about the position, but at first he had difficulty believing God would not want him to be a pastor. "He reminded me that I had given my life to Him to use as He saw fit," Dale said. He resigned as pastor of Willow Grove Baptist Church to become chaplain of the 187-bed Ephraim McDowell Regional Medical Center in Danville.

His daily responsibilities revolve around meeting the spiritual needs of facility associates, patients and their families. This includes daily visits to many patient rooms, family waiting areas and the emergency department. "It is a type of market-

place ministry that changes daily," Dale observed. "I also serve on the oncology support team and the hospital ethics committee, conduct spiritual encounter groups in behavioral health, and teach a class to new nurses on the spiritual care of patients." "The most rewarding parts of this ministry come when I am called to provide spiritual care

and support in tragic circumstances to people who have no religious connections," Dale said. "This includes deaths due to health, violent crime and accidents. I'm also thankful that I can be with associates after the difficult experience when they have lost their first patient or praying with a code team after responding to a cardiac arrest, helping one of our doctors break bad news to a family, or being there to talk with them about their everyday problems."

Dale said he had preached for years about sharing a Christian witness in the workplace and now he practices it daily. When someone asks him why he "left the ministry," he responds, "I haven't left. God has just changed my assignment."

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

Creative license

'Choose Life' car tags spurring legal brouhaha

By Wangui Njuguna
Religion News Service

Washington (RNS)—Drive the nation's highways and you see state license plates touting support for colleges, NASCAR and Boy Scouts.

State governments have learned they can raise millions of dollars by offering license plate logos and slogans while drivers have learned they can communicate their passions on their vehicles.

But two passions—abortion, and to a lesser extent, adoption—have raised thorny legal questions about where personal freedom of expression ends and state endorsement of religion and other controversial beliefs begin.

Last month, the U.S. Supreme Court refused to settle the issue, at least for now, when it declined to take a case involving a license plate battle in South Carolina. That leaves the country in a state of legal confusion over the issue of abortion and license plates.

Eleven states allow plates saying "Choose Life": Florida, Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, Hawaii, Montana, South Dakota, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Connecticut and Maryland.

Legal injunctions have blocked such plates in two states, Tennessee and South Carolina. And one state, Ohio, has passed legislation for "Choose Life" plates but the governor has not yet signed the bill.

In New York, the state determined that a plate saying "Choose



REJECTED TAG The proposed design for a "Choose Life" license plate for New York. The state has rejected the request but a lawsuit is pending.

Life" was offensive and denied a request for it.

Pro-abortion tags rejected

In Florida, a three-year battle resulted in the approval of a plate saying "Choose Life" while an amendment in a legislative bill for another saying "pro-choice" was rejected.

In Tennessee, the state legislature approved a "Choose Life" plate but turned down proposals for a similar plate by abortion rights activists.

The Tennessee American Civil Liberties Union challenged that decision in court, alleging viewpoint discrimination. A judge agreed, issuing an injunction preventing production of the anti-abortion plate.

In South Carolina, the legislature had approved the specialty tags, with revenues from the \$70 fee designated for "crisis pregnancy centers" that discourage abortion. But a circuit court struck down

that effort because supporters of abortion rights were not offered a plate of their own.

Because the U.S. Supreme Court refused to take that case, the lower court ruling stands. The court could take a similar case from another state in the future.

A core question in all these cases is whether individuals and states have the right to pick and choose what goes on their plates.

"It is difficult to argue that you are entitled to your view on a state license plate," said Ira Lupu, a constitutional law professor at George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

Lupu said license plates are unlike a public forum such as Central Park where someone can say whatever one wants.

"When someone puts a message on a license plate, it becomes a state message," he said. "A state does not have to be even handed with its own messages."

License tags as bulletin boards

Exceptions, he said, are when the state treats the license plate like a bulletin board or when it issues a license plate that everybody with a car must put on a vehicle.

Author Ted Jelen said the specialty plates question is best solved out of court and inside the "political arena."

"I am strongly pro-choice and I don't like this idea (of the 'Choose



Life' plates) but they are legal," said Jelen, author of "To Serve God and Mammon: Church-State Relations in the United States."

