



WESTERN RECORDER

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FOR THE RECORD

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Poll links church satisfaction with food & friendship

Princeton, N.J. (RNS)—Having friendship and food at church leads to greater satisfaction among Christians, according to a study by the Gallup Organization.

A survey of churchgoers showed people who report having strong friendships at church are 26 percent more likely to describe themselves as having an active faith and a close relationship to God.

Food also was a key factor, the survey found, with 77 percent of respondents saying they were highly satisfied with their place of worship if they had broken bread with their congregation at least once in the past year.

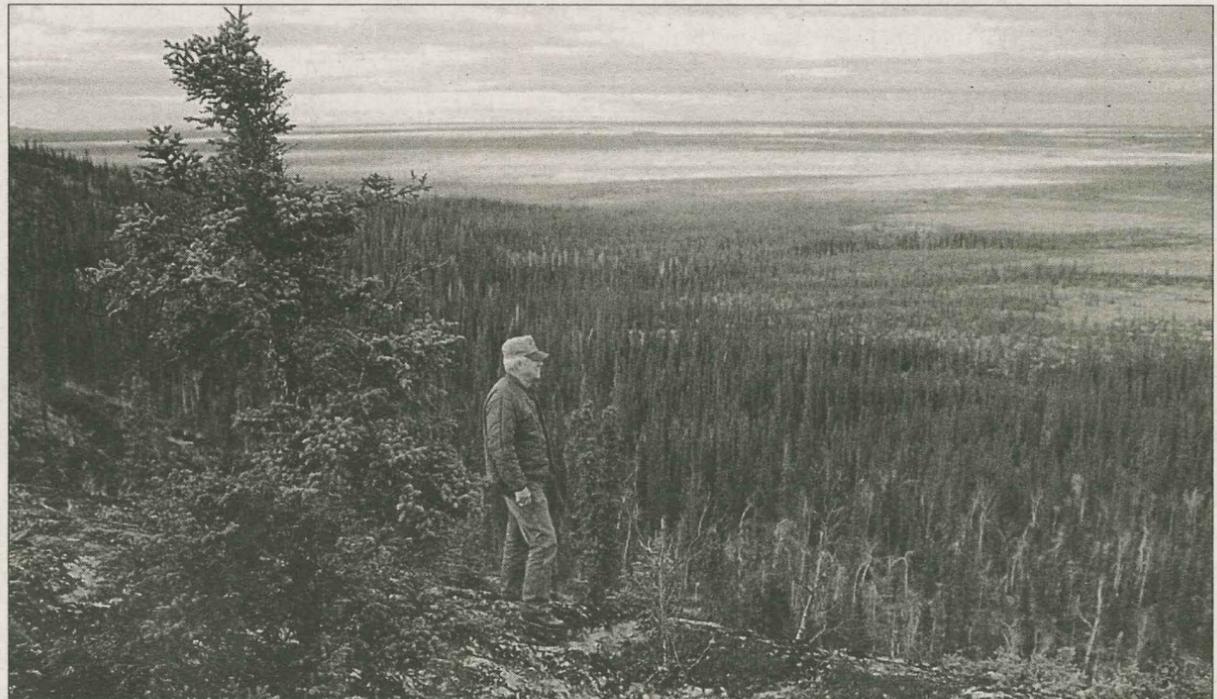
"The more people share meals together, the stronger their friendships grow, and the stronger their faith grows," said Thom Schultz, chief executive officer of Group Publishing, who commissioned the study.

Questions included those about friendship, spiritual maturity, church satisfaction and intimacy with God.

Schultz said the findings of the study are applicable for churches of any size. Providing an environment to develop friendships is a low-budget way to increase faith and church satisfaction, he said.

Another finding, Schultz said, was most respondents—1,002 randomly selected Christians from a range of denominations—were satisfied with the church they were attending.

Looking north



CANADIAN WILDERNESS Retired policeman David Hahn of Taylorsville looks over a portion of Northern Canada, where he helps coordinate missions work and church starts. He regularly travels there in winter, driving roads over frozen lakes to reach remote towns. "If your car quits on that, ... you're out of luck."

Kentuckian heeds call to Canadian territory

By David Winfrey
News Director

Taylorsville—Most folks don't go looking for colder climates in retirement, but Kentuckian David Hahn says God directed him to Northern Canada to help others learn about Jesus.

Hahn, a retired police helicopter pilot for the city of Louisville, makes several trips each year to the rugged and often bitterly cold region.

"I am the strategy coordinator for the Northwest Territories and the Yukon," says Hahn, 64. "My objective is to go and build relations with people in the north and at-

tempt to start churches. I work with the Indian people mostly."

His work includes finding local residents to host Bible studies and vacation Bible schools, coordinating mission teams to work in the region and getting resources to churches, missionaries and the people groups who live there.

"I travel three to five times each year up there," says Hahn, who has made a dozen trips to the area since he began this work in 2001.

When not there, he stays in touch with local workers, coordinating Bible studies and looking to plant churches. "I'm on the tele-

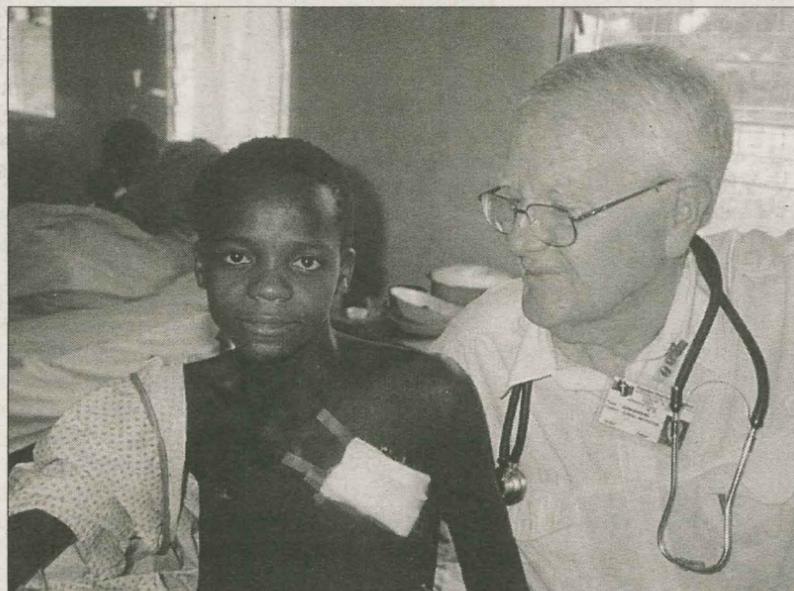
phone quite a lot."

He works with Dwight Huffman, strategy coordinator for Western Canada for the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board. Hahn claims it was a God-filled series of events that linked him with Huffman, whose work was highlighted during the recent Week of Prayer for North American Missions.

Jon Rohr, pastor of Plum Creek Baptist Church in Taylorsville, where Hahn and his wife, Etta, are members, describes Hahn as a mixture of low-key and passion.

□ See *Kentuckian helps ... Page 3*

Doctoring duo honored for lifetime of missions service abroad



MISSIONS Louisville John Sanders sits with a boy he served at Tanzania's Kigoma Baptist Hospital. Sanders and his wife, Marilyn, who is also a doctor, recently were recognized for their mission service by the Baptist Medical and Dental Fellowship.

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

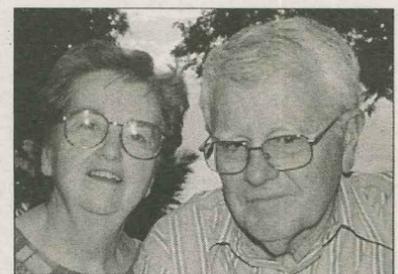
Louisville—They have changed dressings on open wounds of children in Tanzania, prayer walked in the Middle East and shared the gospel with medical students in China.

But Drs. John and Marilyn Sanders say they were surprised recently to receive an award at the annual meeting of the Baptist Medical and Dental Fellowship, held in San Antonio, Texas.

"I felt honored and undeserving," Sanders said.

"We were both overwhelmed," his wife added. "Knowing who had received the award before, we didn't feel like we were anything near them."

The couple received the Don Watkins Servanthood Award, given annually to a fellowship member or couple who demonstrate a servant-like spirit.



John & Marilyn Sanders

The award is named for the first director of CrossLink International, a Virginia ministry that connects medical resources to Christian missionaries, medical clinics and mission teams.

Sanders, a surgeon who retired from active practice in 2000, is a deacon at Highland Baptist Church in Louisville. Mrs. Sanders, who practiced internal medicine, is a Sunday school teacher.

□ See *Doctoring duo ... Page 3*

2005 SBC features 'Everyone Can' evangelism emphasis

Nashville (BP)—Highlighting the "Everyone Can" Kingdom Challenge, Southern Baptist Convention messengers will gather June 21-22 in Nashville for the SBC annual meeting.

"Everyone Can," the vision of SBC President Bobby Welch, has the goal of winning to Christ and baptizing 1 million people in one year.

The purpose of "Everyone Can" is "to create a unity of purpose in the convention and to do so around evangelism," said Welch, pastor of First Baptist Church of Daytona Beach, Fla. "It is my view that the convention has lost an overwhelming amount of its ability to create unity of purpose, and consequently, we have lost the ability to capitalize on one of our most valuable assets, and that is our diversity and our size."

Crossover, the SBC's annual evangelism blitz, will be held June 17-19. Coordinators have reported that more than 12,000 volunteers have pledged to participate either

in event ministries or door-to-door witnessing efforts.

Since Crossover began in Las Vegas in 1989, more than 34,000 people have prayed to receive Christ through this evangelistic effort. The largest previous participation in the annual campaign was about 2,000 volunteers.

Crossover will include a Saturday night celebration service at the Gaylord Entertainment Center featuring recording artists Clay Crosse, Ricky Skaggs and The Whites. Welch, LifeWay Christian Resources President James Draper and Bill Fay, author of "Share Jesus Without Fear," are among scheduled speakers.

Other convention-related events include the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference and Woman's Missionary Union annual meeting June 19-20 and the June 23-24 "Fast 50" ministry seminars sponsored by LifeWay.

Among highlights of the June 21-22 SBC annual meeting at the Gaylord Center:

■ Welch will honor evangelist Billy Graham and other Southern Baptist evangelists. Graham will be represented by his grandson, William Franklin Graham IV, pastor of Wakefield Baptist Church in Raleigh, N.C.

■ Messengers will be asked to adopt the corporate model known as sole membership for New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. It seeks to clarify in legal language that the SBC owns all of its entities. Seminary officials are expected to express reservations about the sole membership model.

■ Each session will feature a baptism. The person will be baptized into a local church, with members of each church present.

■ A bivocational pastor will preach, highlighting the importance of bivocational ministers.

■ Recording artists Casting Crowns will perform.

■ Ken Whitten, pastor of Idlewild Baptist Church in Tampa, Fla., will preach the convention sermon.

■ Four "Everyone Can" challenges will be presented, capped by a Wednesday evening sermon by Draper.

Welch, who is completing his first one-year term as president, will deliver his president's address June 21 at 10:55 a.m. He will be up for a second one-year term at this year's convention.

