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SECOND QUAKE A woman looks after her son at a makeshift hospital after an earthquake in Gunong Sitoli on Indonesia's Nias Island. (RNS/Reuters photo by Luis Ascui)

Baptists respond to quake damage in Indonesia

Jakarta, Indonesia (BP)—Southern Baptist relief workers already are surveying damage on Nias, the Indonesian island off Sumatra's western coast devastated by a second massive earthquake in the region.

Officials estimate hundreds of bodies lie buried under collapsed buildings in the city.

The March 28 earthquake, which struck just before midnight local time, packed an estimated magnitude of 8.2 to 8.7 and caused widespread regional panic.

Especially damaged was Banda Aceh, where the Dec. 26 quake and tsunami killed up to 200,000 people.

The Baptist relief workers report heavy destruction in the city of Gunong Sitoli. Most buildings taller than two stories collapsed or sustained heavy damage, local officials say.

Southern Baptist volunteers already were in the area responding to the tsunami, and workers now are preparing additional volunteer teams to respond to the new crisis.

"The state Baptist convention disaster relief network is again being mobilized to furnish specialized volunteers in response to the earthquake," said Jim Brown, human needs coordinator for the Southern Baptist International Mission Board.

"I know the up-front groups are going to be medical until we hear more. We had already thought about doing some rebuilding of schools and houses in these islands. That's going to stay the same, but now we'll have more emergency response there than what we had anticipated."

Brown said relief response to both the tsunami disaster and the latest quake's damage will continue for years to come.

Thus far, Southern Baptist churches and individuals had given more than \$14.6 million for tsunami response efforts throughout the region.

Blooming in New England

Church grows with help of Murray State students who moved for year of ministry

By Ken Walker
Kentucky Baptist Convention

Amherst, Mass.—Mercyhouse Pastor Robert Krumrey still remembers the first time he learned six years ago that three students from Murray State University were traveling to Amherst, Mass., to help with his church plant.

"After we got here in July of 1999, (my assistant) said three Kentucky kids were coming," Krumrey recalled.

"I didn't know if that was good or bad," he admitted. "It was good."

Later this year, Mercyhouse will move into its first permanent home, and Krumrey still credits John Daly, Danette Farnham and Joycelyn Turner as key workers who helped get the church off the ground.

The three students transferred from Murray State University to the University of Massachusetts for a year to minister in Amhurst.

Their adventure started after their Baptist Student Union director, Keith Inman, visited the area in the fall of 1998. Inman was a member of a national committee overseeing an endowment that funds college ministries.

Once on the U Mass campus, he said, he felt the Holy Spirit stirring his heart to do whatever he could to help launch a ministry to students.

Back at Murray State, he challenged students to consider investing themselves in missions for a year at another campus that needed help.

Daly, Farnham and Turner took up his challenge.

They transferred with the help of a national exchange program. It allows students to attend other col-



GETTING WET Robert Krumrey (right), pastor of Mercyhouse church in Amherst, Mass., prepares to baptize a new member. Krumrey had just moved to the area in 1999 to launch Mercyhouse when three Baptist Student Union members from Murray State University transferred to help with the church start.

leges for the same tuition they pay at home.

"All three students were distinct personality types, which worked well," said Inman, who now is director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's collegiate ministry group.

"This was a huge commitment. They went up there, moved into the community and reached out to all different kinds of students."

Besides Krumrey, associate Joe

Green and their spouses, the three BSU students were the only helpers in launching Mercyhouse.

"They brought two things," Krumrey said recently. "One, just a natural connection with students on the campus."

Before the Kentucky trio arrived, he noted, "we didn't have any kind of bridges to the student population."

Daly, Farnham and Turner lived on campus in student dorms, attended classes and built relationships with other students.

"Within two weeks, two students from U Mass that they met and brought with them came to Christ," Krumrey said. "That kind of got things started."

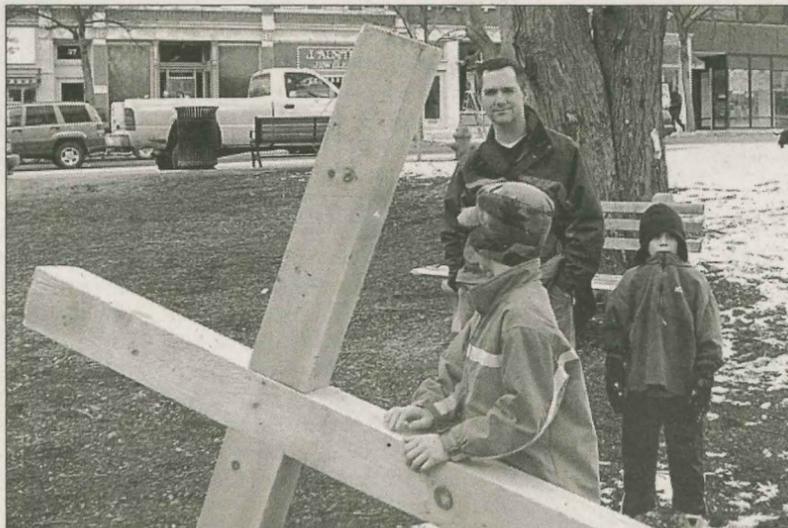
Their second contribution was a mature faith, Krumrey added.

"They had walked with Christ and knew a little about ministry and discipleship," he said. "They could help others discover what it means to follow Christ."

Krumrey said the outgoing Daly immediately built relationships with fellow students, two of whom still are involved in the church.

Farnham and Turner were quieter, but they were equally vital, the pastor added.

□ See BSU students helped ... Page 3



CROSS WALK Krumrey and others prepare for a Good Friday cross walk in Amherst. Approximately 150 people now are members of Mercyhouse, and a third of those joined the church through baptism.

"This network would be incomplete without Southern Baptists."

Gene Mims, International Baptist Network executive director

New international group seeks SBC ties

By Greg Warner
Associated Baptist Press

Lynchburg, Va. (ABP)—Fundamentalist Baptists have formed a new international organization they hope will include Southern Baptists, who last year withdrew from the Baptist World Alliance.

But Gene Mims, the executive director of the new International Baptist Network, said March 31 the group does not intend to become an "alternative" or competitor to BWA, which unites 211 national and regional Baptist unions.

Several prominent Southern Baptists are involved in the new organization, including Paige Patterson, but Southern Baptist Convention chief executive Morris Chapman said the SBC will proceed with its own plans to form an alternative to BWA.

The International Baptist Network had its "first public meeting" Feb. 9 at the Adolphus Hotel in Dallas, drawing "representatives from more than three dozen denominations, theological seminaries, colleges and mission boards, and individual churches," according to an article in the April 2005 issue of the National Liberty Journal, published by Jerry Falwell's Liberty University.

Network affirms SBC action

The article, written by Liberty University co-founder Elmer Towns, said the International Baptist Network was "launched to counter 'leftward drift' of Baptist World Alliance" and praised the SBC's withdrawal from BWA.

Mims, a Southern Baptist leader who became executive director of the new group in January, said the IBN "probably wouldn't work with-

out Southern Baptists." Mims, former vice president of LifeWay Christian Resources, said he was asked to lead the effort because "they needed someone who really knew Southern Baptists pretty well."

But Mims told Associated Baptist Press he does not expect the SBC to join officially. Instead, pastors and individuals likely will participate in IBN. "There are more Southern Baptists than there are any other Baptists," he said. "This network would be incomplete without Southern Baptists."

In addition to Southern Baptists, the organization is targeting four independent Baptist groups—Southwide Baptist Fellowship, World Baptist Fellowship, Independent Baptist Fellowship International and Baptist Bible Fellowship International.

But Baptist denominations are not expected to join IBN, Mims said, particularly given the history of independent and fundamentalist Baptist churches. Many of those groups considered Southern Baptists liberal before conservatives reformed the denomination, and none participated in BWA.

"We're not interested in having an alternative to BWA," said Mims, noting the IBN would not have the capacity to replace BWA.

The February organizational meeting included Mims and Patterson, a former SBC president and now president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Falwell said in a statement on his Web site. Falwell, a Southern Baptist and pastor of Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Va., called the International Baptist Network a "remarkable new venture."

The Southern Baptist Conven-

tion, which helped form BWA in 1905, withdrew its membership and financial support last June, citing a "leftward drift" in the organization.

Denton Lotz, general secretary of BWA, has denied the charges of liberalism and said an alternative organization would be a "slap in the face" of worldwide Baptists and contradict the stated intentions of SBC leaders.

The National Liberty Journal article says the SBC's withdrawal last summer from BWA "set the stage" for organization of the International Baptist Network.

SBC seeks "like-minded" Baptists

In voting to leave BWA last June, the SBC agreed to use some of the funds withdrawn from BWA to form or support an alternative for "like-minded" Baptists.

But the IBN is not that group, Chapman said. In an e-mail interview with ABP March 30, Chapman said he met with Mims and was aware of formation of the IBN, but Southern Baptists have not joined or pledged support.

He reaffirmed that members of the SBC's Great Commission Council "are participating in an exploratory meeting in Warsaw (Poland) to talk about how best to fellowship with conservative Christians around the world."

Chapman said the meeting with conservative European Baptists will be the springboard for whatever alternative group the SBC forms. After the July meeting, the council will advise an SBC task force, which will recommend "how best to proceed in building a fellowship of like-minded Christians around the world," he said.

York: Effective sermons seek to make life-changing impact

Louisville (BP)—The aim of every sermon should be to change listeners' lives, Kentucky Baptist Convention President Hershael York told Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's annual Power in the Pulpit conference.