Jelen said the government does not have to remain "neutral" on an issue unless it is supporting religion.

He cited *Wooley vs. Maynard*, a Supreme Court case that found a New Hampshire license plate with the words "Live Free or Die" violated George Maynard's rights. Maynard argued the plate was contrary to his religious and moral beliefs as a Jehovah's Witness.

"The difference is that all New Hampshire plates had that message," Jelen said. "And they (Maynard's lawyers) argued successfully that the government was forcing the message on them. In the case of specialty plates, that is not happening. It's not like people are being forced to endorse the pro-life position on abortion."

PRO TAG CHOICE

Elizabeth Rex of the Children First Foundation holds a sign showing more than 40 specialty license plates issued by the state of New York while her request for a "Choose Life" plate has been deemed inappropriate. Rex has filed a lawsuit, still pending, claiming that her organization's First Amendment rights have been violated. (RNS photo by Mike Falco)

Protestors' arrest becomes rallying cause for conservative groups

By Jeffrey MacDonald
Religion News Service

Philadelphia (RNS)—On Oct. 10, 2004, as Philadelphia police were hauling off to jail a group of Christian protesters at a gay pride rally, organizers of the event applauded what seemed to be a big victory.

But after four months, the case is instead providing Christian conservatives with a rallying cry, a fund-raising cause and a rare ally in the American Civil Liberties Union.

And the gay advocacy camp is astrir with questions as to whether a zealous prosecutor may have done their cause more harm than good.

At issue are three felony charges brought against Michael Marcavage, a 25-year-old activist who arrived with at least 10 followers and a bullhorn at Outfest, a celebration of homosexuality on the city's streets. For ethnic intimidation, criminal conspiracy and inciting a riot as well as five misdemeanor charges, Marcavage theoretically could face years in prison, although the prosecutor calls probation the likely outcome.

Free speech or hate crime?

To the Mississippi-based American Family Association and other conservative Christian organizations, Marcavage and four charged cohorts are now revered as "The Philadelphia Five." Supporters see them as champions of the right to speak a religious viewpoint in a public setting.

"That city is absolutely out of control," said Brian Fahling, senior trial attorney with the AFA Center for Law & Policy, "and if we don't (fight back), it will come to every city in America."

Philadelphia District Attorney Lynne Abraham sees a different picture. She stands by her decision to prosecute Marcavage under a state statutory provision added in 2002 to include sexual orientation among a list of potential motives in hate crimes.

"This case is about conduct by specific people, not speech," said Cathie Abookire, a spokesperson for the district attorney's office. "You are allowed to be offensive. ... It's mind-boggling to think the DA would arrest people on speech charges."

The outcome of a court conference Feb. 17 will determine whether the case gets quashed, as the defense has requested, or if it advances to trial. At a preliminary hearing in December, a judge ruled there was sufficient evidence for the case to proceed.

Between the two poles in this case, debate centers on implications of trying to use a hate crime law to prosecute what may be offensive or potentially riot-inducing speech.

Members of Philadelphia-based Repent America provoked strong reactions at Outfest by wearing T-shirts and carrying signage conveying God's displeasure with homosexuality. Outfest volunteers sur-

rounded protesters with 8-foot-high pink poster boards and whistles to keep the group's message from being seen or heard.

The case attracted the concern of the American Civil Liberties Union, which generally takes a wary view of hate crime bills for their potential to crimp freedoms. If a hate crime law is to be applied, the litmus test must center on deeds, not words, according to Mary Catherine Roper, staff attorney with the ACLU in Philadelphia.