Churches can register their messengers online at the SBC Web site, www.sbc.net, to reduce registration time at the convention. By registering online, the churches will receive a messenger reference number form to be printed out and presented by each messenger at the SBC registration booth.

Messengers wishing to propose resolutions must submit them at least 15 days before the annual meeting, giving the Resolutions Committee a two-week period in which to consider them. Detailed guidelines on submitting resolutions are available online at www.sbcannualmeeting.net.

SBC PREVIEW

Ministers' wives conference. June 21, 11:45 a.m., Renaissance Nashville Hotel East/Center Ballrooms. Theme: "Be aglow with the Spirit serving the Lord." Speaker: Kay Warren of Saddleback Valley Community Church in Lake Forest, Calif. Tickets are \$10 in advance or \$12 at the SBC. To purchase tickets, call LifeWay Christian Resources' event registration office at (800) 254-2022, visit www.lifeway.com or send a check payable to SBC Ministers' Wives Conference and a self-addressed stamped envelope to Immanuel Baptist Church, 1415 S Topeka, Wichita, KS 67211.

Directors of missions conference. June 19-20, Sheraton Music City Hotel. Theme: "Associations Then & Now." Speakers: D.L. Lowrie, pastor of First Baptist Church of Lubbock, Texas; James Draper, president of LifeWay Christian Resources; George Bullard, associate executive director of the Baptist, associate executive of North Carolina; and Mike Haynes, director of missions for Greene County Baptist Association in Springfield, Mo. For more information, visit www.sbcadom.net.

Evangelists' conference. June 17-18, Sheraton Music City Hotel, and June 19, 8:45 a.m., worship service at Ryman Auditorium. Theme: "The Work of an Evangelist." Speakers: Toby Frost, direct evangelism leader, North American Mission Board; Paige Patterson, president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary; Keith Fordham, evangelists' organization president; evangelist Henry Hill of Hartselle, Ala.; NAMB President Robert Reccord. For more information, contact Frost at (770) 410-6000 or tfrost@namb.net.

Hispanic Baptist fellowship. June 18-19, Tulip Grove Baptist Church. Theme: "I Will Seek Your Face." Speakers: Samuel Otero, evangelist, San Antonio, Texas; Rudy Gonzalez, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas; Jason Carlisle, SBC International Mission Board; Nellie Torrado, executive director, Woman's Missionary Union of Puerto Rico. For more information, call Julio Fuentes at (305) 206-7575 or visit www.confraternidad.org.

African-American fellowship. June 19-20, Simeon Baptist Church, Hilton Inn and Suites, and Nashville Convention Center. Theme: "Witness for My Lord." Speaker: Fellowship President Robert Anderson, pastor of Colonial Baptist Church in Randallstown, Md.

Korean Baptist fellowship. June 20-22, Holiday Inn Express Downtown and SBC Building. Speakers: David Gill, SBC second vice president and pastor of Concord Baptist Church in Martinez, Calif.; Hyunmo Lee, professor of missions at Korea Baptist Theological Seminary; Inhwa Park, senior pastor of First Korean Baptist Church in Dallas; Robert Reccord, North American Mission Board president.

Messianic fellowship. June 17-18, Kol Dodi Messianic Congregation at Calvary Baptist Church and Renaissance Nashville Hotel's Fisk Room. Theme: "The Messiah in the Hebrew Bible." Speakers: Michael Rydelnik, director of Moody Bible Institute's Jewish studies program; fellowship President David Hecht of Wake Forest, N.C.; and Jim Sibley, coordinator of Jewish ministries for the North American Mission Board.

Conference of the Blind. June 18-19, location to be announced. Speakers: Charles Couey, former consultant on ministries with the blind for the Tennessee Baptist Convention, and Paul Ferrara, a doctoral student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. For more information, contact Couey at BroCharles@bell.south.net.

"Younger Leaders" dialogue. June 19, 2 p.m., LifeWay Christian Resources. Speaker: LifeWay President James Draper. For more information, contact Mark Marshall at (615) 251-2514 or mark.marshall@lifeway.com.

LeaderLife luncheon. June 20, 11:45 a.m., Renaissance Nashville Hotel's East and Central ballrooms. Theme: "Healthy Marriage, Healthy Ministry." Speaker: Former SBC President Tom Elliff. For more information, contact Henry Webb at (615) 251-3639 or henry.webb@lifeway.com.

Seminary luncheons. The six Southern Baptist seminaries will host luncheons June 22. Locations include: **Golden Gate**, Renaissance Nashville Hotel's Fisk Room, tickets \$10, (888) 442-8709. **Midwestern**, Renaissance Nashville Hotel's Music City Ballroom, tickets (816) 414-3720. **New Orleans**, Hilton Hotel and Suites' Volunteer Ballroom, tickets \$10 (\$12 after June 1), www.nobts.edu/alumni. **Southeastern**, Renaissance Nashville Hotel's East Ballroom, tickets \$12, (919) 761-2203. **Southern**, Nashville Convention Center, Rooms 204-206, tickets \$20, (502) 897-4143. **Southwestern**, Renaissance Nashville Hotel's Center/West Ballroom, tickets \$10 (\$15 after June 1), (817) 923-1921, ext. 7200.

SBC Pastors' Conference urges ministers to 'stand in the gap'

Nashville (BP)—"Build up the wall, stand in the gap" will be the theme of the June 19-20 Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference in Nashville's Gaylord Entertainment Center.

Featured speakers include Jerry Falwell, three-time Southern Baptist Convention President Adrian Rogers and Judge Roy Moore of Alabama.

Pastors' Conference President Steve Gaines of First Baptist Church of Gardendale, Ala., said the theme is drawn from Ezekiel 22:30. He said he hopes the conference will encourage pastors to see themselves as a key force "to bring America back to where it needs to be."

"I'm all for political involvement and everything else, but I believe America is beyond the political process alone being able to help us," Gaines said. "We need revival. We need spiritual awakening."

"Everything we're doing is going to be one big worship service ...

to connect with the Lord Jesus," he noted. "We really want the presence of God to be in that room."

Featured speakers include: Sunday, June 19: Don Miller, Bible-Based Ministries in Fort Worth, Texas; Voddie Baucham, Voddie Baucham Ministries in Spring, Texas; Ergun Caner, Liberty Baptist Seminary in Lynchburg, Va.

Monday morning, June 20: Mac Brunson, First Baptist Church of Dallas; Junior Hill, Junior Hill Ministries in Hartselle, Ala.; Jerry Vines, First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Fla.

Monday afternoon: Roy Fish, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas; Judge Roy Moore, former Alabama Supreme Court chief justice; Jerry Falwell, Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Va.

Monday evening: Johnny Hunt, First Baptist Church of Woodstock, Ga.; Adrian Rogers, Love Worth Finding Ministries in Cordova, Tenn.

WMU focus: Be 'Christ Followers'

Nashville (BP)—Testimonies from the mission field will highlight Women's Missionary Union's Missions Celebration June 20 at First Baptist Church of Nashville.

As WMU continues its 2004-06 emphasis of "Christ Followers," participants will be challenged to consider the passion God has placed in their heart and how to share that passion with others.

During five plenary sessions, leaders will address a passion for God, the city, the nation, the world and a passion for service. Breakout sessions will include an opportunity to visit Nashville-area ministries and to meet with international and North American missionaries.

Fisher Humphreys, professor of divinity at Samford University's Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham, Ala., will lead Bible study.

Other leaders include Frank Lewis, senior pastor of First Baptist in Nashville; Judith Chambers, presi-

dent of the North American Baptist Women's Union; Janet Hoffman, national WMU president; and Wanda Lee, WMU executive director.

Featured personnel from the Southern Baptist International Mission Board include Gordon Fort, vice president for overseas operations, and Rebekah Naylor, who serves in India at Bangalore Baptist Hospital where she has been a surgeon for more than 30 years.

Representatives from the North American Mission Board include Debbie Cannada, who serves with her husband, Norman, as church planters in Charleston, W. Va., and Diana Lewis, group coordinator of Church to Community Ministries for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Sessions will begin at 2 p.m. on Sunday, June 19, and conclude Monday evening. No pre-registration is required. For more information, visit www.wmu.com.

Kentuckian helps coordinate Canada church starts

Continued from page 1

"He's just a very gentle man with a deep heart for God," Rohr says.

"He's passionate about starting churches," he adds. "You've got to have passion if you're going to go to Northern Canada in the winter time."

Frozen travels

Hahn often travels to Northern Canada in winter so he can drive the frozen lake roads. Otherwise, more remote towns could be reached only by plane.

One night while traveling near Dawson Spring, he recalls, the temperature dipped to 58 degrees below zero.

"Kinda' chills the bone to think about it, huh?" he asks.

"Most of the folks as we were going were begging us not to" continue, he adds. "If your car quits on that, there's not something for 150 miles, not even a gas station. ... You're out of luck."

Hahn insists he's learned to cope with the weather, but he adds that he wouldn't have come up with the idea on his own to work in such a remote area of America's northern neighbor.

"The key to this whole thing is the fact that this was not something man put together," Hahn says matter-of-factly. "God put it together."

To understand why he says that, you need to hear Hahn's story describing how he discovered the Northwest Territories.

In 2001, Hahn was tracking the travels of his son, Alan, an Air Force serviceman driving with his wife and children from Alaska to North

Dakota. On a road atlas, Hahn saw the Mackenzie River Basin, a vast stretch of Northwest Canada that has one-sixth of the country's land but a much smaller fraction of its people.

Even after his son finished the trip, Hahn remained intrigued by the basin. He became convinced God might be calling him to work there in some way. "Not knowing why and never having been there before, ... it was like God was pulling my eyes to the map," he recalls.

Hahn already was a veteran of mission trips to desolate and desperate areas. In 1999, he made his first of three trips to post-war Bosnia and Herzegovina to rebuild homes and ball fields.

"God was doing this"

In August 2001, the Hahns flew to Yellowknife, the capital of the Northwest Territories province, "just to see if I could see anything the Lord was showing me there."

Hahn says he didn't find much, but soon he began to see God working in the process.

While talking to officials at the North American Mission Board, he learned about Dwight and Judy Huffman, church planters in Alberta, Canada. "They said you need to call him (Dwight Huffman) and find out what's going on in the way of mission trips there."

Reaching Huffman can be difficult, as his vast area of responsibility can result in him putting more than 30,000 miles on his car in a year. For three months Hahn's calls failed to reach Huffman.

Finally in January 2002, they connected.

Hahn described his son's trip, his visit to Yellowknife and his sense that God wanted him to work in Mackenzie River Basin.

When Hahn finished talking, he noticed the phone line was quiet. He asked if Huffman was still there.

"Yes sir, I'm here," Huffman replied. "I'm just picking myself up off the floor."

Then Huffman explained that in March 2001, before Hahn's son's trip, "myself and another fellow were in the Mackenzie River Basin, prayer walking, asking God to send someone there to share with the Dene Indians."

"At that point, I was floored," Hahn says, "realizing that God was doing this."