"When we preach the Word, we want them to have more than merely an experience," said York, pastor of Buck Run Baptist Church in Frankfort and a preaching professor and associate dean at Southern. "We want them to have an encounter with the text that does nothing less than change their life."

To produce life-changing sermons, preachers must begin their preparation by determining how the scriptural text reveals man's fallen condition and need for the grace of Christ, York said in addressing the March 14-15 conference at the school's Louisville campus.

"The text always shows us that there is something in us that is deficient that is in need of the grace of God to be applied," he said. "We have to repent. We have to allow the grace of God to be applied to our lives in such a way that we grow in Christ's likeness."

In order to apply biblical texts faithfully, York said, preachers must ask two questions: "What is the main point of the passage?" and

"How does it apply?"

The main point of a passage is found in the original author's intended meaning, and preachers must look constantly for innovative ways to explain that intent, York said. "If you're going to be an expositor, it begins with a willingness to be confined to the intent of the author," he noted. "And frankly, that's the line that separates the would-be expositors from the true expositors. You have to say, 'What is it that the author is after?'"

After determining the main point of the passage, preachers should make two types of application in every sermon: long-term application and immediate application, York said.

Long-term application helps listeners understand how their lives will be different if they implement the truths of a biblical text, he said. Immediate application provides a way in which listeners can express their commitment to action and be held accountable.

"If you just merely describe the text and you don't take that step of application, all you'll do is frustrate your people," York noted.

He said preaching that aims at application results in Christians imitating Christ more faithfully and non-believers experiencing salvation.

Southern officials hire gay-friendly maintenance firm

Louisville—Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's decision last month to dismiss its maintenance staff and outsource its campus maintenance continues to attract media attention.

Sodexo, the international company Southern contracted with to provide maintenance, has been recognized for efforts to increase diversity, including providing domestic partner benefits and celebrating Gay Pride Month on the company calendar, according to a recent article on EthicsDaily.com, the news site of the Baptist Center for Ethics.

In a March 30 column in the Louisville-Courier Journal, David Hawpe noted that Sodexo "is very gay-friendly," adding that "Southern Seminary isn't."

Hawpe quoted Southern Seminary President Al Mohler as saying, "Even though there may be some irony in this, there is no inconsistency."

While seminary officials "want to be faithful to our own convictions," Mohler said, "We recognize that we will inevitably be doing business with companies and individuals whose convictions on some of these issues may differ from our own. ... This is not a surprising phenomenon."

"I guess I do find it surprising," Hawpe responded. "At Southern Seminary, they love the sinner but hate the sin. At Sodexo, they publish a handbook on setting up employee networking groups like People Respecting Individuality, Diversity and Equality (PRIDE), whose mission is to 'strategically align Sodexo's organizational structure to embrace all diversity inclusive of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender employees, so that value is added.'"

Sodexo, which has more than 110,000 employees, is North America's leading provider of food services, housekeeping and facilities management for corporate and education clients.

According to Sodexo officials, a diverse workforce is a core value for the company.

Company policy ensures "equal opportunity in all aspects of race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, age, marital status, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation or any other basis protected by law."

Diversity, Inc. magazine ranked Sodexo 18th in the nation among the top 50 companies in workplace diversity.

Assessing Southern's contract with Sodexo, Mohler said, "I would see a problem if Southern Seminary had to violate its own conscience, ... if it had to change its convictions or be silent about its convictions, but that is not required here."

Judge validates election of Louisiana College president

Pineville, La. (ABP)—Despite a search process that failed to follow established procedure, the election of Joe Aguilard as Louisiana College president is valid, a judge ruled March 17.

The ruling by Ninth Judicial District Judge Dexter Ryland ends a lawsuit that sought to invalidate Aguilard's election as president of the Louisiana Baptist school.

The suit charged that Aguilard's election was invalid because a majority of school trustees did not follow the procedural bylaws. The suit was filed by several alumni and supporters of Louisiana College, as well as one retired faculty member who also was a member of the original presidential search committee.

The issue dates back to March 2003, when then-president Rory Lee announced his resignation and a search committee was formed. The committee worked under constant criticism from some who wanted Aguilard as president.

Eventually, the committee settled on Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary educator Malcolm Yarnell as their top candidate. He was presented to the full board and elected on a divided vote. After contract negotiations hit a snag, Yarnell withdrew his name from consideration.

Trustees relaunched the search process in December, this time with a blended search committee that included the original members as well as new trustee leaders. Board members directed the search committee to consider Aguilard first as a presidential nominee and bring his name to the board for action.

All but two of the original search committee members chose not to be involved with the blended committee. The remaining members quickly interviewed Aguilard and presented him as a nominee during a called board meeting Jan. 17. Then-interim president John Traylor also was nominated at the meeting, but Aguilard was elected on a 17-13 vote.

BSU students helped New England church get started

Continued from page 1

"Some of the girls who are still coming spent time with them," Krumrey said. "Danette helped one girl, pouring her life into her and showing her what it meant to follow Christ."

Starting in the Krumreys' home, the young congregation met in various places, such as campus lecture halls, a hotel and a library.

In addition to weekly worship services and Bible studies, the fledging church got involved in its community. Members still volunteer at such events as Amherst's Fourth of July celebration, its annual "Taste of Amherst" and summer movie nights.

Mercyhouse has come a long way since two dozen students first gathered at scattered locations around the University of Massachusetts campus.

The church has baptized 56 people, with weekly attendance now averaging 150 worshippers. Members look forward to taking ownership of the Wesleyan United Methodist Church a half block from campus.

A personal impact

More than five years have passed since they moved to the Northeast, but the volunteers' experience remains uppermost in their mind.

So does the passion for missions that they said they learned from Inman.

"BSU is what got me interested in missions," says Farnham, who graduated in 2002 and is international student minister at Murray State's BSU. "It was a chance for students to realize what missions was all about and get involved."



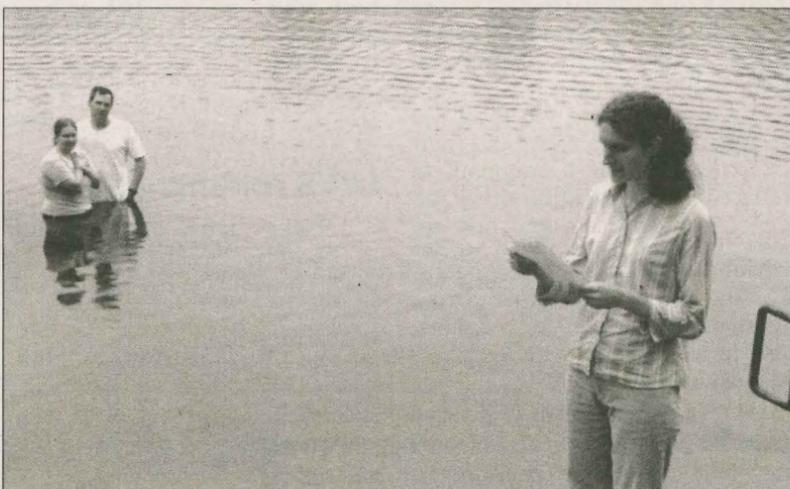
John Daly



Danette Farnham



Joycelyn Turner



TESTIMONY Robert Krumrey, pastor of Mercyhouse church in Amherst, Mass., and a baptism candidate stand in Puffer's Pond while a friend reads the candidate's testimony. Krumrey credits the work of three BSU students from Murray State University for helping the church take off five years ago.

A native of Murray, Farnham found herself in a much different environment in Amherst, brimming with an assortment of beliefs, religions and attitudes.

She said she was surprised to encounter students who not only never had been to church but who never had heard of Jesus.

"I was definitely challenged," Farnham says. "But people are open to hearing about (Christ). All you have to be is obedient. What working in Amherst did was open my eyes to a bigger world."

For Turner, who grew up in First Christian Church of West Frankfort, Ill., BSU was a key to her spiritual walk.

Not only did she appreciate the more vibrant form of worship, the organization provided an atmosphere of acceptance. But before going to Massachusetts, Turner wasn't very involved in the organization.

"If I ever received a clear call from God, this was it," said Turner, currently studying for her master's degree in counseling at Southern Illinois University. "For the first time in my life, I was passionate about my relationship with God and I had a desire for other people to have that relationship."

Daly, who stayed in Amherst for more than two years and graduated from the University of Massachusetts, took home a practical lesson.

Now living in his hometown of Erlanger, he is pastor of Cincy House, a house church for college

students in Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky.

The days of hanging out with other students in Amherst—and watching them grow spiritually—gave him a taste for developing the close relationships that characterize a house church, Daly says.

Erlanger ministry

Cincy House isn't sponsored by a particular church, but Daly looks to Krumrey as his pastor.

"I'm so indebted to Robert in the sense of his thinking and strategy," Daly says. "He spent hours and hours every week with me, talking about life. I learned a very personal, one-on-one style of ministry. I love having my church as my base of friends and family."

Inman calls Mercyhouse a prime example of the power of collegiate ministry. Fifty percent of students involved in BSU come from other backgrounds, but the goal of BSU is to make disciples, not Baptists, Inman says.

Still, he said, many of those students wind up becoming Baptists after college because of their BSU experience.

"I think we've a very driven, Bible-based, evangelistic ministry," Inman says. "We have campus ministers who see the big vision and cast a vision of what can be as a result of having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. We're one of the strongest, most mission-minded student organizations in the country."

Kentucky CP gifts on record pace for 2004-05

Louisville—Kentucky Baptists' Cooperative Program gifts are on a record pace for the first six months of the 2004-05 fiscal year, Lowell Ashby told the Kentucky Baptist Convention Mission Board's administrative committee last week.