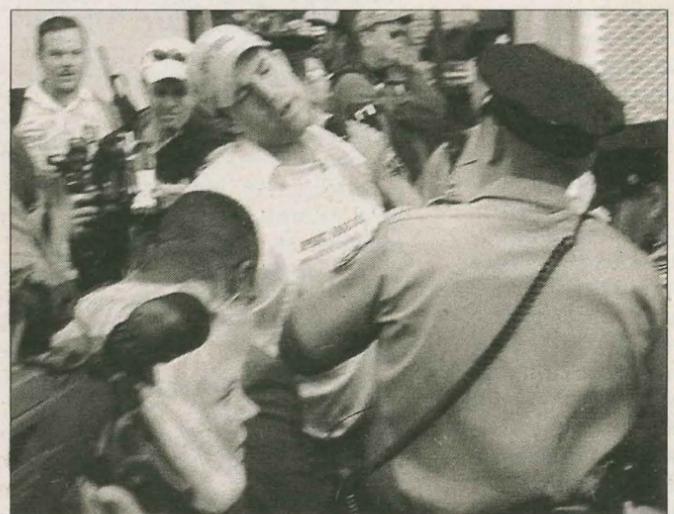
"The idea that expressing an unpopular view is somehow inciting a riot—that's terrifying to me," Roper said. "To say that expressing a minority view becomes an invitation to violence, ... that's a slope we can't step one foot down."

Sympathetic supporters

Supporters sympathetic with the Philadelphia Five's message for homosexuals to repent are sending thank you notes, giving money for a countersuit in federal court and buying \$15 videotapes that tell the story of what the AFA is calling "the clearest example of anti-Christian bigotry by city officials in the last century."

"Christian conservative organizations have always done best when they've had a cause celebre," said James Guth, professor of political science at Furman University and an expert on grassroots Christian movements.

"What has often given stimula-



tion to the action of Christian activists has often been some encroaching act of government."

Even so, less ideological voices say the Philadelphia case represents more than sensitivity on the part of conservatives who see homosexuality as a changeable condition and are willing to fight for the right to say so.

"I think it's a growing issue around the country and around the world," said Charles Haynes, senior scholar at the First Amendment Center in Arlington, Va. "It's a tension between providing for tolerance and (providing for) free speech. ... In my view, there shouldn't be legislation that protects people from speech they don't want to hear. ... If we try to stop all speech that offends somebody, there wouldn't be much left."

NOTABLE ARREST Michael Marcavage is arrested during a protest that took place during the 2004 Outfest, a gay pride rally and parade organized by Philly Pride in Philadelphia. His arrest has raised questions regarding religious protest and free speech, particularly when associated with opposing homosexuality. (RNS photo courtesy of Philly Pride)

PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following projects, needs and congregations related to Kentucky Baptist partnerships with Baptists in Brazil and the International Baptist Convention in Europe.

■ A volunteer team of Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union leaders conducting prayerwalks and WMU work in Teresina, Brazil. Kentucky WMU Executive Director Joy Bolton is leading this six-woman team which will return Feb. 25.

■ A church construction group serving in Teresina, Brazil, led by Kentuckian Larry Noe, March 7-19.

■ Sri Lankans living in Milan, Italy. An International Baptist Convention congregation there reports that God has opened doors of relationships with several immigrants from Sri Lanka, most of them Buddhist, in recent weeks.

■ A medical missions and evangelism team serving in Brasilia, Brazil, March 3-14, led by Ross Bauscher, Kentucky Baptists' director of partnership missions.

■ The Federal District of Brasilia Baptist Convention which has a variety of needs for mission groups to work with local churches to conduct evangelism, church planting, new church building construction, medical missions, church building renovation and leadership training. For more information, contact the Kentucky Baptist Convention's partnership missions office at (888) 254-5724.

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **BEREA**—Red Lick Church ordained **Otis Brock** and **Don Gibbs** as deacons Jan. 16. **Johnny Baker** is pastor.

■ **BURLINGTON**—Burlington Church will hold a Christian parenting conference, "Building a Foundation for the Future," March 4-6 led by **Steve Pettit**. For more information, call (859) 586-6529. **Terry Wilder** is pastor.

■ **HARTFORD**—Hartford Church will host a Sunday school leader training conference, "Making the Connection: Essentials for Excellence," Feb. 19, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information, call (270) 298-3701. **Ed Mitchell** is pastor.

■ **ENDERSON**—Immanuel Baptist Temple ordained **Chris Remke** as a deacon Jan. 30. **Joseph Tricquet Jr.** is pastor.

■ **HICKORY**—Lighthouse Church will host a concert with **Eric Horner** Feb. 19, 6 p.m. Tickets are free but an offering will be taken to aid tsunami victims. Call (270) 856-3507 for tickets. **Terry Mullenex** is pastor.