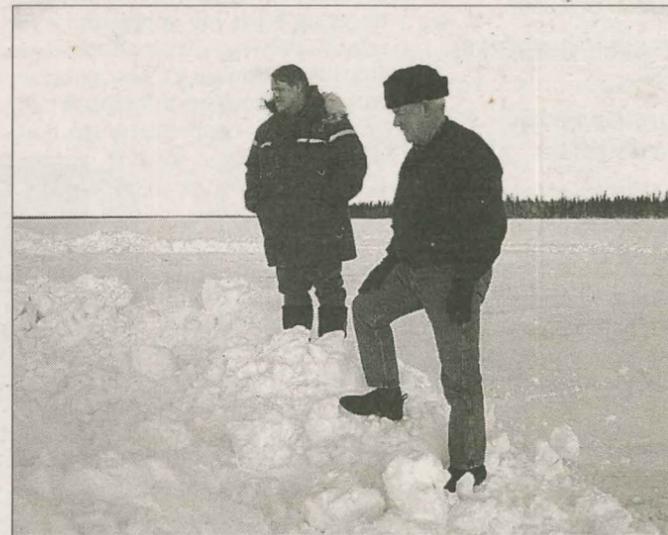
Since then, the Hahns have established Northern Lights Missions, an umbrella organization through which they coordinate their work. In recent years, they have organized teams for prayer walks in the territory, delivered clothing to local residents, organized Bible studies, and recruited mission teams to conduct vacation Bible schools.

"We are confident that this is just the beginning and we are excited about what the Lord has in store for this remote region of Canada," they state on their Web site, www.northernlightsmissions.org.

Wide open spaces

Hahn has been working with the Northwest Territories province since 2001 and recently expanded his work to include the Yukon province.

The Northwest Territories is similar in size to the portion of the United States east of the Mississippi



River, but it has just one Southern Baptist congregation, Hahn said.

Its population totals just 37,360 according to the Canadian Census Bureau. Most of those are five Indian tribes that make up the Dene Indian people group, Hahn adds.

Ask why God is using him in such a remote area, and Hahn says he's just as amazed as anyone else. But he notes that God has been preparing him for this for most of his life.

"Even when I was 15 years old, I was reading a book about the Indians and studying and getting to know more about them," he says.

"Apparently, God used that in a way to help me to help them come to know Him," he says. "It took me all this time to figure out where He wanted me."

"Southern Baptists have just not done much there, and I'm not sure why," Hahn adds. "But maybe it's the Lord's timing."

LOST CAR David Hahn, (right) of Taylorsville, looks at an area on a lake road where a car fell into the water. Hahn often travels lake roads in the winter to towns that otherwise could only be reached by plane.

Doctoring duo honored for lifetime of missions service abroad

Continued from page 1

Both serve on the church's missions committee and are active in its justice ministry.

Fred Loper, executive director of the Memphis, Tenn.-based fellowship, said the Sanderses earned the honor for their service throughout the years.

"One (attribute) that others comment on is their patience (and) calmness as they go through difficult settings," Loper said. "The other thing is their interest in teaching. They really like to help health care practitioners learn new things."

Their pastor, Joe Phelps, said the Sanderses are so unassuming they didn't even tell fellow church members about the award before going to Texas.

"They're quiet, gracious Christians," Phelps said. "They're both medical doctors. But rather than spend the fruits of their labors on themselves they've chosen, very intentionally, to spend money on mission trips and supporting missions around the world."

"They are quite an inspiration to us," added their son, Mark, also a member of Highland Baptist. "They set the bar very high for those of us who came behind them. If I can be half the witness in this world they have been and be as self-effacing, I would be pleased."

Both have been longtime Kentucky residents; Mrs. Sanders is a native of Logan County.

Her father, J.T. Miller, served as president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention in the 1970s while he was pastor of Chestnut Grove Baptist Church near Owensboro.

Married for nearly 48 years, the couple met at Walnut Street Baptist Church in Louisville, where Mrs. Sanders completed her medical degree at the University of Louisville. Her husband graduated from the University of Miami's medical school.

After completing residencies in Indianapolis, they settled in Owensboro, where they attended Lewis Lane Baptist Church.

There they got involved in missions, Mrs. Sanders said.

They started in the Southern Baptist Lay Renewal program, visiting six states and two nations overseas during an eight-year period.

Helping missionaries open doors

After their two sons were in college and their daughter had turned 16 and a relative could stay with her, they started volunteering for medical mission trips. Both call their first trip to China in 1986 the most exciting.

After that visit, the community eventually welcomed a doctor appointed by the Southern Baptist International Mission Board as a full-time resident and hospital employee, Mrs. Sanders said.

"It was breaking new ground and going into a place where peo-



HONOREES John and Marilyn Sanders recently were recognized for their mission service by the Baptist Medical and Dental Fellowship. (BMDF photo)

ple were in awe of having donated medical service," she said. "(Today), twice a year, short-term medical teams are going into various provinces."

In addition, on their most recent trip last October, they had the opportunity to openly discuss their faith in Christ with several small groups of students.

"It also helped the local missionaries because it elevated their status," Sanders said. "For them to have us come in gave them more credibility. What we're doing all the time is trying to make it better for the people who are there."

Mrs. Sanders said she became most aware of the need for missions a few years ago while prayer walking sites in the Middle East and the Horn of Africa.

Among their numerous trips have been missions to nations hostile to Christianity, where their

presence is low key because open proselytizing is prohibited.

Several close calls

At times, they have sensed their lives were in danger. In one Middle Eastern nation two years ago, an armed guard rode in their van or a police car followed closely behind.

"On another occasion in Lagos, Nigeria, robbers outside the airport threatened them. After a policeman came and chased them away, he asked, 'Now, what are you going to give me?'"

Just then a mission car from Baptist Hospital drove up, saving them from having to pay a bribe.

In 2001, Sanders was exposed to HIV by a needle prick. Though he never tested positive, he had to take medication for a month and was tested for eight months to be certain he was not HIV-positive.

Despite these and some other nervous encounters, Mrs. Sanders said they continue to go on mission trips at the age of 73 because they determined long ago this would be their lifestyle.

"The needs are almost impossible to describe," her husband said of the impoverished nations they have visited.

"In a way, the most gratifying thing is the response of the people," he added. "They pay us many times over with their thankfulness for what we do to help them. I don't feel we're in it for free."

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P.O. Box 43969
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TRENNIS HENDERSON
Editor

DAVID WINFREY
News Director

JANET McINTOSH
Marketing & Business
Manager

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

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Speak truth in love

I want to congratulate and thank you for your objectivity in allowing Hershael York an opportunity for rebuttal to your prior editorial on Southern Seminary's new contract with Sodexo. Your attempt to help Western Recorder readers see both sides of this issue, as well as other issues, is to be commended.

There is a tendency on the part of all of us, due to our fallen humanity, to treasure and defend our own views. The "speck-and-beam" syndrome is one of the most common characteristics of man, and we all, regardless of our training, status or rank in the Kingdom, stand guilty of relating to one another and to the issue at hand with proverbial blind spots governing our *modus operandi*.

We all shall continue to "see through a glass dimly" (1 Corinthians 13:12) while in this earthly existence. Fact is, there is only One Who never had a blind spot, Who never mis-evaluated anything, Who never made a mis-call, Who never said anything He later had to retract, Who never had to apologize to anyone—and that was the Lord Jesus Himself, Who knew all men and what was in them (John 2:24-25).

Therefore, since none of us is omniscient, let us recognize that the whole truth about any issue is yet to be revealed when we shall see Him in glory. When we stand before Him, the two questions we must be able to answer in the affirmative will be: "Did you follow and obey My Son Jesus as your Lord?" and "Did you follow and obey the clear teachings of My Word as your guide?"

In the light of those two eternal standards, while still here below, let us all endeavor to strive for the truth, live by the truth, and speak the truth in love.

Jim Castlen
Hazard

Are views 'out of step'?

In the April 19 Western Recorder, Georgetown College's Eric Fruge wrote that he is proud of Georgetown's heritage. To be sure, Georgetown is a great school with a great heritage, but core beliefs can change and evolve. The last two generations have witnessed an erosion of Christian orthodoxy in many religious institutions across the country.

While most Kentucky Baptists appreciate and honor Georgetown for its distinguished achievements in education, many have concerns more specifically with teaching in the religion department. I've heard, anecdotally, that the beliefs propagated by its professors are out of step with the mainstream of Kentucky Baptist belief. Some testimonies have been heartbreaking and, if truly representative of Georgetown's theological culture, very disturbing.

I suggest that the church relations director survey the professors of religion on a variety of issues Kentucky Baptists hold dear and report back to the churches. How many of the professors would affirm inerrancy, for example? Since a sizeable portion of Kentucky Baptists hold this view, shouldn't our Kentucky Baptist institutions have some professors representative of this view?

How many professors affirm that Adam and Eve were literal people and the parents of the human race? Would all the professors affirm not only that Jesus is the only way of salvation but that explicit faith in Christ is necessary for salvation? How many professors affirm the miracles of the gospels? Do all professors believe in the literal bodily resurrection of Jesus?

Kentucky Baptists deserve to know what is being taught in the religion classes of our schools. What a shame it would be if churches entrusted their youth to a KBC school only to have their faith in the Word of God undermined.



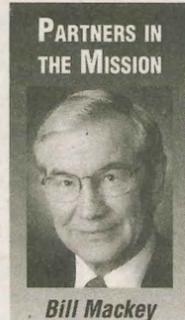
Get involved in evangelism and Crossover

Southern Baptist Convention President Bobby Welch has challenged Southern Baptists to ask God for one million baptisms in 2005-2006. It is an impossible goal for human efforts. However, in view of the Great Commission, I believe we can say that God desires that all people would come to repentance and faith (2 Peter 3:9).

Welch temporarily has moved to Nashville and has been speaking in churches and associations almost every day. He is encouraging church members to believe that "Everyone Can" help reach someone for Christ, guide them to follow up with baptism in a local church, and help them become followers of Christ.

He prayerfully has requested that Southern Baptists participate in Crossover on the Saturday before the Southern Baptist Convention, which will be held June 21-22 in Nashville. Because the convention is in driving distance for all Kentucky Baptists, I hope we will be well represented.

Bobby Welch has done what he said he would do in expanding the base of participation on SBC committees, and I applaud his commitment.



Bill Mackey

Crossover, on June 18, will begin with a launch at the Gaylord Entertainment Center at 10 a.m. (doors open at 8:30 a.m.) followed by a massive afternoon door-to-door visitation in Nashville-area church communities. The day will conclude with a rally at the Gaylord Entertainment Center at 6:30 p.m.

Please call (877) 324-8498 to indicate that you will participate. I plan to be there on Saturday and already have received my assignment.

Remember that Kentucky Baptists have some big goals for reaching people for Christ and baptism and discipleship in the local churches as empowered by the Holy Spirit! We believe that every church can accept the challenge to increase baptisms each year, train new members and leaders, and start new units and ministries.

Light always helps people see clearly; perhaps that's all we need on this subject, to get along and keep moving forward in faith.

Kevin B. Hash
Bowling Green

Hymns haven't left

Interesting indeed is the article in the April 12 issue of the Western Recorder, "Hymns making comeback? Some contemporary singers recording 'theology in song.'"