Noting that three of the first six months set giving records for comparable months, Ashby said CP gifts through the end of February were 1.7 percent ahead of budget and 1.8 percent ahead of last year's pace.

The six-month CP gifts of \$11.4 million topped the previous year's six-month giving record of \$11.2 million, said Ashby, leader of the KBC business services team.

While designated offerings for state, North American and international missions are down slightly, he

added that much of that downturn likely is due to designated gifts for tsunami relief.

In other business, committee members heard updates from Dan Garland and French Harmon about the work of the KBC's regional church development strategists. Garland leads the KBC church development and evangelism team, and Harmon, a former church development strategist, now coordinates the work of the four regional workers.

Citing a growing use of technology to help identify and respond to churches' needs, Garland said staff members are seeking "to leverage all our resources to help our churches be effective in reaching our culture for Christ."

Harmon said the four strategists

are working to "encourage leaders, equip the saints and evangelize the lost" as they help churches and associations pursue greater effectiveness.

Robert Reeves, director of the KBC's communications department, reported that the KBC recently mailed "Kentucky Baptists Connect" information packets to churches throughout the state.

"Connect" is the KBC's five-year strategy to strengthen evangelism, missions, leader training, networking and other key goals in Kentucky Baptist churches and associations.

Reeves said convention leaders hope to involve up to 500 churches in "Connect" during the coming year and 1,500 churches by the end of the emphasis in 2010.

Mercyhouse getting new home

Amherst, Mass.—Property in New England doesn't come cheap, as shown by the \$1 million price tag on the church building Mercyhouse hopes to acquire by mid-summer.

But all signs are that the Baptist congregation will proceed with the purchase despite having raised only \$50,000 of the \$200,000 down payment by mid-March.

As it moves toward a projected closing date of July 15, Mercyhouse is raising funds via cash donations, monthly pledges to cover mortgage payments, and collateralization of bonds to back financing.

The acquisition includes some income potential.

"Part of the property is a boarding house with eight bedrooms," says Robert Krumrey, pastor of the Amherst, Mass., church. "We're hoping we can rent those out."

Built in 1949, the Wesleyan United Methodist Church covers 12,000 square feet, with a sanctuary holding about 300 people. It opens into a fellowship hall with seating for about 100. The finished basement contains bathrooms, kitchen, classrooms and open space.

The building needs various upgrades, such as painting, bathroom renovations and other repairs. To do the work, Krumrey hopes to recruit mission teams from around the country, with one already lined up.

Kentucky Baptists already have begun responding to the need. In addition to a \$2,500 offering collected March 1 at the state evangelism conference, one church has donated \$1,300 and another has promised an unspecified amount.

Keith Inman, associate team leader for collegiate ministries with the Kentucky Baptist Convention, has been sharing the needs with numerous people.

"If Southern Baptists are about planting churches in emerging regions, it would be a tragedy if we let this one pass us by," Inman said.

"Robert has made an incredible sacrifice to have his family up there. Once that church (building) becomes ours, it's going to have a concrete identity and have a strong message to the community."

Although it has been more than six years since the original visit that led to helping start the outreach, Inman took three BSU directors to Amherst a year ago to remind them of the vision.

In addition, Krumrey will speak at KBC's statewide collegiate ministry conference Sept. 30-Oct. 1 at Highview Baptist Church in Louisville.

Inman said he hopes other Baptists throughout Kentucky will sense a burden for supporting missionaries like Krumrey who go to largely unchurched areas to start new works.

"For whatever reasons, I think traditional Southern Baptists in traditional Southern states have an obligation to help those folks who are willing to step out and go to tough areas," Inman said.

"There are folks going to the Northeast and other places. Those of us who are secure enough to draw salaries and have the security of church life—it's the faith of these people that should inspire us to help. I hope other folks would be involved."

For more information about Mercyhouse, contact Krumrey at (413) 374-7532 or e-mail Chilidogk@aol.com. Ken Walker



NEW HOME Mercyhouse is proceeding with the purchase of a 12,000-square-foot church building in Amherst. The price tag is \$1 million, but the congregation has raised only a quarter of the \$200,000 downpayment. KBC collegiate ministry director Keith Inman has been soliciting help for the project. "It would be a tragedy if we let this one pass us by."

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

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Give sacrificially

Having been in my current church for just five months, I recently began to do some research about their giving to missions, especially the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

While Eastwood Baptist Church has a strong track record of giving through the Cooperative Program, they had in recent years moved away from supporting the special offerings of our convention. In fact, last year Eastwood gave just a bit over \$2,100 to the AAEO.

We begin to pray that God would do something miraculous in our midst. Our missions committee felt led to set a goal of \$10,000. We felt like that would stretch us in light of recent years' giving but was a goal worthy of our Lord and His work.

We utilized in worship much of the audio-visual helps that the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board made available to us. We set up a conference call on Easter Sunday for our church to listen live as we spoke to one of our NAMB missionaries featured in our week of prayer, Troy Smith serving in the Northwest U.S. We then had our first annual "March to the Cross" where we took about 15 minutes and people filed by a large cross with a basket at the base of it and made their offerings. Our goal was to raise this offering in one Sunday morning service. God is so good. As of the next morning, we had received more than \$26,000 and it still is coming in.

Let me challenge my fellow pastors to ask God's people to give sacrificially to missions. God will bless the church that honors Him by reaching out in missions. I am convinced more would give to missions if we would only ask them.

Tom James
Bowling Green

Disturbing worldview

In the March 15 issue of the Western Recorder there was a nice full-page ad congratulating the Kentucky Baptist Convention scholarship recipients.

I was very proud for all of the recipients, their families and their churches. I took a moment to reflect on the education these students would receive and how we need more young people educated with a Christian worldview and Baptist heritage in our culture today. I then turned a couple of more pages and became disturbed that 26 of these scholarship recipients would be attending a college that apparently has a different worldview than most of our Baptist churches in Kentucky.

The 12th annual Georgetown College Pastors' Conference boasts, among other speakers, Brian McLaren, the recently uninvited KBC Evangelism Conference speaker with divergent views on salvation in Christ alone, and Sarah Jackson Shelton, a woman "pastor" from Church of the Covenant in Birmingham, Ala. Am I the only pastor in Kentucky who believes this is an obvious contradiction to what we believe as Baptists and Southern Baptists?

This would not be an issue if it weren't for the fact that every church in Kentucky with Cooperative Program ties is directly affiliated with this college. In addition to the 26 \$1,000 scholarships recently awarded, the school receives around \$1.5 million annually from the state CP budget.

In the 2005 Kentucky Baptists Connect calendar, I notice that Georgetown boasts of the distinctive KBC-affiliated Christian environment as evidenced in its annual pastors' conference. I can't speak for the other pastors and churches, but the evidence certainly demands an explanation by

the leadership of Georgetown and exploration by our state convention as to whether our convention, both state and national, is being properly represented by Georgetown College.

Brad Hall
Benton

Let's rename Easter

I hadn't given much thought to the word "Easter." But this past year, I heard that the word Easter meant something other than Jesus' resurrection. Maybe everyone but me already knew this, but I didn't. I researched and learned that Easter was, indeed, a pagan festival honoring a goddess of light and spring.

While digging, I also confirmed what I'd heard about the origin of Easter eggs and bunnies—but I'll not get into that now.

Some say none of these things matter because it's what's in the heart that counts. True, God does look at the heart. On Easter Sunday we are commemorating the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus. That is what matters most.

My question is: Doesn't it matter what we call it? I think it does.

Easter is the word I grew up with; I believed whatever my parents, teachers and preachers told me. I took for granted that Easter equals Jesus' resurrection. But as the Father prepares us for the trials to come, more and more truth is coming to light. So what do we do now?

Most of the sermons I heard this past weekend did not use the word Easter; they talked about Jesus and the resurrection. That was good. I've noticed some churches advertised "Resurrection Day" services. It's a step in the right direction.

Can we keep the momentum going toward more truth and less secularism in our churches? I believe we must. I believe it's time!

Glenda Blair
Waddy

KBC staff, directors of missions dialogue

The Kentucky Baptist Convention Mission Board staff recently hosted a two-day retreat for directors of missions. The retreat provided excellent opportunities for learning, dialogue and fellowship for key partners in serving Kentucky's churches.

A representative committee of KBC staff members, working with Randy Jones, leader of the missions growth team, planned times to get acquainted, pray, listen to associational needs and dreams, have fun, worship and enjoy a missions fair.

In one listening session, DOMs shared what God is doing in their associations. In the group I attended, information was shared about missions and ministries designed to involve and strengthen believers and churches, as well as reach beyond the associations in missions and evangelism.

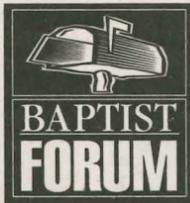
Later, the DOMs shared their vision for their associations. In my group, the vision included expanding ministries such as disaster relief and Hispanic work and providing

funding for pastors to receive orientation in world missions at the International Mission Board's Missionary Learning Center in Richmond, Va. The DOMs' expressed vision was to expand national and international missions involvement. The visions expressed included ways to help implement Kentucky Baptists Connect.

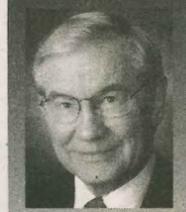
In the final session, DOMs were asked to share ways the Mission Board staff could be more helpful in supporting their work. In my group, the primary concerns related to getting publicity in time to promote events and finding ways to better respond to calls for immediate information.

The missions fair provided an opportunity for DOMs to meet Mission Board staff, as well as staff members from Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union, Western Recorder and Kentucky Baptist Foundation. This get-acquainted time was valuable due to the large number of new DOMs and staff members.