■ **LONDON**—Hart Baptist Church recently honored **W.C. Wyan Jr.** for 35 years of perfect attendance at every service of the church. **Jeff Jackson** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Cedar Creek Church recently called **John Ewart** as pastor. Parkland Church recently honored **Carol Taylor** for 20 years of service as church secretary. **Tom Curry** is pastor.

Victory Memorial Church recently called **Jim Orrick** as interim pastor.

■ **MANCHESTER**—Macedonia Church recently called **Charlie Goodman** as pastor.

■ **MELBER**—Melber Church recently called **Jeff Cruse** as pastor.

■ **MORGANFIELD**—First Church will present its Easter musical at First Church of Sturgis March 18-20. For more information, call First Church, Sturgis at (270) 333-2691.

■ **MURRAY**—First Church's Fellowship of Christian Women will host a "Listening to Love" conference Feb. 19 with **Kim Bolton** as guest speaker. For more information, contact the church office at (270) 753-1854.

■ **OWENSBORO**—First Church will present its Easter pageant at Riverpark Center March 24-26, 7:30 p.m., with a 2 p.m. matinee March 26.

Hall Street Church will host a free health and wellness fair Feb. 24 from 9 to 11 a.m. For more information, call (270) 683-1303.

■ **PHILPOT**—Dawson Church recently kicked off a year-long centennial celebration with a service featuring former pastor **Joe Thomas** and a concert by **Dwight Ashley**. The church will host other centennial events throughout the year. **Craig Bratcher** is pastor.

■ **WINCHESTER**—Allansville Church recently called **Tom Cummings** as pastor.

KBC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

KENTUCKY BAPTIST CONVENTION

February

- 17 Regional Annuity Conference, Broadway Baptist Church, Lexington.
- 17 Regional Annuity Conference, First Baptist Church, Hazard.
- 19 All-State Youth Choir/Orchestra Auditions, Eastwood Baptist Church, Bowling Green.
- 26 All-State Youth Choir/Orchestra Auditions, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.
- 26 Regional Keyboard Festival, First Baptist Church, Murray.
- 26 Regional Keyboard Festival, Eastwood Baptist Church, Bowling Green.
- 28-March 1 Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference, Valley View Baptist Church, Louisville.

March

- 4-5 Creative Ministries Festival 2005, St. Matthews Baptist Church, Louisville.
- 5 All-State Youth Choir/Orchestra Auditions, Sand Springs Baptist Church, Lawrenceburg.

- 5 RA Congress Region 3 & 7, White Plains Baptist Church, Scottsville.
- 5 RA Congress Region 5, Mays Lick Baptist Church, Mays Lick.
- 5 RA Congress Region 8A, Oakland Ave. Baptist Church, Catlettsburg.
- 5 Ring & Share—East, Sand Springs Baptist Church, Lawrenceburg.
- 5 VBS Clinic, Calvary Baptist Church, Lexington.
- 11-12 Creative Ministries Festival 2005, Hillvue Baptist Church, Bowling Green.
- 11-12 Mission Service Corps Basic Training, Baptist Building, Louisville.
- 12 All-State Youth Choir/Orchestra Auditions, First Baptist Church, Hopkinsville.
- 12 RA Congress Region 1, Lone Oak First Baptist Church, Paducah.
- 12 RA Congress Region 3, Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, Shepherdsville.
- 12 RA Congress Region 7, Stanford Baptist Church.
- 12 Ring & Share—West, First Baptist Church, Hopkinsville.

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



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FOR SALE: 2004 enclosed Hallmark cargo trailer. Black; 6x9; excellent condition; bought new in May 2004 for \$1,875. Will sell for \$1,400. Call (859) 516-1699, or e-mail herose@mikrotec.com.

SEEKING: Pianist/organist for Fern Creek Baptist Church. Strong accompanying skills required. Send resumes to: Fern Creek Baptist Church, PO Box 91146, Louisville, KY 40291, Attn: Personnel Committee.

SEEKING: Part-time ministers in the areas of youth, children and recreation. Applicants must be spiritually mature, enthusiastic and creative. Send resumes to: Fern Creek Baptist Church, PO Box 91146, Louisville, KY 40291, Attn: Personnel Committee.