For millions of worshippers in a wide variety of Christian denominations, hymns have never left us!

The article makes the common assumption that Christian entertainers principally determine what the people want in their church song. While this is largely true, there nevertheless exists another great constituency in congregations which vote by its habits of usage for the great hymns of the faith that have been created throughout the Christian centuries as well as in contemporary times.

Every day, "theology in song" is being produced by talented laypeople as well as clergy, many of them members of hymn societies not only here in the United States but in countries all over the globe. The majority of these hymns are apt in their practical singableness and rich in their theological content. Moreover, they are accepted and sung enthusiastically by the folk of mainstream denominations both Protestant and Roman Catholic here and abroad.

For lively Christian worship, the congregations' lifting of these inspiring songs in divine worship is, in my view, vastly more significant than the entertainment provided by admittedly influential professional personalities.

The millions who have been feasting on great hymnody all along can say in hope and joy to Christian entertainers, "Welcome back!"

Hugh T. McElrath
Penney Farms, Fla.

Dan Garland, church development and evangelism team leader, has been analyzing baptism statistics in Kentucky from the past 10 years and has made some surprising discoveries. One of the most exciting is that if each Kentucky church simply matched its best year of the last 10 in baptisms, the total results would be more than 40,000 baptisms!

Vacation Bible school will be an excellent opportunity to reach older children and youth for Christ. Every church should consider conducting a mission VBS or backyard Bible club wherever children are unreached. Consider assisting another church that does not have enough workers.

Cross Over Kentucky will be conducted in Three Forks Association this year. Forty teams already have made commitments to participate, and the association is involved in a major prayer effort.

It is about connecting all people to Jesus Christ. If you want to know more about Kentucky Baptists Connect or indicate your church's commitment, please contact us at (502) 254-4731 or (888) 254-5713.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

CHURCH

Six key reminders can help enhance investment efforts

By Don Spencer

What is an investment? In simple terms, it is when you put your money to work for you.

Savings accounts and CDs generally are safer, but their return usually is less. An investment in stocks or mutual funds will have increased risk and volatility but generally will provide increased earnings potential. You need both savings and investments.

Some of your retirement money might be invested in stocks or mutual funds. You might have other non-retirement money invested in mutual funds or individual stocks. If so, you likely have been concerned about losses you might have experienced in recent months.

Here are six basic truths to remember about investing:

Most investments fluctuate in value. Fear and greed often determine short-term values of stocks. Don't get overly concerned about short-term ups and downs. Invest for the long term. Don't let your own fear and greed determine your decisions.

Use time, not timing. Even experts rarely time the market correctly. Just when they agree on the direction of the market, it often moves the opposite way. Those trying to time the market often do the wrong thing at the wrong time. But those who keep time on their side by investing for the long term generally profit. Be patient.

Bank CDs and savings accounts will not make you rich. It happens too often. Individuals put money in CDs or savings accounts to reduce risk. After taxes and inflation, they end up with a dollar amount that is lower in terms of real buying power. For the long term, it generally is better to invest for growth to offset the effects of inflation and taxes.

Your portfolio is more important than any single investment. No one can expect every investment to grow dramatically. But you expect reasonable growth from a total mix of investments in your portfolio.

It pays to diversify. Remember the old saying, "Don't put all your eggs in one basket." Use a mix of investments with differing levels of risk. This reduces the volatility of one's total portfolio.

Christian should invest their money. Many of Jesus' parables deal with stewardship. Appropriate investing is part of a Christian's total stewardship (Matthew 25:14-30).

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

Avoid dating relationship with emotionally unhealthy person

Q: I've been dating a man with low self-esteem. My "constructive criticism" of how he could improve has hurt his feelings and driven him to leave the relationship. What now? Should I pray? Ask his forgiveness? Leave him in the prison of his own depression?

Low self-esteem and major depression can be red flags that a person is not ready for a relationship.

SINGLES

Consider the issue of codependence. Why do you feel compelled to be with a man you constantly need to improve? A man generally does not want to be a woman's "project."

As far as the man is concerned, he might need help, but you might be the last person he wants to get it from. Like the man who spent 38 years by the pool waiting to be healed in John 5, he must want to be healed. When he is ready, you can refer him to someone who is skilled at cognitive therapy. (For an introduction to this type of therapy, see David Burns' book, "Feeling Good.") You also can refer him to a medical doctor trained in the science of antidepressant medicine (a psychiatrist). The two-pronged approach of cognitive therapy and antidepressive treatment has been shown to be very effective in many cases.

After this man receives the kind of help outlined above, you might choose to go into this relationship with your eyes open. Do not enter a relationship with "rose-tinted glasses," thinking you are going to change another person. Find a healthy person to date, but even more important, concentrate on being a healthy person yourself.

You might enlist the help of a qualified counselor to explore why you are attracted to someone you think you need to change. Such insights could help you avoid falling into the trap of dating someone who needs therapy before he is healthy enough to move toward a committed relationship.—James Stillwell

Q: As a parent, what is the most effective way to resolve conflict with my preteens?

Parenting preteens (older children in grades 5-6) requires parents to change their parenting style from one of authority to one of influence. Older children are more responsible and deserve to make more of their own decisions. However, conflict inevitably will arise.

PARENTING

Wade Rowatt, director of the St. Matthews Counseling Center in Louisville, offers five suggestions for resolving differences while keeping relationships intact. Rowatt cautions parents and preteens not to allow themselves to become part of an "angry" fight. Instead, sit down, calm down and discuss the situation. Let the discussion follow the following ABCDE guidelines:

Accept the problem. Define it clearly. Make sure you are on the same page and in agreement on the nature of the conflict.

Brainstorm options. Anything goes during this part of the discussion and neither parent nor preteen can dismiss any idea or solution presented. Think outside the box as you look for an answer, but don't decide anything at this point.

Choose one option. The selected option must be something both sides can live with. Arriving at such an option might require compromise. In other words, both sides might have to give up something.

Do it! Restate the agreement and then act on it. Neither parent nor preteen can be allowed to back out or complain once this point has been reached. Honor your commitment and follow through.

Evaluate. Sit down after the conflict and discuss the situation again. Ask questions such as "What did you think?" and "How did it go?"—David Garrard

Family Forum writers are:

David Garrard, minister to children at St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville. E-mail: dgarrard@smbclouisville.org.

James Stillwell, minister to singles at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington. E-mail: james@ibs-lex.org.

Valerie Vincent, Christian counselor with Hardy Associates in Louisville. E-mail: dr.vincent@insightbb.com.

Scott Wigginton, associate professor of pastoral ministries and counseling at Campbellsville University. E-mail: sewigginton@campbellsville.edu.

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



Fresh perspective sharpens ministry focus

When you spend years deeply involved in any endeavor or relationship—whether church, work or family—it's easy to take it for granted.

Familiarity with a situation or setting often means we overlook details we once viewed as fresh or exciting. Such is the case for Kentucky Baptist Convention ministries and goals. State convention and entity staff members, local pastors and involved laypeople sometimes can grow so accustomed to the diverse ministry efforts in KBC life that we fail to fully appreciate their widespread impact.

How do we overcome the challenges that such familiarity can breed? One sure-fire way is to spend time with people who do have a fresh perspective about convention ministry. That occurred for me and several other KBC-related staff members last week as the KBC Mission Board staff hosted its annual "Welcome to Kentucky" orientation conference for ministers and spouses new to the state or new to vocational ministry.

It's refreshing to spend time with ministers who are new to their field of service. Their enthusiasm and anticipation are contagious as they seek God's leadership amid a major life transition.

That enthusiasm was heightened for many of the participants as they discovered ministry resources available to help them impact their communities with the gospel.

A highlight of the conference for me was the opportunity to take part in a question-and-answer session with the orientation participants. A 10-member panel of convention representatives included KBC Executive Director Bill Mackey and leaders of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, Western Recorder and Woman's Missionary Union as well as leaders of the Mission Board staff's five ministry teams.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

During my nearly six years as editor of the Western Recorder, this is the first time I recall participating in a forum where a group of Kentucky Baptist ministers had simultaneous access to the leaders of the KBC Mission Board, Foundation, Recorder and WMU. It's a format worth repeating at future KBC events.

The most significant part of the session was not the panel's availability, but the group's interest in gleaned firsthand information about ministry needs and opportunities. Participants asked questions about the KBC's "Kentucky Baptists Connect" ministry emphasis, Cooperative Program funding, church growth resources, leadership training opportunities, summer camp options and more. They also shared spontaneous testimonies about some of the ministry initiatives in their congregations.

There are many things for which Kentucky Baptists can be thankful these days, including the Connect initiative's focus on evangelism, discipleship and leader training, the recent increase in baptisms across the state, vibrant campus ministry and partnership mission programs and ongoing church growth efforts.

It's human nature, however, to get sidetracked by conflicts, criticism or complacency and fail to fully appreciate all God is accomplishing through Kentucky Baptists.

Perhaps the same is true in your congregation. Do you ever take God's incredible blessings for granted, ignore pressing needs or major on minor issues?

"Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds," Hebrews 10:24 urges. That's a worthy goal on a personal level, in the local church and in state convention life.

Sometimes it's just a matter of gaining a fresh perspective.

Major life transitions impact youth

Maybe it is the time of year. Maybe it is the life experiences I have been through in the past six months, but transition is the current theme that keeps running through my thought process as I sit down to write. Transitions are not necessarily bad or good on their own, but they do provide us with a plethora of opportunities for ministry.

This time of year brings natural transitions in youth ministry. Youth ministers and volunteers gain a new crop of 6th or 7th graders, depending on the scope of our ministry. That in itself brings tons of enthusiasm in those wide-eyed, naive students.

We also bid farewell to seniors we have poured six or seven years of our lives into. Questions constantly run through our minds about these students: "Did they really get this Jesus thing?" "Will they still be involved with the church when they leave the safety of the youth group?" "Will they be part of the 88 percent who graduate church when they graduate the youth ministry?"

Other students and leaders will move in and out of our youth ministries because of job changes, divorces, changes in church membership and because of friends they have and lose in our ministries.

So what can youth leaders do to help students during these points of transition in their lives?

New students. Whether 6th or 7th graders, new students in youth ministry need specific attention. I remember one year asking our grad-

uating seniors when they felt like they were part of the youth group. It was humbling and eye-opening when one of them said, "During my freshman year." She had been on youth council, was there for every event we hosted and was a leader in our group.

After her comments, we assigned a junior or senior to each incoming middle school student. Their job was to make sure the younger students personally were invited to every event, included in the conversations and made to feel part of the group. Six years later when that group of 6th graders graduated, we had the best retention rate of any group we had ever worked with. They even helped integrate the students who came in after them—without having to be prompted. It was the model they knew and practiced.

Some churches have a transition year with 6th graders, leaving them in the children's ministry but gradually involving them in the youth ministry as the year progresses. These students have the best of both worlds: They get to be fully children and eventually fully youth.

Graduating seniors. Recent studies indicate that 88 percent of the students who graduate from our youth ministries also choose to graduate from church. That is disheartening, disgusting, unacceptable, and a thousand other disappointing adjectives.