St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville was later the site for an



PARTNERS IN THE MISSION



Bill Mackey

evening of fun, dinner and bluegrass music. Pastor Les Hollon, a member of the KBC Mission Study Committee, shared an excellent vision for Kentucky Baptists Connect. He addressed the strong emphasis of the report on reaching and keeping people, as well as networking to strengthen churches and develop leaders. He expressed strong convictions that all Kentucky Baptists can come together around Kentucky Baptists Connect.

The closing worship time included music, Scripture, prayer and testimonies by DOMs Tom Biddle of Enterprise Association and Rob Johnson of Logan/Todd Association, and by Lizzi-beth Spence, who serves in the KBC's collegiate/young adult ministry group.

Directors of missions are real partners with KBC and WMU in missions. I am grateful for the work of every Kentucky association.

I encourage all of you to join us for the WMU annual meeting at First Baptist Church of London April 8-9. Kentucky WMU Executive Director Joy Bolton and her staff always put together an excellent program.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

STEWARDSHIP

Avoid investments that 'sound too good to be true'

By Don Spencer

As you consider investment options, here are two basic principles to remember:

If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Financial

planners can cite many cases of advising clients against a particular investment because it appeared to be a scam. The appeal of higher income in an investment promoted as safer than stocks caused the client to disregard the advice. After investing, they realized months or years later that all or most of their money was lost.

It has been proven over and over that risk and reward go together in investing. More volatile investments generally offer more opportunity of increased gain long-term. However, there is an increased likelihood of losing as well. As you increase the safety of an investment, you generally decrease projected earnings on a long-term basis. Human nature seems to make folks want to "beat this system." History repeatedly has proven it rarely can be done. But the appeal of the possibilities make people susceptible to scam artists.

Years ago, one of these scam artists tried to convince my parents of a unique investment opportunity. My mother told him to leave the information and she would share it with her son who was a certified financial planner. He immediately packed up and left, not even leaving a card or copy of any of the materials.

Remember, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Get good, competent advice before investing.

If you don't understand it, don't invest. Financial companies are adept at creating and marketing investments that appeal to the average citizen looking for a higher return. Each new product has a particular spin and promises of higher returns. With all the spins and names, it becomes difficult for the average person to determine if the investment is appropriate for his or her needs.

History has proven that even professionals sometimes can be fooled. If so, it's more likely the average person can be fooled by a little-understood investment strategy. If you don't understand a product, but a trusted financial professional feels that it is the right one for you, insist on their continuing to explain the product until you have a reasonable understanding. Until you do, avoid it.

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



How can couples overcome negative cycle of conflict?

Q: My husband and I are always in the middle of conflict. How can we overcome this habit?

All marriages need conflict resolution strategies at some point. A good place to start is to find a counselor trained in PREPARE/ENRICH counseling who can take you through a 10-step conflict resolution process.

MARRIAGE

Another option is to locate marriage education based on the PREP model, which focuses on a tool called "the speaker-listener technique." Just as any game has rules, it often helps at least one person in the marriage to know what the rules are of successful communication.

Jeff and Debby McElroy, marriage enrichment specialists who regularly lead conferences for LifeWay Christian Resources, offer this practical advice:

Sometimes you just need to "bite your tongue" and pray. A common mistake is to speak or react with words before those words have a chance to go first through our brains. We need to use the "filter" God gives us in order to be kind rather than unkind.

Sometimes we need to take a "time out" and pray. Ask yourself, "What does this situation remind me of?" The conflict might not be about your current relationship at all, but could have its roots in childhood trauma. If you realize this is the problem, seek counseling help.

Make a decision: Do I want to be right, or do I want to have a right relationship? Respond to the person, rather than reacting to an opinion. What is your partner's heart? This is a deliberate choice to put your mate's needs above your own. Jesus did this for us in His sufferings on our behalf. Christ put having a right relationship with us as His top priority when He would have had every right to do otherwise.

Remember, Scripture teaches self-control as a fruit of the Spirit. As in the plant kingdom, fruit takes cultivation in order to be produced. Pray for that fruit. The book of James says that to tame the tongue is the greatest discipline of all.—James Stillwell

Q: What are the negative factors of having young children in ongoing daycare settings?

Mary Eberstadt, who works from home as a research fellow for Stanford University, is a consulting editor for the conservative Policy Review journal. Her recent book, "Home Alone America," challenges readers to reconsider what is best for American children.

PARENTING

In a chapter titled "The Real Trouble with Day Care," Eberstadt argues that the current debate over daycare overlooks how daycare is experienced by "real, live very small children." She believes that "institutional care is a bad idea for parents who have a choice because it raises the quotient for immediate unhappiness in various forms among significant numbers of children."

For starters, just being in daycare increases the likelihood of physical distress or illness. Forty-one percent of the families Eberstadt interviewed acknowledged that having their child in daycare had negatively affected the child's health.

Behaviorally, recent research has documented that some children are more belligerent and aggressive in daycare. Bad behaviors, such as biting, don't happen as much elsewhere as they do in daycare settings. Proponents see such behavior as rugged individualism. Eberstadt says these simply are small children who are unhappy with their circumstances, and who strike out in various ways because they feel threatened and unprotected.

"The real trouble with day care is twofold," Eberstadt concluded. "One, it increases the likelihood that kids will be unhappy, and two, the chronic rationalization of that unhappiness renders adults less sensitive to children's needs and demands in any form."—David Garrard

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



Southern & Sodexo: Consistency is key

For followers of Christ, there's a fine line between fulfilling or falling short of the biblical admonition to "be in the world but not of the world." One of the keys to such an effort is consistency.

One current example of that challenge is a page 2 headline few Southern Baptists would ever have anticipated reading: "Southern officials hire gay-friendly maintenance firm."

The Western Recorder previously reported that Southern Baptist Theological Seminary officials dismissed the campus maintenance staff last month and contracted with Sodexo, the nation's largest facilities management firm, to provide campus maintenance.

Since that time, other news outlets reported that Sodexo supports such employee networking groups as PRIDE (People Respecting Individuality, Diversity and Equality) which is committed to "strategically align Sodexo's organizational structure to embrace all diversity inclusive of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender employees."

While the Recorder didn't break that story, it still is newsworthy for Kentucky Baptists and others who support Southern Seminary through the Cooperative Program and other means.

According to Sodexo President Richard Macedonia, "Diversity is at the heart of everything we do." Examples include providing domestic partner benefits for homosexual employees and featuring Gay Pride Month on the company calendar.

Contrasting Southern Seminary President Al Mohler's outspoken opposition to homosexuality and Sodexo's identity as "very gay-friendly," Louisville Courier-Journal columnist David Hawpe asked, "What kind of witness is it when you bless a gay-friendly giant with the contract to keep your lights burning?"

The question comes back to the issue of consistency.

Mohler frequently speaks out not only against homosexuality, but against many other moral and social concerns. He hosts a weekday radio program, posts daily web logs and is a frequent guest on "Larry King Live" and other shows, espousing a commitment to "be in the world but not of the world."

Leaders honor pope's legacy

As Catholics around the world mourn the April 2 death of Pope John Paul II, political and religious leaders reflected on the 84-year-old pontiff's 26-year reign. Among those paying tribute to the pope were:

President George W. Bush: "The Catholic Church has lost its shepherd, the world has lost a champion of human freedom, and a good and faithful servant of God has been called home."

Evangelist Billy Graham: "Pope John Paul II was unquestionably the most influential voice for morality and peace in the world during the last 100 years. ... He was truly one of those rare individuals whose legacy will endure long after he has gone."

Samuel Kobia, general secretary of the World Council of Churches: "His Holiness John Paul II will be remembered as one of the most courageous spiritual leaders of our time. He demonstrated this courage as much in his illness as he did through his leadership, his writings and his pronouncements."

Bob Edgar, general secretary of the National Council of Churches: "He engaged in a passionate quest to end hostilities in all the hot spots of the globe and to advance human rights everywhere. He spoke forthrightly on the scandal of want and

need among the global family, calling to task the wealthy and secure, urging them to invest in economic systems that support human dignity and well-being."

Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission: "I think

history will record Pope John Paul II as one of the most significant, historic figures of the 20th century, on a par with great statesmen and world leaders. In many ways, he was as eloquent a spokesman for the inherent and intrinsic value of every human being as Winston Churchill was for freedom and liberty."

Religious broadcaster Pat Robertson: "John Paul II has been the most beloved religious leader of our age—far surpassing in popular admiration the leader of any faith. He has been a man of great warmth, profound understanding, deep spirituality and indefatigable vigor. ... His personal magnetism brought together all Christians in new bonds of understanding."

Rabbi Ismar Schorsch, chancellor of the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York: "Pope John Paul II was a religious leader of inordinate conviction, courage and compassion who bridged the gulf between intellect and spirit, piety and poverty, church and synagogue to leave the world a better place."

During his 1995 Southern Baptist Convention sermon, Mohler warned SBC messengers, "When a denomination begins to consider doctrine divisive, theology troublesome and conviction inconvenient, consider that denomination well on its way to a well-deserved death. We take our stand upon the great essential truths of biblical faith, even when the world is at war with that truth."

Two years later, convention messengers adopted a resolution calling for a boycott of Disney as well as "any company that promotes immoral ideologies and practices." Among concerns cited by critics of Disney was the company's domestic partner benefits and allowing the continuation of "Gay Days" at Disney theme parks. Sound familiar?

Just last year, when the SBC voted to cut ties to Baptist World Alliance, one of the charges was a "guilt by association" claim that one small association in the BWA-related American Baptist Churches USA is "committed to being a gay-friendly place for churches and people of that disposition."