SEEKING: A full-time minister to students is prayerfully being sought for a Southern Baptist church (averages 580 in SS) to lead ministries for middle school, high school and college students. Send resume to Dr. Herb Hester, 108 E Grundy St., Tullahoma, TN 37388.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for New Hope Community Baptist Church of Jackson, Ky. Please submit resume to: New Hope, 1621 Highway 30 W, Jackson, KY 41339.

SEEKING: Full-time student minister. Responsible for comprehensive program for children, youth and college/career. Send resume to First Baptist Church, PO Box 327, Paris, KY 40362, Attn: Mr. Robert Sturgeon.

SEEKING: Social worker for the Cabbage Patch, a non-profit Christian organization. MSSW, 5-years experience preferred. Bachelor's degree required. Teaching experience preferred. Resume/salary requirements: Lisa Griffin, Cabbage Patch, 1413 S 6th St., Louisville, KY 40208; lgriffin@cabbagepatch.org; fax: (502) 637-9943.

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 resume to: Search Committee, 201 North Main St., Barbourville, KY 40906, or e-mail to chsec@barbourville.com.

SEEKING: Full-time youth minister for First Baptist Church of Marion, Ill. The individual will be responsible for developing and maintaining the youth program, college/career. They also will be directing the recreation programs. Benefits include: salary, housing allowance, annuity, health insurance, dental insurance and disability. Please send resumes to: Mike Malone, Church Administrator, First Baptist Church, 401 W Union, Marion, IL 62959.

SEEKING: Director of missions. Search Committee of Pike Association SB will be receiving resumes through March. Send resumes to: Search Committee, PO Box 2973, Pikeville, KY 41502.

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SEEKING: Full-time minister of music for First Baptist Church of Leitchfield, KY. FBC is a growing, purpose-driven church with contemporary worship style. Send resume to: Music Search Team, FBC, 106 E Walnut St., Leitchfield, KY 42754.

SEEKING: Part-time youth minister for Bagdad Baptist Church, Shelby County. We are looking for someone with a passion for youth and their spiritual development. We also are looking for someone wanting a long-term commitment. Please send your resume to: Youth Minister Search Committee, Bagdad Baptist Church, PO Box 8, Bagdad, KY 40003.

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Preaching from left field

Evangelical social activist Jim Wallis preaching values to receptive Democrats

By Jason White
Religion News Service

Washington (RNS)—Coming out of an election in which values issues played a key role in growing Republican majorities in the U.S. Congress, Jim Wallis is finding receptive ears among Democratic leaders eager to hear how they might win back religious voters.

Wallis, one of the few prominent, left-wing evangelical Christians, comes bearing a simple message: Evangelicals care about more than abortion and gay marriage.

He says Democrats could attract religiously conservative voters if they emphasized the religious roots of poverty relief and moderated their stance on abortion. Wallis recently delivered this message to Senate Democrats in a closed-door meeting.

"Whoever wins the battle over values is going to win the American political future," Wallis, 56, said in an interview.

"The Republicans are comfortable with the language of moral values, but then they narrow it to one or two issues, albeit important issues, like abortion and gay marriage and family issues. A serious moral values conversation will challenge an economic agenda that rewards wealth over work and favors the rich over the poor and sees war as the first resort, not the last resort."

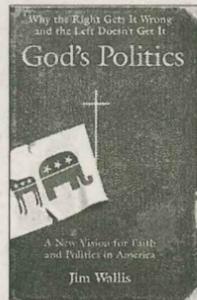
Wallis' passion is reaching out to the poor and the outcast, which he has done for much of his adult life in Washington.

He knows firsthand what poverty means for people, having lived for nearly 30 years in D.C.'s Columbia Heights neighborhood, long one of the city's most segregated, poorest and dangerous areas.

Wallis has become a nationally known expert on religion and politics. He's currently promoting his new book, "God's Politics: Why the

Right Gets It Wrong, and the Left Doesn't Get It."

Originally scheduled for release later this year, the publisher moved up the date to coincide with President Bush's inauguration. In its first month of release, the book has been a top seller on Amazon.com.