It would be easy to blame our churches for being boring, non-rel-

evant, out of touch, etc. While some of that is true, youth leaders cannot allow our churches to be our scapegoat. We need to ask ourselves as student ministers if we have done all we can to help in this transition. Have we helped our students develop significant relationships with adults in "big church"? Have we taken our students to the colleges they will attend and introduced them to the campus ministers or do we send them off and hope for the best? Have they been given opportunities to lead events outside the student ministry or have we kept our best and brightest young people all to ourselves?

Students should be involved in leading worship for more than special events. They can lead in prayer and serve as ushers, decision counselors, greeters, musicians, etc. While none of these are guarantees our students will be integrated into the church body as a whole, it likely will help.

Other life issues. Student transitions in life are as varied as the students in our ministries. Do we have a plan to connect with students during these vulnerable points in their lives? Have we thought about how we are going to incorporate new students who move into our neighborhood because their parent has changed jobs? What about the student who is now living with the other parent or a grandparent because of their family situation?

Youth leaders must make a conscious decision to not miss prime opportunities to connect with students as they transition through life and ministry settings.

Joe Ball, a former youth minister at Edgewood Baptist Church in Hopkinsville, is youth strategist for the Kentucky Baptist Convention

YOUTH MINISTRY CORNER



Joe Ball

Paducah LifeWay manager receives national recognition

Stephanie Hodges told her father's friends, "When I own my bookstore, you'll have to come and buy from me."

By Sara Horn
SBC LifeWay Christian Resources

Paducah (BP)—Laughter fills the back room of the LifeWay Christian Store in Paducah.

The co-workers—all women this particular morning—catch up from the weekend before a devotional that will flavor their day.

"We laugh a lot here," store manager Stephanie Hodges said with a big smile. The group reflects the character of the town they live in: cozy, family-like, bighearted. They finish their devotional with prayer for God to bring what they call divine moments—ministry opportunities only He can arrange.

Hodges, a member of Paducah's First Baptist Church, started working at the LifeWay store when it opened in 2000, shortly after she graduated from Murray State with a degree in business management. Her hope was to manage the store one day—an opportunity that came her way in October 2003.

This year she was selected as "Manager of the Year" for the 123-store chain. At 28, she's the youngest to receive the award since its inception 11 years ago. Specific criteria must be met to be considered: overall high performances for the store in all operational areas, high scores for customer service and for store visits. LifeWay's regional directors make the final selection from a group of finalists.

"The best thing I can say about Stephanie is that she's truly excited about what she does every day," said Bob Fuller, Hodges' regional director. "Her passion for ministry and for LifeWay Christian Stores is infectious and her staff follows her lead."

"She always puts the emphasis on relationships with both churches and customers," he said. "People know it's a place where someone is going to care about them and what their needs are."

Growing up with LifeWay

As a child, Hodges piled into the family car with her parents for day trips to Nashville several times a year, a three-hour trip from Paducah. They'd make their way to the LifeWay Christian Store—Baptist



STARTING THE DAY Stephanie Hodges (right) shares a morning devotional with co-workers (from left) Ashley Medley, Laura Castleberry and Marilyn Gregory at the LifeWay Store in Paducah. Hodges is the national chain's "Manager of the Year." (LifeWay photo by Kent Harville)

Book Store as it was known then—to purchase resources for the church where her father served as pastor.

Each time, she told her parents that a store in Paducah. She would tell her mother how the layout of the store should look.

Every trip to the Baptist Conference Center in Ridgecrest, N.C., also started with a visit to the bookstore.

After Hodges became a Christian as a fifth-grader and her theology about ministry grew, she told her parents that, one day, she would own a store in Paducah. She told her father's friends the same, adding, "When I own my bookstore, you'll have to come and buy from me."

Hodges soon learned she couldn't own a LifeWay store, but she could manage one. Someone told her family that managers often went to the store where there was an opening, sometimes far away. Her family prayed hard for a store to open in Paducah.

"It's been unreal to watch how God has worked things in Stephanie's life," said Hodges' mother, Sandy Hodges. She and her husband, Monte, associate pastor of Briensburg Baptist Church in Benton, regularly stop by the store. "Every job she's had growing up has assisted with the knowledge and skills she needed to manage a bookstore."

Working at a restaurant, "she noticed very quickly that the owner was always on the floor greeting the customers," Sandy Hodges recalled. "She came home and told me, 'That's what a good manager should do—when I have my bookstore, I'm not going to stay in my office, I'm going to be on the floor.'"

Staying "ministry-focused"

Jim Bryant, director of missions for West Union Baptist Association, said Hodges and her staff are "well-known in our area as being people who are willing to help."

"Day to day, we're just staying ministry-focused," said Hodges, standing at the cash register greeting customers and ringing up merchandise. Hodges said she's grateful for the recognition but admitted her surprise at receiving LifeWay's highest honor for store managers. "I'm blessed to have such a great crew. I couldn't do it without my staff."

She points to two customers seated in a couple of chairs bent over a Bible. An elderly Greek man came into the store to find Scripture in hopes of comforting his wife on the one-year anniversary of their daughter's death. The pastor who happened to be in the store offered to help him.

Hodges smiles and offers a reason for why she loves what she does.

"Now there's a divine moment. We get to see them every day."



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Camping season starts soon

It's not too late for churches to register or add campers

Within just a couple of weeks, summer will begin for our ministry. As you might have noticed, I speak of the seasons more in line with the camp schedule than the lunar calendar. To me, summer begins basically the first day campers arrive.

While exact arrival schedules vary between Cedarcrest, Cedarmore, Northern Kentucky and Jonathan Creek, the first campers begin arriving later this month. Summer will run about 10 weeks and literally thousands of people will participate in the summer experience we call camp.

The final 30 days leading to camp become pressing as staff is added, facilities are prepared and last-minute programming alterations are made. Each summer we increase our staff to more than 130 people at our four locations. The churches who are coming make final arrangements, get information together and brief students on what to bring and sometimes more importantly what not to bring.

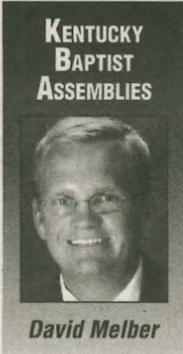
While summer is almost here, you still have time to register for

camp or to add to your number of campers who are coming. I believe this time of year offers a great opportunity to add youth who are outside of your church group. Challenge your staff and youth group to invite a classmate from school, a new neighbor who recently has moved to the area, or a special-needs person who could enjoy the camp setting and the community of being with others.

I pray that we always will have a lifestyle of seeking each day to extend the love of Jesus to someone else. Just because your church group has filled its slots does not mean camp signup is over. Literally until the day you get in a van to come, others can be invited.

The life change that takes place in a camp or retreat setting is undeniable. What better way to extend friendship to a new person who is outside your church? Not only can the new student get to know your group, but he or she might come to know Jesus as Lord—great results either way for a simple invitation to come and have a good time at camp.

David Melber is president of Kentucky Baptist Assemblies. Contact him at 3043 Beal Road, Hardin, KY 42048; phone (270) 354-8355.



KENTUCKY BAPTIST ASSEMBLIES

David Melber

Kudzu



Doug Marlette

For Heaven's Sake



Mike Morgan

Bible Crosswords

Evelyn Boyington

Across

- 1 "I will come in to him and will _____ with him" (Revelation 3:20)
- 4 "The foxes have _____" (Matthew 8:20)
- 9 Isaac, to Abraham
- 12 _____-la-la
- 13 Pole vault or high jump, for example, in a track meet
- 14 "_____ of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark" (Genesis 6:19)
- 15 Went in
- 17 Alter, hopefully for the better
- 19 "And he shall rule them with a rod of _____" (Revelation 2:27)
- 20 Celestial sign, to Magi
- 21 Remnant of a broken pot (KJV var.)
- 23 "Nor silver, nor brass ... nor scrip for your _____" (Matthew 10:9, 10)
- 26 Fowl creatures
- 27 Nonsense
- 28 In _____ (concerning)
- 29 Consume
- 30 Certain collectibles
- 31 Age
- 32 Title used when not on a first-name basis (abbr.)
- 33 "You're So _____" (C. Simon hit)
- 34 Confirm
- 35 "If any man _____, let him come unto me" (John 7:37)
- 37 Drops pounds
- 38 Act as accomplice
- 39 Actor Orson, for one
- 40 "Ye are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a _____" (1 Thessalonians 5:4)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12			13					14			
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40	41					42				43	44
45					46	47				48	
49					50					51	

- 42 Pasture activity
- 45 Rowing implement
- 46 Chief son of Kohath (1 Chronicles 15:5)
- 48 Born (Fr.)
- 49 Twisted strand in rope
- 50 "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye _____" (Psalm 100:1)
- 51 Came into possession

Down

- 1 Jeanne d'Arc, e.g.
- 2 Vase
- 3 "Rejoicing in hope, _____ in tribulation" (Romans 12:12)
- 4 "For _____ feared John, knowing that he was a just man" (Mark 6:20)
- 5 Appliance
- 6 "He was _____ as a sheep to the slaughter" (Acts 8:32)
- 7 Half an em
- 8 Icons, perhaps
- 9 Far from cracking a smile
- 10 Possess
- 11 "And Cain ... dwelt in the land of _____ on the east of Eden" (Genesis 4:16)
- 16 Blunders

- 18 One betrothed to Joseph
- 20 In the near future
- 21 Son of Noah
- 22 "A merry _____ maketh a cheerful countenance" (Proverbs 15:13)
- 23 Elbow, for one
- 24 "Who concerning the truth have _____, saying that the resurrection is past" (2 Timothy 2:18)
- 25 "For I have laid upon thee the _____ of their iniquity" (Ezekiel 4:5)
- 27 Raise up
- 30 "Be _____ for nothing" (Philippians 4:6)
- 31 After dusk
- 33 Emotional reaction (colloq.)
- 34 Son of Jotham, king of Judah (2 Kings 16:1)
- 36 Hirsute
- 37 What the Lamb opens, in the Book of Revelation
- 39 Partner of born
- 40 Over the _____
- 41 Masculine nickname
- 42 Cotton _____
- 43 New (comb. form)
- 44 "_____ thee behind me, Satan" (Matthew 16:23)
- 47 Chemical element (abbr.)

Last week's solution

1	W	A	S	T	5	W	A	D	S	9	A	R	E
12	A	S	E	R	13	A	B	I	A	14	M	E	R
15	S	P	R	E	A	D	I	N	G	17	S	F	A
22	S	H	A	D	E	25	E	N	27	A	E	R	
28	L	A	P	L	O	S	E	31	T	R	E	E	
33	O	B	T	A	I	N	35	S	T	E	R	N	S
37	G	I	F	T	C	A	S	H	O	C	T		
43	M	A	R	A	H	46	R	A	R	E			
48	A	B	I	R	I	G	A	T	I	O	N		
54	S	L	Y	E	A	V	E	57	U	L	A	N	
58	T	E	R	E	W	E	S	60	P	E	R	E	



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Meet some of the class of 2005, part 8

Even students who arrive with attitudes can learn to love living at Oneida

Attitude. It can make you or break you.