If failing to maintain "inconvenient" convictions was an issue a decade ago or even nine months ago, why is it any different today? Is Southern Seminary's voluntary business contract with Sodexo an exception?

"Even though there may be some irony in this, there is no inconsistency," Mohler told the Courier-Journal.

Being "in the world but not of it requires incredible discernment and a lot of reflection," he remarked. "If at any point (the contract with Sodexo) becomes counterproductive for Southern Seminary, we can make another decision."

Perhaps now is the time for Mohler and other seminary officials to use "incredible discernment and a lot of reflection" about the school's ongoing business relationship with Sodexo.

It's difficult to tell the world you're against homosexuality and gay rights while choosing to help line the coffers of a multi-billion-dollar gay-friendly corporation.

What does it take to be in this world but not of it? One major ingredient is consistency.

Mark Hanson, president of the Lutheran World Federation: "A man of the people, he championed the cause of justice and peace not only for his native Poland but on behalf of all the peoples of the world. He welcomed into his embrace people of every creed and race, but his love for young people was a special example of his care for all."

Frank Griswold, presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church: "His voice and moral authority gave inspiration and hope to millions well beyond the Roman Catholic Church. His commitment to the unity of the church expressed itself in his personal willingness to meet with representatives of other faith communities and to invite those outside his own tradition to reflect on how the ministry of the bishop of Rome might be of greater service both in the cause of Christian unity and the well-being of the world."

Bishop Delano Ellis, president of the Joint College of African-American Pentecostal Bishops: "He's ... a pope that has reached out ... as far as he could afford to reach. He's reached out to other faith groups in an effort to create a sense of peace between us."

John Thomas, president of the United Church of Christ: "Differences we have in theological perspective do not keep us from giving testimony to this remarkable legacy of faith and we celebrate those achievements even as we mourn his death."

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

Lawrenceburg church attracts hunters with Beast Feast

By Jay Cason
The Anderson News

Lawrenceburg—Seven hundred hungry Kentuckians gathered at Sand Spring Baptist Church recently to chow down on exotic food—all kinds of wild game.

The occasion, the third annual Anderson County Beast Feast, was held the last Saturday in February, as it is each year.

It's the brainchild of three local men, whose goal is to provide wholesome family entertainment and fellowship, while dining from a menu featuring hunters' and fishermen's fare.

"The church is hosting the event," said Ellery Milburn, the minister of music and senior adults at Sand Spring. "Rusty Johnston, Scott Brown and me are the organizers."

Milburn said the idea for the event came in a roundabout way.

"We came back from a meeting where a lady was talking about a block party for kids," he said. "We



FULL PLATES Members of the Riley family, from Mercer County, enjoy wild game served up at the third annual Beast Feast. (Anderson News photo by Jay Cason)

started thinking that there ought to be a way to incorporate that idea into something for adult men."

After much brainstorming, Beast Feast was born.

"We want to show that hunters and fishermen are just like everybody else and can have a good time just like everybody else," Milburn said.

In addition to the food, some great entertainment was part of the good time.

Before keynote speaker Tim Farmer took the stage, Lardo and Burley, the Moron brothers, warmed up the audience with their unique mix of humor and music.

"Uncle Ben had a problem," Burley told the audience. "He got his Polygrip and Preparation H mixed up. He didn't have any problem with his teeth, but he couldn't get his underwear off."

Other cornball stories and tunes—"If my nose was running money, honey, I'd blow it all on you"—had

the full house in stitches.

In addition to the food and entertainment, 200 door prizes were distributed, ranging in value from \$1 to about \$300.

The first Beast Feast was limited to people connected to Sand Spring Baptist Church, but it has been opened to anybody willing to pay for tickets (\$8 each or two for \$15) since then. All the money goes back into the next year's feast.

"We don't want it to become a church affair," Milburn said. "It's not just for church-goers, all are invited (including women and children). Right now, we continue to host it because we have the facilities to accommodate it."

While the three organizers got the Beast Feast started, they say that without a lot of help, their plans would have fallen flat.

"We have about 40 adult volunteers and about 20 youth," Scott Brown said. "Baptist Disaster Relief has about eight people here help-



SERVING LINE (From left) Rusty Johnson, Ellery Milburn and Tracey Briscoe offer antelope and venison sausage pizza, pulled venison, smoked Boer goat, fried catfish and Cajun fried turkey. (Anderson News photo by Jay Cason)

ing."

"We have about 25 guys who take off from work to get this ready," Rusty Johnston added. "If they were a company, it would be a Fortune 500 company."

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PICKIN' & GRINNIN' Mike Carr and Mike Hammond, aka the Moron Brothers, joke with Ellery Milburn.

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Southern Baptist Convention

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NATIONAL NOTES

Court bars death sentence when juror consults Bible. The Colorado Supreme Court has thrown out the death penalty for a convicted rapist and murderer because a juror consulted the biblical passage Leviticus 24, in which the Hebrew law requires "an eye for an eye." A closely divided panel of that state's highest court ruled March 28 that jurors should not have taken biblical law into account when reaching the decision. The decision means Robert Harlan's sentence will be changed to life without parole.

Federal court upholds Ten Commandments display. A federal appeals court has upheld a Ten Commandments display similar to one being considered by the U.S. Supreme Court. The Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago said it has no interest in a proposed "panel discussion" on the Bible's view of homosexuality. Souforce, an interfaith group urging greater acceptance for gays and lesbians, said it still urges hundreds of demonstrators to protest Focus on the Family's view of homosexuality May 1-2. Although the two sides have found little agreement, Souforce has tempered its rhetoric, agreeing to not label Focus "a toxic religion zone" as originally planned.

Religious leaders to push action on hunger. More than 30 top Jewish, evangelical, Catholic, Buddhist and mainline Protestant leaders will push Congress and the White House this summer to end hunger in the United States. Sponsored by Bread for the World, Call to Renewal and America's Second Harvest, the first-ever Interfaith Convocation on Hunger will feature a joint prayer service at the Washington National Cathedral on June 6. The convocation will be one of the broadest efforts among U.S. faith leaders to tackle hunger. It highlights one of the few issues to attract widespread support across the ideological spectrum.

Gay group declines discussion with Focus on the Family. A gay rights group that plans to protest outside the Colorado Springs, Colo., headquarters of Focus on the Family said it has no interest in a proposed "panel discussion" on the Bible's view of homosexuality. Souforce, an interfaith group urging greater acceptance for gays and lesbians, said it still urges hundreds of demonstrators to protest Focus on the Family's view of homosexuality May 1-2. Although the two sides have found little agreement, Souforce has tempered its rhetoric, agreeing to not label Focus "a toxic religion zone" as originally planned.

Legal disputes continue after Schiavo's death

By Robert Marus and Greg Warner
Associated Baptist Press

Washington (ABP)—Terri Schiavo is dead, but the passions and controversies her case stirred are certain to have a life of their own.

Just hours after the incapacitated Florida woman died March 31, those who fought to keep her alive vowed to carry on their cause after her death.

House Majority Leader Tom DeLay said her case would cause Congress to take a "look at an arrogant, out-of-control, unaccountable judiciary that thumbed their nose at Congress and the president."

Meanwhile, Barry Lynn of Americans United for Separation of Church and State said Schiavo's "tragedy was seized upon by fundamentalists and their political allies in a bid to force their narrow moral code on everyone" and "to stack the judiciary with right-wing ideologues."

Whatever the case, many experts agreed America's most highly publicized debate over end-of-life decisions since the Karen Ann Quinlan case nearly 30 years ago likely will have wide reverberations in the ethical, legal and political realms.

At the center of the debate is a feeding tube should be used to sustain the life of the 41-year-old woman, who suffered significant brain damage 15 years ago after a heart attack reportedly brought on by an eating disorder.

Court-appointed doctors determined Schiavo was in a persistent vegetative state, and Florida courts repeatedly agreed with her husband's determination that Schiavo

would not have wanted to continue living in such a condition. But her parents, Bob and Mary Schindler, disagreed on both counts, and questioned Michael Schiavo's motives in wanting to end his wife's life. Nonetheless, a judge ordered removal of the feeding tube that had kept her alive.

Multiple issues to consider

Among the issues raised by the case: Is it ever ethical to withhold feeding from someone? And how should courts go about determining which family member has an incapacitated person's best interests at heart when there is a dispute?

David Smolin, a law professor at Sam Houston University in Birmingham, Ala., said he wished the case had been resolved by Michael Schiavo relinquishing custody of his wife to her parents—or by the law offering those who wanted to keep her alive more legal means for forcing such a custodial change.

"I continue to think that the right approach in the Terri Schiavo

case would have been to deal with the relationships among the parties," said Smolin, an expert in health-care law. "There should have been legislation to change the guardianship or the statutory order."

But instead, Congress attempted to throw the issue to the federal courts, which agreed with the state courts and sided with Michael Schiavo.

Now, he said, both Congress and state legislatures are likely to take a different approach—to change the law about the use of feeding tubes.

"I'm not optimistic that we're going to see legislation on the question of who is an appropriate guardian coming out of the Schiavo case," Smolin predicted. That would be "very narrow" and apply only to a handful of cases, he said.

"I think that there will be attempts to legislate about feeding tubes and the circumstances, if any, in which it's appropriate to withdraw feeding tubes" from patients in conditions similar to Schiavo's.

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South Oaks is managed by Volunteers of America of Kentucky and will open in early 2005. This newly constructed two story 47-unit apartment building, sponsored by HUD, is for low income elderly (62+) people. All units have a kitchen, living/dining room combination, bedroom, and bathroom. They have wall to wall carpet, vinyl in the kitchens and baths, A/C, and laundry facilities on both floors of the building. Rent is based on income. Call Volunteers of America for an application, 502-636-0771.