Wallis' progressive political vision derives from his conservative Christian faith. He believes the Bible is a key authority on political questions and that God came to this world in the person of Jesus to save it.

"In Jesus, God hit the streets," Wallis said. "Who does Jesus hang out with? The poor and the outcast and those left behind. He talks about a new order and new kingdom. He will transform your life and because of that He will transform your neighborhood and your nation and the world."

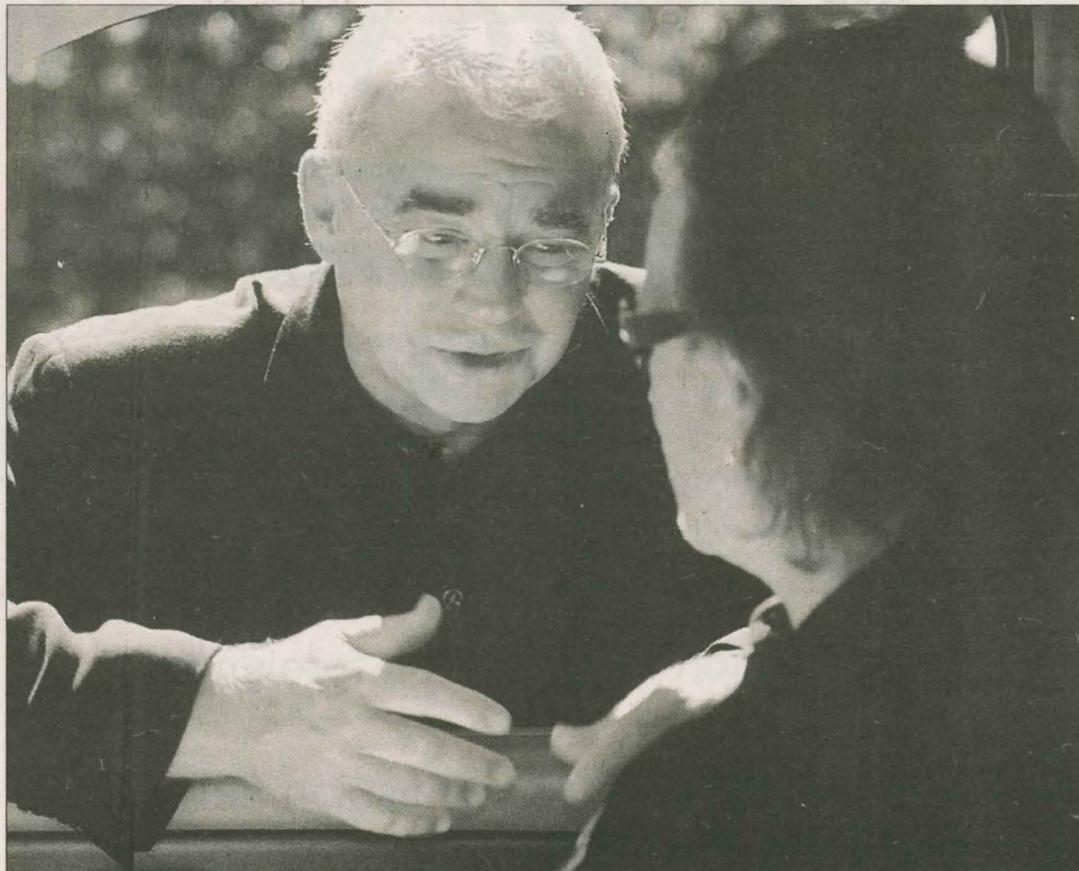
Suspicion from left & right

Wallis' fusion of religion and politics, and his equal-opportunity attacks against liberals and conservatives, is not without controversy. Those sympathetic to his political aims often question his religious means while those who subscribe to similar religious beliefs don't necessarily think those beliefs translate into a liberal political agenda.

Elizabeth Castelli, an associate professor of religion at Barnard College in New York City, recommended Wallis' new book in a review for Slate, an online magazine. But she questioned Wallis' claim that progressive politics need a religious foundation.

"That leaves a lot of people out who don't share his theology," Castelli said in an interview.

"It conflates religion and politics in a way that concerns me. ... There is plenty of political philosophy that is not religiously grounded that offers a profound



portrait of justice."