One of our biggest challenges is to deal with hostile and angry attitudes. Often by the time a student enrolls at Oneida, considerable emotional damage already has been done. Many times parents thoughtlessly have threatened to "send" their child away to, or "put" them in a boarding school if things don't improve.

If someone had threatened you for months, maybe even years, about being sent to a boarding school if you didn't "straighten up" and then you actually were enrolled in a boarding school, what would your attitude be? After all, this was supposed to be your punishment. Enrolling you in a boarding school was supposed to make you feel bad about your actions, and this is the consequence of that behavior. Would it be logical for you to arrive, see the school, enroll and then be happy about the fact that your parents finally did what they had been threatening to do for years? Without even giving us a chance, we become the bad guys. In the mind of the student, we are here to make life miserable for him or her.

What most of us remember about "Kathy" (not her real name) was her attitude. Here is part of what she wrote in her senior essay: "At the age of 12, I came to realize that I was having a rough time in school. ... My mom and I would fight all the time. When we would fight I knew all along it was my fault, but I treated her like garbage. ... My school work in the public school was terrible. I would not listen to a single person or do a

single assignment. ... I didn't get into drugs, but I had an attitude."

We spent years—yes, years—working with her. Finally, at the end of her junior year, we had had enough. It was time to tell her she was not welcome to return. When she discovered that we finally had decided not to allow her to return for her senior year, things changed quickly. She asked for a second chance, not that she hadn't been given many second chances already. Reluctantly we gave her yet another opportunity to find success and change her attitude.

Here is more of what she wrote: "When I first came to Oneida ... I thought I knew what I needed to know about God. But I was completely wrong. ... So chapel during the week really became fun. ... One of my favorite activities at Oneida is choir. You can meet thousands of people who care so much and have a great passion for the

Lord; it can really shock you. Meeting all these wonderful people has really touched my heart and soul. No one would be able to take away what these people did for me and taught me. I will miss being in the choir.

"Oneida has really helped me in so many ways. ... Coming here when I was 12 years old was not easy. ... I was scared but now I am scared to go into the real world. ... But I know that no matter what, I have people who love me and mean a lot to me. They will help me and give me guidance. ... I will never forget all of you at Oneida who have made me a better person. I will never forget you! And, I love all of you!"

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

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

A 'priceless' education

Graduates share of spiritual growth, God's faithfulness

Commencement Day, May 6, was a day of celebration for 36 seniors. Before then, they shared some special memories and thanksgiving:

"Gaining experience in ministry is my major accomplishment at Clear Creek. I hope to continue as minister of education at East Cumberland Baptist Church in Middlesboro." *Craig Boley, North Carolina.*

"I learned what it really means to be a brother in Christ. Both of our daughters came to know Christ as their Lord and Savior." *Tim Bongiorno, Ohio.*

"I'm thankful for gaining ability and confidence in public speaking, and for the support of fellow students, both in and out of class." *Michael Burns, Kentucky. (Michael will pursue a master's degree to become a military chaplain.)*

"While here, I was licensed to the ministry and saw 10 youth get saved. The greatest joy was our daughter, Ashleigh, came to Christ. I will seek a master's degree at North Greenville Bible College." *David Butler, Kentucky.*

"My fondest memories while here are watching God provide

everything that I ever needed through the mall (campus thrift store), Christmas shopping spree, Turkey Day and food and clothing giveaways. I thank God for the teaching of the professors. I will attend New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary." *Nick Butler, Kentucky.*

"God blessed me with new friendships, a closer walk with Him and seeing my family grow up. He confirmed our call to a traveling ministry focused on the sanctity of human life." *Doug Cullen, Florida. (Doug and his wife, Joli, have five children, ages 13 to 23.)*

"God provided for Sarah and me on a low income. I'm grateful for the opportunity to develop a youth ministry

at Hosman Baptist Church while I was a student. I will attend Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary in Memphis." *Steven Curtis, Michigan.*

"I gained self-confidence and the knowledge of the power of the gospel. My wife, Samantha, graduated and both of our children were saved. It is an honor and privilege to graduate from Clear Creek—a priceless education." *Christopher Campbell, Kentucky.*

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

'We haven't recovered'

Thousands still live in damaged homes after Florida's hurricanes

By Vanessa Rodriguez
Florida Baptist Convention

Jacksonville, Fla. (BP)—Hurricane Charley's forceful winds uprooted more than the banyan tree in the Conger family's yard last August.

It overturned their lives as they lost their jobs, home and all of their personal belongings.

"I have three boys," Kristen Conger said. "You try to protect your children, then they lose everything and you tell them that it's going to be OK. But I didn't even think it was going to be OK," she said.

Money the family intended to use for repairs covered hotel costs as they sought shelter from the subsequent hurricanes and storms that ravaged Florida. With only a tarp-covered roof and extensive mold damage, the Congers returned home to try to piece together their house and lives.

Weeks after living in the damaged home, Florida Baptist disaster relief volunteers helped rebuild the Congers' roof with wood the family purchased and materials donated by Tampa Bay Baptist Association.

"If no one had stepped in to help us, my house would still have no roof and would have been condemned," Conger said.

But nearly eight months after last year's storms, many Floridians still have had no one offer help.

People and families are without the resources to finish needed repairs for uninsured or underinsured homes, said Hal Burke, the Florida Baptist Convention's director of long-term disaster recovery operations.

"I can safely say there are literally thousands who are still living in homes that are in disrepair and in many cases not livable," Burke said. "Some live in homes with roof damage and mold because they have no other way to turn."

After Hurricane Charley struck

Punta Gorda, a Rebuild Coordination Center was established in Sarasota to help identify individuals' homes with structural needs.

But Hurricane Frances plowed through the state, soon followed by Hurricanes Ivan and Jeanne before any recovery work could begin.

The multiple storms forced volunteers to concentrate on meeting victims' immediate needs by providing warm meals, dry food supplies, water and clothing. After relief efforts stopped in the hardest-hit areas, recovery operations began slowly with limited resources and materials.

Baptist associations throughout Florida coordinated volunteers and established recovery rebuilding projects within their regions while the Rebuild Coordination Center in Sarasota concentrated on the southwest part of the state.

Approximately \$118,000 was invested in the site to put a strategy in place, hire workers and secure initial materials needed to begin registering and assigning volunteers for the building and recovery projects.

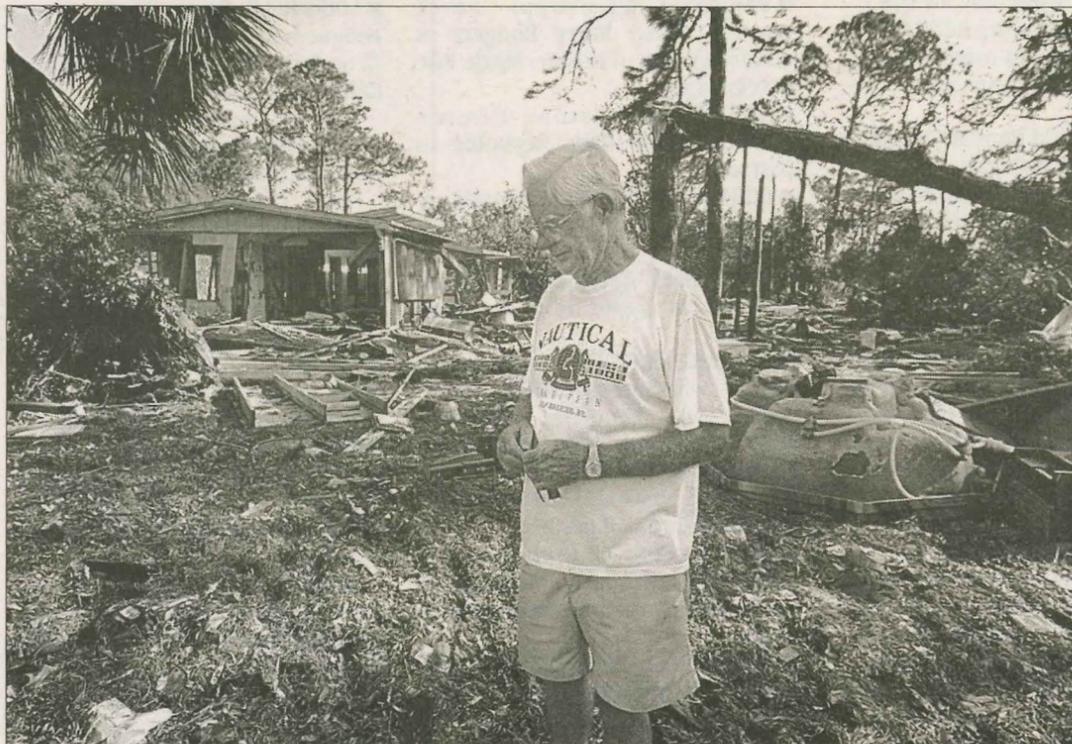
From September to February, at least 643 volunteers assisted more than 830 families with roofing, dry wall and other temporary and permanent construction.

Partnering with Samaritan's Purse

The recovery effort has now hit a new stage.

"Right now we are trying to get people back on their feet in a long-term way by helping rebuild their lives and homes," Burke said.

Partnering with Samaritan's Purse, an evangelical Christian organization that provided a substantial contribution for the purchase of materials, the Florida Baptist Convention is prepared to take an aggressive step forward to help rebuild homes throughout the state.



This contribution and the money set aside through the convention's State Board of Missions "has allowed us to expand the scope (of rebuilding) to the whole state," Burke said.

As director of long-term recovery operations, Burke has divided reconstruction efforts into four regions.

Each region is overseen by a director who will coordinate volunteers, administer materials and work with a local long-term rebuilding committee. These committees include individuals from a network of faith-based groups, volunteer organizations, local businesses and municipal government.

"What we are doing is trying to get recovery/rebuilding efforts on an equal par with the relief that took place within the state as a result of so much hurricane damage," said Don Crocker, director of the southwest recovery region.

"We need people to be aware that we haven't recovered from those storms and we won't for quite

a while," Crocker said. "This rebuild is going to take years, and we will continue to need volunteers and support for our mission."

Meeting physical & spiritual needs

The mission and purpose is to help rebuild lives and homes both physically and spiritually, Burke said. "These projects give us the opportunity to share not only how they can rebuild a home but rebuild their lives through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ."

As the next hurricane season approaches, an increasing number of Florida Baptists have shown interest in disaster relief training. Fritz Wilson, director of the convention's Florida Baptist men's department, said attendance has been high at each of the recent disaster relief trainings.

Projects are available for individuals or volunteer groups of any size and for any length of time. For more information on how to volunteer, contact the Rebuild Coordination Center at (941) 360-0321.

HURRICANE AFTERMATH

Patrick Cannon stands last September amid sea weed and debris left in the wake of Hurricane Ivan in front of what was left of his son's house in Gulf Breeze, Fla. Florida Baptists are working to help families who still live in homes damaged by the four hurricanes last year. (Mobile Register photo by Bill Starling)

Study: Senate has approved religious, pro-life judge candidates

By Robert Marus
Associated Baptist Press

Washington (ABP)—A study of Senate records shows many of President Bush's judicial nominees who are religious and hold pro-life views have been approved by senators—including Democrats.