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

Meet some of the class of 2005

Graduating senior credits Oneida staff for helping her discover confidence

One of our seniors is part of a much larger family of Oneida graduates. Emily is the fourth sibling, all girls, in her family to graduate from Oneida Baptist Institute.

Two uncles and four cousins also attended Oneida. But it does not stop there; her aunt is our grandmother and dean of students, and her grandmother is a full-time volunteer who works in our business office. With so many family members who have ties to Oneida, it was no wonder Emily chose to attend.

In her senior essay Emily wrote, "I wanted to be back home where I was comfortable. I had forgotten that God doesn't always make us comfortable in the places He wants us to be."

"I didn't come to Oneida because my grades were bad. I had decent grades. However, my grades at Oneida have continued to advance. The small classes were a true blessing for me. They allowed me to get the attention I needed in those classes. I'm just getting a Commonwealth Diploma. I'm not just getting this diploma because it means taking more challenging classes. I actually went for my Commonwealth because none of my three sisters did. I know it sounds crazy, but as the youngest you want to be different from other children in the family."

When Emily arrived on our campus, it did not take the casual observer long to notice that she

was not only quiet, but also very shy. One area where Oneida has had great success over the years is helping students find the confidence and self esteem they need to discover themselves. Faculty and staff work with our students in many ways. For example, Tamara Cochran, who is part of our print shop staff, is also our drama director. In her essay, Emily credited her involvement in school plays for helping her become more confident. Here is what she wrote: "The one teacher who has

affected my life is Mrs. Cochran. I look up to her a great deal. She helped me to have confidence in myself by casting me in some of our school plays."

Another staff member, Theo Prince, also had a special impact on Emily. He is our print shop manager and tennis coach. She wrote, "All of my coaches have been very influential in my life, but one stands out above the rest in my mind. Mr. Prince is a gift from God. He has shown his dedication to the Lord by his attitude toward the kids. Many times in tennis practice, a teenager won't understand how to play the game. Mr. Prince always helps them and ... has an encouraging word for everyone."

In closing, Emily wrote, "I have undergone many changes while being at Oneida. I have become more responsible. ... The biggest change that has occurred while attending Oneida would be my confidence. I came to Oneida as the mousiest little thing you ever did see. ... If I could say something that everyone would remember, it would be never doubt God because He is all-knowing and all-powerful. God does the impossible and He will never let you down."

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



W.F. Underwood

Helping us educate, not indoctrinate

Fred Cummings concludes 12 years on our faculty

It was my privilege to be in on the front line of the decision-making that resulted in Fred Cummings joining our staff. At the end of June he will leave Clear Creek to pursue other interests, concluding 12 years of faithful service.

Like many of our students, he had a call into ministry early in life and ran from it for almost 17 years. He did almost everything in the church during those years except preaching. In 1983 he surrendered to that call, came to Clear Creek and began what he has called "my real spiritual journey with the Lord."

While attending Clear Creek, he and his wife, Marge, sang in campus choirs; he was elected president of the campus Brotherhood, student-housing representative. In his senior year, the student body elected him president. At graduation, he received the President's Award, the highest recognition given to a student.

Bro. Fred graduated from Clear Creek in 1987 and became a pastor, with a commitment to long pastorates. But the bottom line then, as now, is "to be where God wants me to be regardless of where that

might be."

His second-career calling and his experiences as a student and pastor served Fred and us so well for six years when he was dean of students. In 1999, he joined the faculty and began pursuing a doctorate from Spurgeon's College in London, England.

Fred, England has exemplified to me the attitude of the Apostle Paul who said he had "not yet arrived," and the continuing response to the Holy Spirit who "leads us into truth." He's still on that "real spiritual journey" he began as a student. That's been his approach to students: listen, search, seek, trust the Holy Spirit to lead

you into truth. Not all of us are willing, like Fred Cummings, to examine every Scripture against the rest of Scripture to know the full dimension of God's truth. The best teachers help us discover something within ourselves that keeps us learning, growing, open to different ideas, always testing them against the truth of God's word. I regret Bro. Fred's leaving, because he has helped Clear Creek educate rather than indoctrinate.

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



Bill Whittaker

Major leaguer Pettitte pitches sexual purity in book for boys

By Shawn Hendricks
SBC LifeWay Christian Resources

Nashville—Houston Astros pitcher Andy Pettitte has played 10 seasons in the major leagues and knows all about the physical and emotional rigors of being a professional athlete. But living a life of spiritual integrity and sexual purity, he said, is just as challenging.

Pettitte began his baseball career in 1990 when the New York Yankees selected him in the 22nd round of the draft. He eventually helped lead the Yankees to four World Series titles and also has become known for his success off the field as a man of faith.

Pettitte, along with co-author Bob Reccord, president of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, examine how young boys can live godly lives in the book, "Strike Zone: Targeting a Life of Integrity and Purity," released by Broadman & Holman Publishers of LifeWay Christian Resources.

Pettitte and Reccord explain to young boys that a Christ-filled life can still be maintained in a society where steroids, promiscuous sex, pornography and various types of criminal behavior often grace the headlines of today's sports pages.

"Let's be honest," Pettitte wrote, "the world doesn't expect a lot out of us as guys. Everyone pretty much expects us to cuss and to cheat and to be obsessed with sex ... but they are wrong."

No one knows temptation more than Pettitte, who admits he's made plenty of mistakes. But one mistake he feels blessed to have avoided is engaging in premarital sex. He shares how that decision has strengthened his Christian testimony and blessed his marriage.

Along with stories of how young men can succeed and fail

every day in their spiritual lives, the book also provides study questions for readers to answer and apply to their lives. The chapters address a variety of contemporary issues, but the book primarily focuses on sexual purity.

Reccord said today's society gradually has watered down the definition of sex and created a generation of "technical virgins."

"A trend is sweeping the country, even into junior high," Reccord wrote. "People fool themselves into thinking that if they refrain from intercourse, they remain virgins, even if they engage in a variety of other sexual activity. But this is nothing more than a word game that can lead to tragic consequences."

Living a pure life is about more than just avoiding sexual activity, the authors explained.

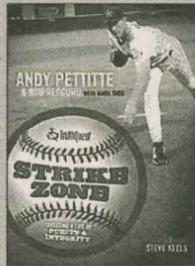
"A life of purity means honoring the Lord in the language you use, the movies you watch, the way you conduct yourself in class," Pettitte wrote.

One of the keys to avoiding these temptations is through establishing relationships with those who will act as accountability partners.

"(God) works in our lives through people, especially the people who care the most about us," Pettitte wrote. "We need the wisdom and guidance of our parents, our pastors, and other Christians who have walked this path before us."

As important as consistency is on the mound for Pettitte, he shares it is equally important in a person's spiritual life.

"If you aren't consistent, if you don't live out your convictions and exercise self-control, no one will listen if you try to speak out," he wrote. "There comes a point when a silent witness isn't enough. You have to stand up for what is right."



Facing Messy Stuff in the Church: Case Studies for Pastors and Congregations. Kenneth Swetland. Kregel Publications, 2005. 224 pages. \$12.99. ♦♦♦♦ (Out of five)

This is a book for church leaders, whether staff ministers or lay leaders. It is not designed to give answers to the "messy stuff" in the church, but rather to provide a beginning point for discussion about how to respond to the "messy stuff."

By "messy stuff" Swetland means such situations as depression, sexual harassment, effects of abortion, murder, spouse and child abuse, alcohol, suicide, AIDS, gambling and divorce. Swetland provides detailed case studies in which aspects of each situation are presented from multiple directions. The core facts of each case study are true, thus emphasizing the likelihood of a similar situation occurring in one's own church. Mostly, the case studies do not present a particular theological perspective (a real plus) but attempt simply to set the stage for discussion.

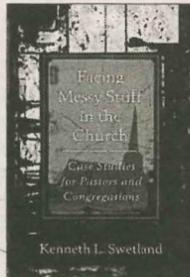
To facilitate discussion, Swetland provides a series of questions at the end of each case study that guide the individual or group to the real purpose of the case studies: education and preparation. The idea is to consider these situations and what Christian response a congregation or minister may make before the situation actually happens. In a group, there is likely to be a lively discussion. If studied individually, Swetland's questions will lead the reader into real soul-searching. But these situations are where ministry is toughest and also the most rewarding.

This book can be used effectively in staff meetings, retreat settings, lay leadership team meetings and other settings. The best results will come out of discussion with other people. *Wayne Hager*

God's Politics: A New Vision for Faith and Politics in America. Jim Wallis. HarperSanFrancisco, 2005. 384 pages. \$24.95 ♦♦♦♦

As founder of Sojourners, an evangelical community dedicated to social justice, and as editor of the magazine by the same name, Jim Wallis' life has been committed to raising a prophetic witness within the Christian church for at least three decades. During the last election cycle, he was distressed by how Christian values were dealt with by Christians and secular politicians on the right and left. "God's Politics" is his attempt to jumpstart a fresh dialogue, from deep within the evangelical tradition, about the social face of Christianity.

Two concerns guide his presentation. First, he believes that the answer to the values divide is more religion, not less. Wallis is convinced that both the right and left operate out of paper-thin understandings of the role of faith in developing values. Second, he wants this fresh dialogue to move beyond protest and negativity to presenting positive alternatives.



The bulk of the book consists of Wallis' attempt to show how Christian faith and the biblical message impact the conversation about international affairs, war and peace, poverty and economic policy, race, and matters of life and death. In each section he combines critique and analysis with guidelines for dealing with the issue at hand.