Michael Cromartie, a senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, shares many of Wallis' religious beliefs. But he doesn't subscribe to his progressive politics, favoring instead a more conservative approach to curing social ills.

"There are a lot of cultural problems out there that government can only do so much about," Cromartie said.

"Wallis' first reaction is always: We have a problem, and the government is not doing enough. My reply is: We have a lot of problems, and the government has been doing a whole lot."

Living among the poor in D.C.

Wallis moved to Washington nearly three decades ago with a cadre of like-minded believers to form a community called Sojourners. They chose to live in a mostly African-American neighborhood that had been decimated by riots after Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination.

Although the neighborhood is slowly gentrifying, it was an urban wasteland until just a few years ago.

In "God's Politics," Wallis writes about Mary Glover, a good friend from the neighborhood. Wallis considers this poor Pentecostal woman one of his chief mentors. He tells of her work in the church food pantry, handing out bags of groceries that she sometimes needed too. He tells of her looking out for new people in the neighborhood, trying to make them feel at home in a violent place. And in a recent interview, Wallis' eyes grew watery as he spoke of her words of advice.

"I was a young activist when we met," Wallis said. "She would say to me, 'You're doing it again. You're all worried about the harvest all the time, the harvest, about succeeding and winning everything. But you gotta sow the seeds, sow the seeds, sow the seeds. The harvest isn't always going to be yours.'"

LEFT-WING EVANGELICAL
Evangelical Christian Jim Wallis converses with rock star Bono after holding a 2003 news conference in which the two religious activists challenged the Bush administration to do more about AIDS in Africa. (Sojourners photo by Ryan Beiler)

Worship leader says God's plan fulfilled during 'America Idol' appearance

By Leann Callaway
Baptist Press

Grapevine, Texas (BP)—Worship leader Jeff Johnson won't become the next American Idol, but he says he thinks God had a reason for his recent appearance on the hit show.

Johnson is a member of 121 Community Church, a Baptist congregation in Grapevine, Texas, and a full-time worship leader in churches and retreats.

On an episode of Fox-TV's hit show "American Idol" last month, Johnson was shown praying with a group of contestants and, in a voice-over, he told of his ministry as a worship leader.

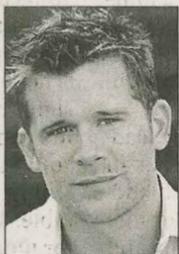
One of the celebrity judges, Gene Simmons from the rock group Kiss,

subsequently suggested that Johnson sing country music instead of pop music—so the lyrics would not conflict with his beliefs.

Johnson said he found it interesting that Simmons, one of rock's bad boys, "was trying to give me spiritual advice, about not singing pop music."

But, he said, "I believe we're supposed to be in the world and not of the world. I believe that I could sing pop music or country music and still live a life that's a witness for Christ."

Although Simmons voted against Johnson, the other judges advanced him to the next round. Two months later, Johnson was among 200 contestants auditioning in Hollywood.



Jeff Johnson

But last week his quest ended when judges didn't include him among those who will become the finalists. Until the audition aired Feb. 8, Johnson was unable to disclose the results due to contractual obligations.

"When I didn't make the cut, at first I thought, 'Why did I go through all of this? What was the purpose?' But when the show aired, it promoted my ministry to 30 million people. I had never thought of that. God was working the whole time," Johnson said.

Underscoring God's "perfect plan," he reiterated, "It's working out as part of God's plan for what He has called me to do."

Since appearing on the show, Johnson said he's had numerous opportunities to share his faith during radio and TV interviews.

In addition, he has been flooded with requests for his worship CD. Many of those requests are coming from non-Christians, he added.

"Teenagers have sent me e-mails saying, 'I don't really listen to Christian music, but I wanted to get your CD because I liked seeing you on American Idol,'" Johnson noted.

Johnson said he hopes when people get the CD, they will read the cover—which includes a testimony of what God has done in his life and a note about how others can have a personal relationship with Christ.

Johnson said his future plans, other than continuing to lead worship, is uncertain. "I never expected that God would put me on a reality TV show, but I am glad that I was able to use this as a way to honor Him."

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