Many religious conservatives recently accused Senate Democrats of blocking Bush's judicial nominees on the basis of their conservative faith or views on abortion rights, claiming a prejudice against "people of faith."

To date, the Senate has approved 208 Bush nominees to the federal courts since he took office in 2001. Senate Democrats have used a procedural move to block 10 others.

A study by Democratic Senate staffers indicates at least 106 of Bush's judicial nominees who were approved by the Senate claim religious affiliation with a particular congregation. And at least a dozen of the successful nominees have

previously advocated pro-life positions or been affiliated with groups that oppose abortion rights. The vast majority of those 100-plus judges were approved without objection from Senate Democrats.

Some conservative evangelical Christian leaders—led by James Dobson of Focus on the Family and Tony Perkins of the Family Research Council—held a nationally televised rally at Highview Baptist Church in Louisville April 24 accusing Democrats of using a "litmus test" against pro-life nominees.

"For nominees to be held back from opportunity because they have chosen a faith that might advise against abortion, same-sex 'marriage' and similar issues is deplorable," Perkins wrote in the April 29 edition of his e-mail newsletter.

Senate rules require 60 votes in the 100-member body to close debate on any issue and move on to a substantive vote. Republicans,

who hold a 55-member majority, have been frustrated that all of the chamber's 44 Democrats and one left-leaning independent have used the tactic known as a "filibuster" to block nominees they consider objectionable.

Bush doesn't see "targeting"

Democrats said the idea that they are using the filibuster to block some of Bush's judicial nominees because of their religious beliefs is preposterous. Many moderate religious leaders, including the heads of most of the nation's major Protestant denominations, denounced the rhetoric used by Dobson and others in the "Justice Sunday" telecast.

And President Bush, in his April 28 press conference, said he did not believe Democrats were targeting his nominees because of their faith, although he did disagree with the decision to filibuster some nominees.

According to documents provided to Associated Baptist Press by Tracy Schmalzer of the Senate Judiciary Committee, at least 106 approved judges listed affiliations with religious congregations in biographical information provided to the committee.

According to the study, those listing religious affiliations included eight Baptists, 54 Catholics, 12 Methodists, eight Presbyterians, four Jews and three Mormons. That listing is "likely conservative in number" since the study was not complete and not all nominees list religious affiliations, said Schmalzer, press secretary to Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), the Judiciary Committee's ranking Democrat.

Schmalzer said the Senate has approved at least 12 Bush judges "with active pro-life or anti-choice records or involvement before appointment," including at least eight appointees to powerful federal appeals courts.

PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following Kentucky Baptist missionaries and ministries:

First Baptist Church of Paducah. Jerry Mansfield, co-chairman of the church's revival/awakening committee, reports that the church is involved in "Awakening 2005." More than 1,000 people were baptized into the church 100 years ago during a time of great revival. Culminating in September, "Awakening 2005" will celebrate that spiritual revival and acknowledge the need for a new awakening and fresh encounter with God. Pray for God to engulf the Paducah area with spiritual revival and an awakening to His Word. Pray that the church will faithfully and effectively demonstrate God's love through service to others.

Mission Service Corps missionaries John and Alvine Routh of Stanton. The Rouths serve as directors of the Wendell Belew Appalachian Training Center, a ministry that offers job training, housing for mission groups and retreat facilities. Pray that the center's ministry will be developed further through increased use and that financial needs will be met. Pray also that God will provide physical strength to the Rouths as they direct the ministry and care for the center.

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

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **BARDWELL**—Mississippi Church recently called **Barry Rodgers** as children/youth minister. **Mark Burnett** is pastor.

■ **BEREA**—Roundstone Church recently called **Rick Reynolds** as pastor.

■ **CORYDON**—**Mike Fambrough** resigned April 24 as pastor of Corydon Church.

■ **COXS CREEK**—**Terry Leap** recently resigned as pastor of River View Church.

■ **ELIZABETHTOWN**—Immanuel Church will host a missions event, "Celebrating Kentucky Missions," May 14, 9:30 a.m. **Joyce and Harold Scroggs** with Meridzo Ministries in Lynch will speak and the **Heartland Dulcimer Club** will perform.

■ **FULTON**—First Church recently called **Jeff Bowman** as minister of youth and recreation. **Jack Acree** is pastor.

■ **HODGENVILLE**—First Church will host a community gospel sing May 14, 7 p.m. **George Smith** is pastor.

■ **LEXINGTON**—A reunion for Baptist Student Union participants at the University of Kentucky in the 1950s will be held May 20-21. Calvary Church will host a dinner May 20, 6:30 p.m., and a brunch will be held May 21, 10 a.m., at Donamire Farm. For more information, contact **James and Wini Humphrey** at (859) 543-2203.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—**Roger Lamb** recently resigned as minister of music at Broadway Church. **Christopher Caldwell** is pastor.

Carlisle Avenue Church recently ordained **Kevin Baggett** to the gospel ministry. **Shawn Merithew** is pastor.

First Gethsemane Church will celebrate its 95th anniversary with activities May 11, 14 and 15. Events include a 5:30 p.m. meal and 7 p.m. worship service May 11; dedication of the Center for Family Development the May 14; and an anniversary banquet May 15, 1:30 p.m. For more information, call (502) 635-7906.

■ **MOUNT VERNON**—Clear Creek Church will hold revival services May 22-26, 7 p.m., with **Hamp Valentine** as evangelist. **Kenny Queener** is pastor.

Scaffold Cane Church will hold revival services May 15-18, 7 p.m., with **Ron Meece** as evangelist. **Bobby Turner** is pastor.

■ **OWENSBORO**—First Church will host a Family Pavilion May 13-14 during the annual Owensboro Bar-B-Que Festival. The pavilion will feature a children's carnival and other activities. For information, visit www.fbcowb.org.

■ **SHEPHERDSVILLE**—Victory Church recently called **Bill Moore** as associate pastor. The church also recently dedicated its new sanctuary. **Tony Stamps** is pastor.

Southern Seminary team aids tsunami victims in Indonesia

Louisville (BP)—A team of volunteers from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary serving last month in Indonesia saw areas "where every home was wiped off the face of the earth," Kenneth Magnuson recalled.

"And we were told it was like that for something like 200 miles down the coast," said Magnuson, associate professor of Christian ethics at Southern Seminary. He was among a group 11 students, faculty

members and spouses who worked in post-tsunami relief efforts.

"Thousands of wells were filled with salt water. Rice fields were completely destroyed. We drove by a mass grave where 47,000 people were buried in a field the size of a football field," Magnuson recounted.

The seminary group undertook a variety of service projects, including teaching English, surveying disaster sites, talking with local residents and restoring wells to a



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May

14 Associational WMU Leadership Training, Beaver Dam Baptist Church; Lowell Ave. Baptist Church, Campbellsville; First Baptist Church, Morehead.

17 Baptist of Worth Lifestyle Evangelism Conference, Consolidated Baptist Church, Lexington.

21 Associational WMU Leadership Training, First Baptist Church, Princeton; First Baptist Church, Hazard; Graefenburg Baptist Church, Waddy.

21 Regional Keyboard Festival, Calvary Baptist Church, Lexington.

23-24 Day Care Orientation, Baptist Building, Louisville.

28-30 Wrangler Trail Ride, Land Between the Lakes.

June

4 Church Weekday Education, Bethlehem Baptist Church, Louisville.

4 Son Team Dinner Theatre, Cedarmore Baptist Conference Center.

6-10 Discovery Youth Camps, Cedarmore Baptist Conference Center.

11 Adults on Mission Rally, First Baptist Church, Sonora.

11 Church Library Ministry Workshop, Baptist Building, Louisville.

11 Church Weekday Education Workshop, Porter Memorial Baptist Church, Lexington.

11 Technical Ministries Conference, Crestwood Baptist Church, Crestwood.

11-18 Kentucky Changers, Benton.

13-17 Discovery Youth Camps, Cedarmore Baptist Conference Center.

13-17 Mission Adventure Camp for Boys, Campbellsville University.

13-17 Mission Adventure Camp for Girls, Cedar Crest.

17-18 Mission Adventure Camp for Boys, Father/Son Overnight, Campbellsville University.

17-18 Mother/Daughter Overnight, Cedar Crest.

18 Church Weekday Early Education Workshop, First Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

19-26 All-State Youth Choir & Orchestra Tour, Georgetown College.

20-24 Discovery Youth Camps, Cedarmore Baptist Conference Center.

20-24 Mission Adventure Camp for Boys, Campbellsville University.

20-24 Mission Adventure Camp for Girls, Cedar Crest.

24-25 Acteens Splash, Jonathan Creek.

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

CLASSIFIED ADS

AVAILABLE: Magnify Quartet—men's 4-part harmony gospel music, live musicians—seeks to magnify the precious name of Jesus everywhere! CD in production in Nashville. Call toll-free: (877) 409-3764. www.magnifyquartet.com.

FOR RENT: Christian-owned condo on the beach just west of Panama City, Fla. Available for rent this summer; sleeps four; new appliances; family games and videos available. Currently running special: \$100 off the regular weekly price. Go to www.pinnacleportrentals.com, or call (800) 874-8823 and rent unit B2308.

FOR RENT: Sanibel Island, Fla. Two-bedroom, two-bath condo. Screened porch, large pool, tennis courts, canoe, kayaks, lovely secluded beach. www.sanibelcondo.net.

FOR SALE: Books co-authored by Ken Walker (WR state correspondent): "Riches Beyond Measure" (\$10); and "God@Work" (\$12). Orders: www.kenwalker.biz or send check to 1355 Bardstown Road, #217, Louisville, KY 40204.

FREE: To church or mission—8 used pews: two 8-foot; five 9-foot; one 11-foot. Louisville. Bob Hummel: (502) 964-6265; 245-4101, ext. 735.

SEEKING: Pastor for Brooksville Baptist Church in Northern Kentucky (Bracken County). Average attendance: 35. Submit your resumé to PO Box 126, Brooksville, KY 41004. (606-735-2455).

SEEKING: Part-time director of adult education and discipleship with emphasis on small group ministry. Please send resumé to: Broadway Baptist Church, 4000 Brownsboro Road, Louisville, KY 40207; or e-mail to: office@broadwaybaptist.org.

SEEKING: Part-time youth minister for growing church in Falls of Rough, Ky. Responsible for all aspects of ministry to elementary grades through teen years. Salary: \$150 per week. One week vacation per year. Send resumé to: Search Committee, 319 Morgantown Road, Caneyville, KY 42721, or contact Bill Franks, daytime: (270) 879-3079, or Phillip Crume, evenings: (270) 879-8011.

SEEKING: Bivocational Southern Baptist pastor for rural church in Boone County, Ky. Send resumé to 10060 Beil Road, Union, KY 41091.

SEEKING: Part-time secretary (M/W/H, 25 hours/week). Microsoft Office experience required. Mail resumé to: Personnel Committee, Deer Park Baptist Church, 1733 Bardstown Road, Louisville, KY 40205; or e-mail to: secretary@deerparkbaptist.org.