In presenting this material he tries to address the broadest possible audience, which is both a strength and limitation. Those who already are moderate will find this book inspirational, because it grounds progressive politics solidly in the prophetic biblical tradition.

Those left-of-center will find this book refreshing, yet challenging for the same reason. Those who are right-of-center will find themselves wishing Wallis had been more biblical in his argument.

I doubt "God's Politics" will accomplish what Wallis hopes it will for those on the extreme left or right, but if it gets those of us between those poles talking to one another, then he will have accomplished his purpose. *Jim Holladay*

Muslims Next Door. Shirin Taber. Zondervan, 2004. 136 pages. \$9.99 ♦♦♦♦

Shirin Taber is an American-born Iranian who was born as a Muslim before becoming a Christian.

In her book, "Muslims Next Door," Taber declares that the Christian and Muslim communities have more in common than readers might initially suspect. They include moral similarities

when it comes to raising children in modesty, getting good grades in school and being a good citizen.

The book is divided into two sections. The first uncovers common myths; the second encourages readers to create friendships.

Western misconceptions include the belief that all Muslims are Arabs, that all Muslims hate the West, that women are oppressed by Islam, just to name a few.

The section on building relationships is quite straightforward. Taber encourages Christians to start building relationships with Muslims and other non-Christians by focusing on those things they have in common. She includes such topics as how to entertain guests from a different culture and how to share the Christian faith.

Overall, the book is straightforward with testimony of personal salvation and befriending others in times of need.

Taber ends each chapter with questions for discussion and reflection. The book would be a good read for those who are looking for ways to reach out to their neighbors.

The book concludes with a glossary of Islam terms, such as burqa, the veil worn by women, and Issa, the name for Jesus in the Koran.

My only concern was that the author states that Allah and Jehovah (God) are the same. From other readings, I have not found this to be true. Still, the rest of the book is quite good. *Steve Coleman*



'Passion' ringtones available for cell phones

Los Angeles (RNS)—The next time your cell phone rings, it could be Mel Gibson—or at least the soundtrack from his "The Passion of the Christ"—calling.

Los Angeles-based AG Interactive is making three snippets of the movie's soundtrack available to download as ringtones for cell phones, as well as 12 "premium images" from the film.

The images include several of Jim Caviezel playing Jesus and Maia Morgenstern playing Mary. One scene features Jesus carrying His cross, but none of them shows the brutal flogging or crucifixion scenes.

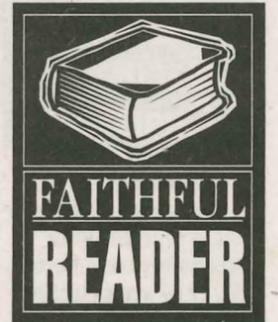
On March 11, Gibson released a "recut" version of his controversial film about Jesus' last hours that cut six minutes from the most violent scenes. Gibson said

he wants to re-release it every year for Lent and Easter.

Biniak said his firm worked closely with Gibson's Icon Productions to select images from the film that would be the "most appropriate."

"If somebody's going to be looking at something every time they're picking up their phone, what kinds of images are they going to want to see?" he said. "Images of pain of suffering, or images that evoke the spirit of the movie? We weighed more heavily on the spiritual side."

The downloads are available for 13 cellular service providers, including Cingular Wireless/AT&T, Verizon and Sprint. Each download costs \$1.95. They are available at www.midiringtones.com.



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

HOW TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

By Jerry Oakley

Everyone I have ever met is searching for the answers to a better life. They are searching at different places, but they want a fulfilling, meaningful life.

What is the basis of this life? The Apostle Paul indicated it is agape love—a totally giving love that expects nothing in return. Paul wrote in I Corinthians 13:1, "If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal." He is saying that without love, all that we do is an empty gesture or sound. Without love, nothing in life has any content.

It is only through love that we can make a life commitment to God and receive His forgiveness and guidance. It is only through love that one can relate properly and positively to one's neighbors. It is only through love that one can build a family that shares happiness and achievement.

What is the source of this love? 1 John 4:7 says, "Love comes from God." I must give my life to God in a free act of yielded obedience for such love to become the basis of my life.

Is this difficult? Yes, but it also is simple. God has been calling to us and reaching for us since birth. According to Romans 5:8, "God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

We do not have to convince God to love us. He loves us while we are still in rebellion against Him. That is what a sinner is—a person in rebellion against God. Turn from your sin. Turn to God today. Let love become the basis of a life worth living.

Jerry Oakley is director of missions for Warren Baptist Association in Bowling Green

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **CAMPBELLVILLE**—Robinson Creek Church recently called **Frank Merrill** as pastor.

■ **DANVILLE**—Calvary Church recently called **Mac Mayre** as student minister. **Doug Wesley** is pastor.

■ **FRANKLIN**—First Church will hold revival services April 6-10, 6:30 p.m., with **John Torres** as evangelist. **Bob Sutton** is pastor.

■ **GEORGETOWN**—Mallard Point Church will host "Seven Days of Reason" April 18-23 with guest speakers addressing such issues as involvement, money, diversity and winning. For information, call (502) 863-5344.

■ **JUNCTION CITY**—First Church recently called **Dale Denton** as pastor and **Steve Fegenbush** as associate pastor.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Gardenside Church will host a prayer conference, "What It Takes to Get Hold of God," led by **John Franklin** April 28, 6:45 p.m.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Ormsby Heights Church recently honored **Harold and Jennie McDonald** on their 50th wedding anniversary. **Rick Bowden** is pastor.

St. Matthews Church will host Baptist World Alliance General Sec-

retary **Denton Lotz** May 8-9 in honor of BWA's 100th anniversary. Lotz will speak at the church's 10:45 a.m. service May 8 and at an 11:30 a.m. luncheon May 9. Other organizers of the luncheon are **Matthew Smyzer**, superintendent of Central District Baptist Association, and **Russell Awkard**, moderator of the General Association of Baptists in Kentucky. Sponsors include Campbellsville University, Georgetown College and the University of the Cumberland. For more information, call (502) 896-8882 or e-mail jwatts@smbc.louisville.org. **Leslie Hollon** is pastor of St. Matthews Church.

Valley View Church had a total Easter attendance of approximately 5,000 worshippers at three services, including an additional 12:30 p.m. service. Twenty-three people joined the church Easter Sunday, including 15 by profession of faith. **Kevin Hamm** is pastor.

■ **MANCHESTER**—Lilly Grove Church recently called **Jerry Emond** as pastor.

■ **VINE GROVE**—**Gene Waggoner** recently announced his retirement as pastor of New Salem Church.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April

7 Adults 50+ Living Celebration, Burlington Baptist Church.

8-9 WMU Annual Meeting, First Baptist Church, London.

9 GA/Children in Action Missions Event, First Baptist Church, London.

12 Adults 50+ Living Celebration, First Baptist Church, Brandenburg.

14 Adults 50+ Living Celebration, Sand Spring Baptist Church, Lawrenceburg.

14 Preparing the Church for Future Trends, Crestwood Baptist Church.

15-16 EXALT (State Acteens Conference), Georgetown College.

For more information, call (800) 266-6477 or visit www.kybaptist.org

Gardner, longtime Kentucky pastor, dies

Louisville—**Ferrill Gardner**, a Kentucky Baptist pastor for more than 50 years, died March 27. He was 70.

Gardner, pastor of Middle Creek Baptist Church in Hodgenville, served more than 20 years as pastor of Carlisle Avenue Baptist Church in Louisville. He also was pastor of several other churches throughout the state.

Gardner served 16 years as a trustee of Campbellsville University. He also taught at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville and served as pastoral care minister at Little Flock Baptist Church in Shepherdsville.

"When you remember Ferrill,

you remember his gracious, accommodating spirit, the way he helped others to come together and work for the good of Christ and for the good of our institutions," said Campbellsville President Michael Carter. "Ferrill was genuinely a peacemaker."

Describing Gardner as "truly a Kentucky Baptist with a sense of family," Carter added, "Thousands of people were saved under his ministry. We're genuinely going to miss him."

Gardner is survived by his wife, Lou Rae, three children and eight grandchildren. Memorial gifts may be made to Gideons International.

CLASSIFIED ADS

BOOKS: We buy quality used Christian books. Narrow Path Bookstore, 1829 Bardstown Road, Louisville, Ky. (502) 459-4001.

FOR RENT: 2BR/2BA condo in Destin, Fla., across the street from beach. Available May, July, August. Phone: (502) 538-6769.

FOR SALE: Steinway grand piano. Classic concert style with black satin finish. Beautiful condition. \$23,500. Call (270) 316-9850.

SEEKING: Full-time senior pastor. Bullittsburg Baptist Church is a contemporary and vibrant 200-member church in the rapidly growing Northern Kentucky tri-state area. Candidate must have at least 5 years of experience serving as a senior or associate pastor, be able to lead and work with a team-oriented staff, and have a heart and desire for discipleship and outreach. Please submit resumé by April 30 to: Bullittsburg Baptist Church, c/o Pastor Search Committee, 2616 Bullittsburg Church Road, Petersburg, KY 41080.

SEEKING: Full-time associate pastor/minister of music to assist Calhoun Baptist Church in ministering to the heart of McLean County. With baptisms occurring monthly and a continually growing congregation, our community needs a godly man to assist in providing pastoral care and discipleship. The position also requires a willingness to assist the minister of youth in the active children's ministry. In addition, with two blended worship services on Sunday mornings and a lively praise and worship service on Sunday nights, we are looking for someone with a visionary approach to meeting the worship needs of a diverse congregation. Salary, benefits and housing compensation provided. Submit resumé to: Dr. Richard Sams, Calhoun Baptist Church, PO Box 283, Calhoun, KY 42327, or e-mail to drsams@cbcheart.com.

SEEKING: Full-time student minister for Sale Street Baptist Church to focus on youth, grades 6-12 and college students. Send resumé to: Youth Minister Search Committee, PO Box 5215, Lake Charles, LA 70606.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for First Baptist Church Sonora in Severns Valley Association, a progressive, mission-focused, rural church with tremendous outreach in a growing community. Worship style is currently traditional. Please submit resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, PO Box 187, Sonora, KY 42776. Resumés must be received by April 30, 2005.

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

SEEKING: Full-time minister of education/discipleship for First Baptist Church, Richmond, Ky. Responsibilities include the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ through biblical teachings, facilitating ministry opportunities, and assisting with pastoral care. The position is responsible for developing, managing and evaluating a comprehensive program of Christian education for every age and level of Christian maturation, with special emphasis on adult education. Ability to build and maintain effective working relationships and rapport with members, prospects and staff is required. Compensation includes salary, vacation, insurance, SECA and retirement. Send cover letter, resumé, salary history and available starting date to: Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 425 Eastern ByPass, Richmond, KY 40475, or via e-mail to richard.landiers@firstbaptistnet.com.

SEEKING: Secretary. First Baptist Church Shelbyville, 2803 Woodlawn Road, Shelbyville, KY 40065-9354, Attn: Personnel Chairman.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of music/worship for Sale Street Baptist Church. Send resumé, cover letter and demo/sampling of worship leading to: Music Search Committee, PO Box 5215, Lake Charles, LA 70606. Job requirements at www.salestreet.org.

SEEKING: Part-time preschool director for growing, contemporary church. Strong administrative and relational skills needed, as well as a passion for progressive preschool ministry. Send resumé to Highland Hills Baptist Church, 132 S Grand Ave., Fort Thomas, KY 41075, Attn: Becky Alexander.

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

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Southern Baptist church between Mt. Vernon and Berea, Ky. Diverse membership with approximately 200 enrolled, 140 average SS attendance, 300 Bible school attendance and growing youth group. Missions oriented. Bible college or seminary preferable. Send resumé to: Fairview Baptist Church, Route 3, Box 347, Mt. Vernon, KY 40456.

SEEKING: Full-time, conservative Southern Baptist pastor for Fellowship First Baptist Church, High Ridge, Mo. Located in a rapidly growing area of Jefferson County. Accepting resumé through 4-30-05. Please send to: Pulpit Search Committee, 2735 High Ridge Blvd., High Ridge, MO 63049. Fbchr@brick.net. www.fellowshipbaptisthr.org.

SEEKING: Senior pastor for Graefenburg Baptist Church, Waddy, Ky. Please send resumé to 11288 Frankfort Road, Waddy, KY 40076.

SEEKING: Part-time youth minister for growing church in north Mercer County. Interested applicants may send a resumé to: Salvisa Baptist Church, PO Box 75, Salvisa, KY 40372, Attn: Personnel Comm.

SEEKING: Pianist/organist for Fern Creek Baptist Church. Strong accompanying skills required. Send resumé to: Fern Creek Baptist Church, PO Box 91146, Louisville, KY 40291, Attn: Personnel Committee. Questions: call (502) 239-0316 (Linda Barnes Popham, pastor).

SEEKING: A flexible musician and spiritual guide who is comfortable with a variety of musical styles and with a half-time position. Moderate CBF/SBC church near Cincinnati is committed to reaching its neighborhood and helping its members worship. E-mail: latonia.baptist@insightbb.com. Web site: www.latoniabaptist.org.

SEEKING: Director of missions. Christian County Baptist Association will receive resumé through April. Send resumé to: DOM Search Team, 20340 Buck Fork River Road, Hopkinsville, KY 42240.

SEEKING: Full-time youth minister to serve youth of all ages. Minister must be called and led of the Lord to work in this capacity; he must be qualified, trained and a full-time member of the community. Salary and benefit package will be commensurate with experience and education. Please send resumé to: Waco Baptist Church, PO Box 560, Waco, KY 40385, Attn: Youth Dept.

SERVICES: Christian long distance at 3.9¢/minute (24/7); no monthly service charge. Toll-free: (866) 587-8346 or www.covenantphoneservice.com.

Out of her comfort zone

Former teacher brings hope to troubled Alabama community

By Joe Westbury
SBC North American Mission Board

Birmingham, Ala.—Grace McGraw ends the tutoring lesson and says goodbye to her young student. She steps outside to get a breath of fresh air and is reminded of where her obedience to God has brought her.

McGraw had been accustomed to teaching school to nicely dressed children in an affluent section of Birmingham known as Vestavia Hills. Her work environment was pleasant, grass covered the lawns and streets were well maintained.

Today she stands outside the M-POWER Ministries building where she guides a staff providing hope to a community riddled by social and economic problems.

As she looks down the street, she reflects how far she has come in the past five years. Her world is more complicated with problems caused by crowded public schools where children encounter gangs, drugs are offered as an escape from reality, and prostitution is common. Her office now is located on the edge of a high-crime community known as Woodlawn/Avondale and, she says, she might as well be serving in a Third-World country due to the economic, cultural and social barriers she has had to overcome.

"For all practical purposes, the Lord picked me up from my comfortable career and dropped me in the middle of a foreign land," she says matter-of-factly.

"It's a good thing He didn't reveal to me what He had in mind, or I'm not sure I would have been as willing to follow Him."

McGraw and her husband, John, are among nearly 5,200 missionaries in the United States and Canada supported by the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions. They also are featured during the North American Mission Study.

A change in plans

For 28 years McGraw taught school, and she planned to keep going for two more years to round

The big picture

How great are the needs in North America for literacy missions?

■ More than 20 percent of adults in the U.S.—approximately 44 million people—read at or below a fifth grade level.

■ In 2000 there were 28.4 million foreign-born residents living in the U.S.

■ More than 35 percent of fourth graders read below their grade level.

■ More than 30 percent of eighth graders function below their math grade level.

■ More than 340,000 students drop out of high school each year.

it out at 30. She could have retired at 25 years but saw no need. She was happy, she enjoyed her job and she was content with the world she had built for herself.

But at age 52, she felt a call to retire and, after a season of resistance and rationalization, heeded the call.

"My parents always taught me to be sensitive to that small, still voice of the Lord's leading. They believed in it and instilled that value in me from my early years, and that's why I'm here today, totally out of my element," she adds.

Shortly after turning in her letter of resignation, she learned from her pastor about a new ministry that would be started by Birmingham Baptist Association and several churches. Her congregation, Dawson Memorial, was among the churches partnering to bring the ministry to reality.

When she heard the new executive director speak, she could not shake the impression that she would be a part of the ministry—but as a volunteer, not as a full-time employee.

As the ministry known as M-POWER began taking shape, McGraw realized she was needed on a level that required more commitment.



TEACHER McGraw leads M-Power, an inner city ministry that gives at-risk children the opportunities to reverse a cycle of poverty and hopelessness.

A world of needs

But as she became more familiar with the residents and their needs, she saw exactly what God had in mind.

Most of the residents had no high school education, and their children were on the same track due to the overcrowded schools and lack of encouragement from adults to excel in their class work. They were torn between temptations of either selling or dealing drugs and came to school hungry in the mornings.

McGraw knew that it was difficult to teach children who were distracted by empty stomachs.

The children came to school with so much baggage from home that they could not focus on math, English or other subjects.

The solution slowly began to reveal itself. M-POWER would offer an educational program, with literacy missions, tutoring children and youth, and teaching English as a Second Language as a means of ministry evangelism.

"I learned to come to the office every day and just say, 'Father, show me what You want me to do today.'"

That taught me to be totally dependent on Him and to be sensitive to the needs that I began to see," she explains.

Today, five years later, she oversees 20 volunteers and a popular after-school tutoring ministry that gives at-risk children the opportunity to reverse the cycle of poverty and hopelessness that has characterized their lives since birth. The ministry does not just relate to children, but to their parents, as well.

A popular GED program helps parents earn their high school diploma, and adult reading and writing classes help them improve literacy skills.

"The reading level of adults and children is such that they can't even read or understand the Bible. Tutoring for both groups—with a healthy dose of Bible study—is changing that and bringing hope to Woodlawn.

Prayer, prep and play

The tutor prays with each child, reads a Bible story, helps with homework and then ends the session with a board game. The game is an important part of the afternoon because the students learn social skills, how to follow directions and how to be good losers as well as good winners.

The goal of the ministry is not just to teach the children and parents how to read and write, but how to be more productive members of society because of the spiritual lessons they learn.

"We are praying the children and adults will learn about Jesus and begin to live a Christian lifestyle if they already know Him and to accept Him if they are not a believer.

McGraw said she has had many of the children in her care since they were in the second or third grade and she is encouraged with the change she has seen.

"I want to see them continue to be nurtured into their teens and young adulthood so they can learn to discern what wonderful plan God has for their lives. They are members of my family, and I want them to catch God's vision for their lives and to run with that vision."

PLAY TIME Southern Baptist missionary Grace McGraw taught school 28 years in an affluent section of Birmingham, but God called her to the inner city where she now provides new hope through a variety of activities including an after-school program. (NAMB photos by John Swain)



MENTOR & FRIEND By nurturing Birmingham's inner city teens and young adults, Grace McGraw helps them discern God's plan for their lives. She says she wants them to catch God's vision and "run with it."

Connecting Kentucky Baptists with vital current issues

Addressing such issues as child abuse, ministry burnout, church finances and global missions, the award-winning Western Recorder provides readers 50 issues a year packed with useful news and features.

PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING
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