SEEKING: Director of missions for South District Association. Resumes are being accepted; send to: DOM Search Committee, Rev. Dennis Hisle, 6610 Alum Springs Road, Danville, KY 40422, or e-mail to: pkpastor@praisinghim.com. (859-238-2249).

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

usable condition. "People would see us and come from all around to ask if we could pump their well, hoping to restore fresh water," Magnuson said. "They would express great appreciation for doing that and often would offer something to drink, giving us an opportunity to receive their hospitality and to talk with them."

David Sills, director of Southern's Great Commission Center and associate professor of missions and

cultural anthropology, said the trip was an opportunity for a broad spectrum of students and faculty to declare God's glory to the tsunami-affected areas.

Noting that the trip allowed participants to "put their faith into action and demonstrate the love of Christ to hurting people," Sills added, "The trip was rewarding labor for the participants, needed relief to the recipients and a blessing to all by His grace and for His glory."

SEEKING: Bivocational pastor. Watson Lane Baptist Church, 233 Watson Lane, Henderson, KY 42420, Attn: Pastor Search Committee.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor of education. Williamstown Baptist Church is a Southern Baptist purpose-driven church with a weekly attendance of 300+ located in a growing Northern Kentucky town near Lexington and Cincinnati. Candidate should be age 25-45, energetic, self-motivated, well-organized, and a creative team player who has an ability to relate to people of all ages on a personal and spiritual level. A bachelor's degree is required and a master's degree with related experience is a plus. Check us out at www.williamstownbaptist.com. Send or e-mail resumé by May 22 to: Stephen C. Rice, 214 North Main St., Williamstown, KY 41097. E-mail: srice@fuse.net. Telephone: (859) 824-4102.

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

Day of Prayer activities held throughout country

By Shawna Gamache
Religion News Service

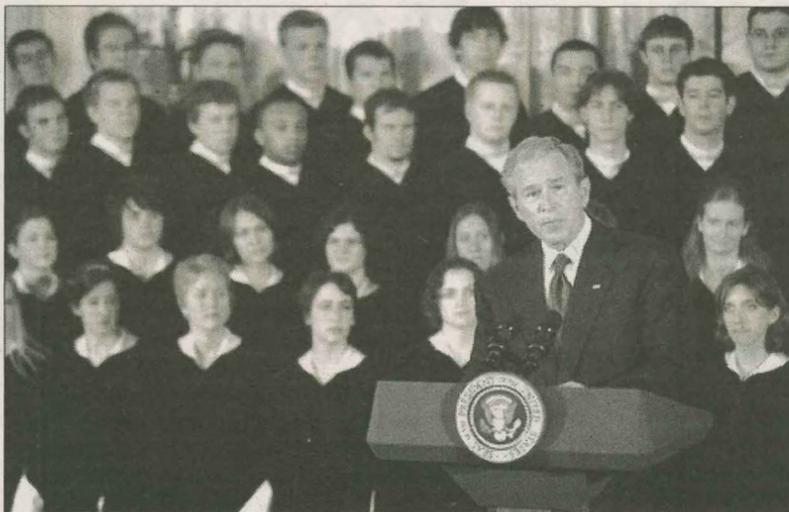
Washington (RNS)—With a purple-robed, 74-member choir as a backdrop, President Bush met with religious leaders at the White House last week to commemorate the 54th annual National Day of Prayer.

"The National Day of Prayer was founded in 1952 by an act of Congress, yet this day is part of a broader tradition that reaches back to the beginnings of America," Bush said May 5, as the choir from St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn., watched and periodic "amens" were heard from invited guests. "They declared it a self-evident truth that our right to liberty comes from God."

In his comments, Bush emphasized the frequency and diversity of prayer.

"Every day, millions of us turn to the Almighty in reverence and humility," Bush said. "Every day, our churches and synagogues and mosques and temples are filled with men and women who pray to our Maker. And almost every day, I am given a special reminder of this great generosity of spirit when someone comes up and says, 'Mr. President, I'm praying for you.'"

The White House celebration included representatives of several faiths, including Rabbi Kenneth Auman, president of the Rabbinical Council of America; Shirley Dobson, chairman of the National Day



DAY OF PRAYER President George W. Bush delivers remarks at the White House during the National Day of Prayer, with the choir from St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn., in the background. (White House photo by Eric Draper)

of Prayer Task Force and an evangelical Christian; Catholic priest Charles Pope, pastor of St. Thomas More in Washington; and pastor Max Lucado, 2005 honorary chairman of the National Day of Prayer.

Charges of exclusivity

Some critics say the National Day of Prayer Task Force, a private organization based in Colorado Springs, Colo., and headed by Shirley Dobson, wife of James Dobson of Focus on the Family, has given the National Day of Prayer a politically conservative and religiously evangelical flavor.

"I am not against prayer; I just don't want to exclude anybody from it," said John Vrana, 74, a retired Catholic priest participating in an alternative Interfaith Day of Prayer in Oklahoma City. "I personally feel excluded from it."

When asked about the criticism, Terrell Mayton, a spokesman for the NDP Task Force in Colorado Springs, said in a telephone interview that "our perspective is evangelical Christian," which represents a "very, very large" constituency.

He emphasized that the organization, with fewer than a dozen full-time employees, is privately

funded, even though it partners with government.

Gatherings were held in cities across the country, with organizers predicting beforehand that millions would participate.

Pilgrim's Pride, the nation's second-largest poultry producer, invited its 36,000 employees to participate in company-hosted NDP events at plants across the country.

The competing Interfaith Day of Prayer, coordinated in part by the Washington-based Americans United for Separation of Church and State, billed its Oklahoma City gathering as a celebration of religious freedom and tolerance. Unlike the National Day of Prayer, organizers said it was limited to one locality.

In the White House East Room, Shirley Dobson said, "Almighty God continues to bless America despite the fact that we cooperatively and individually have turned our backs on Him."

Bush took a more positive approach, connecting prayer to one of his favorite themes, freedom.

"No government can ever take a gift from God away," Bush said. "And in our great country, among the freedoms we celebrate is the freedom to pray as you wish, or not at all. And when we offer thanks to our Creator for the gift of freedom, we acknowledge that it was meant for all men and women, and for all times."

"I am given a special reminder of this great generosity of spirit when someone comes up and says, 'Mr. President, I'm praying for you.'"

President George W. Bush

Baptist agency pulls support for free-speech act

Washington (RNS)—The Southern Baptist Convention's public policy commission has withdrawn support for a bill that would allow religious institutions to endorse candidates without threatening their tax-exempt status.

The Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, once a vocal supporter of the bill, decided it could not affirm the latest version of the Houses of Worship Free Speech Restoration Act, ELRC officials announced.

The bill, sponsored by Rep. Walter Jones, R-N.C., failed a full House vote in 2002 and nearly passed as part of a larger bill last year before the controversial provision was gutted.

The most recent version sponsored by Jones does not permit political views expressed by religious

leaders or congregation members to be distributed beyond those attending the service in which they are made.

The agency thinks the changes leave churches open to the possibility of government intrusion, and its leader calls the latest version a "grotesquely bad idea."

"Under the new bill, the government would permit churches to endorse a candidate but then would allow government investigators to come in and determine when the church has exceeded the government's narrow parameters of permission," ERLC President Richard Land said.

"It gives the government foxes a hunting license to enter the churches' hen houses, and we all know what happens when foxes get into hen houses. Hens get

killed, and foxes get fat."

The latest version of the bill would amend the Internal Revenue Code to prevent the tax-exempt status of religious organizations from being affected by the "content, preparation or presentation" of addresses, such as sermons, at religious meetings or services.

The new bill also would force churches to edit taped or live broadcasts of sermons if speakers expressed political viewpoints, according to Barrett Duke, ERLC's vice president for public policy research.

Land said that while the ERLC supported previous versions of the bill, commission officials continued to call for Baptist churches to refrain from candidate endorsements.

With additional reporting by Baptist Press

Robertson comments on judges, Islam & Sept. 11 denounced

Washington (RNS)—Religious leaders, left-leaning political activists and victims of the Sept. 11 attacks in New York joined May 4 to denounce recent comments Pat Robertson made about the escalating battle over the federal judiciary.

MoveOnPAC, a progressive group that provides financial backing to congressional candidates, said it's launching a TV ad campaign repudiating the religious broadcaster's May 1 comments on ABC's "This Week."

Robertson told "This Week" host George Stephanopoulos that federal jurists were a more serious threat to America than "a few bearded terrorists who fly into buildings" and that

Muslims were unfit to hold federal judgeships.

"And they have said in the Quran there's a war against all infidels," Robertson said. "Do you want somebody like that sitting as a judge? I wouldn't."

In a telephone news conference, Jim Wallis, evangelical editor of Sojourners magazine called Robertson's remarks "irresponsible, extreme and hurtful."

He added that Robertson's claims that "all Muslims want to kill us" were particularly destructive to the healing process happening in the Islamic community.

Adele Welty, who lost her son Timothy, a firefighter in New York

City, on Sept. 11, said she was especially wounded by Robertson's statements.

"I'm disturbed by the fact that a religious man chose to marginalize the tragedy of September 11 for the purpose of shock value," Welty said.

A spokeswoman for Robertson said he had no more to add about his comments, but referred to a letter Robertson sent to Sen. Frank Lautenberg, D-N.J., refusing to apologize.

"I owe no one any apology for my point of view, because in these matters I believe that history will bear me out," said the letter, posted on CBN's Web site.

NATIONAL NOTES

PBS criticism gets letters of praise. More than 150,000 conservative Christians have sent letters or e-mails to the office of U.S. Education Secretary Margaret Spellings, praising her for criticizing a PBS children's television program that depicted same-sex parents in a positive light. In a January letter to PBS President Pat Mitchell, Spellings voiced concern about an episode of "Postcards From Buster." PBS pulled the episode.

Methodist bishops: No change in sexual standards. The bishops of the United Methodist Church said last week that the legal victory for a defrocked lesbian minister doesn't change the denomination's sexuality standards for clergy. The bishops said Beth Stroud won because of a legal technicality, not because church rules against "self-avowed practicing" gay clergy are wrong. Stroud, who was defrocked last December, was reinstated April 29 by an appeals court of the church's Northeastern Jurisdiction. "The decision of the Northeastern Jurisdiction Committee on Appeals does not in any way reverse the standards in our Book of Discipline," the bishops said, referring to the church constitution.

Religious discrimination probed at Air Force Academy. A top Pentagon official has ordered the appointment of a special task force to investigate "lingering allegations" about religious discrimination at the Air Force Academy toward cadets who are not evangelical Christians. Allegations include that Christian cadets get special allowances to attend off-campus religious services, that upperclass cadets who are Christians are encouraged by their superiors to proselytize underclass cadets in their charge, and that cadets of minority faiths or no faith are regularly harassed.

After dip, confidence in religious leaders stabilizing. An annual Harris Poll shows 27 percent of U.S. citizens have a great deal of public confidence in the leaders of organized religion. While the 2005 number is the same as last year's figure, it reflects a sustained notable increase from 2003, when only 19 percent reported having a great deal of confidence in religious leaders, probably because the Catholic sex abuse scandal was at its height. Three-fourths of the public expressed at least some degree of confidence in the leaders of organized religion.

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