


**PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING**  
**WESTERN RECORDER**

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**FOR THE RECORD**

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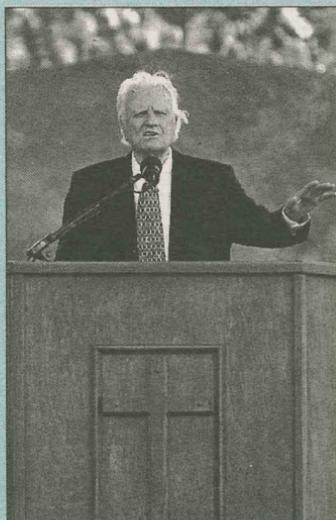
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Many say the Supreme Court's rulings on Ten Commandments displays send mixed message. *Page 10.*

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Judge rules Pentagon support for jamboree is unconstitutional. *Page 12.*

**The end?**



**NEW YORK CRUSADE** *Despite illness, evangelist Billy Graham reportedly looked relaxed and vibrant in the pulpit during his recent New York crusade. (RNS photo by Michael Falco)*

*Unsure staff says they've worked 'last crusade' for past 10 years*

By Jason Anthony  
Religion News Service

**New York (RNS)**—New York was ready to say goodbye to Billy Graham. His three-day crusade was billed as his last in the city and Graham suggested in interviews it could be his last anywhere.

But on Sunday, June 26, Graham, 86, surprised everyone with a statement that appeared to put his retirement indefinitely on hold.

"This is not the end," Graham said moments before launching into his sermon. "They may think so, but I don't."

Even Graham's team doesn't know where the sawdust trail will end. Publicist A. Larry Ross said in a pre-crusade interview that Graham will defer a decision about a November revival in London until the elderly preacher sees "how much gas he has in the tank."

After 24 years of fielding the question "Where will it end?" Ross has given up trying to come up with an answer.

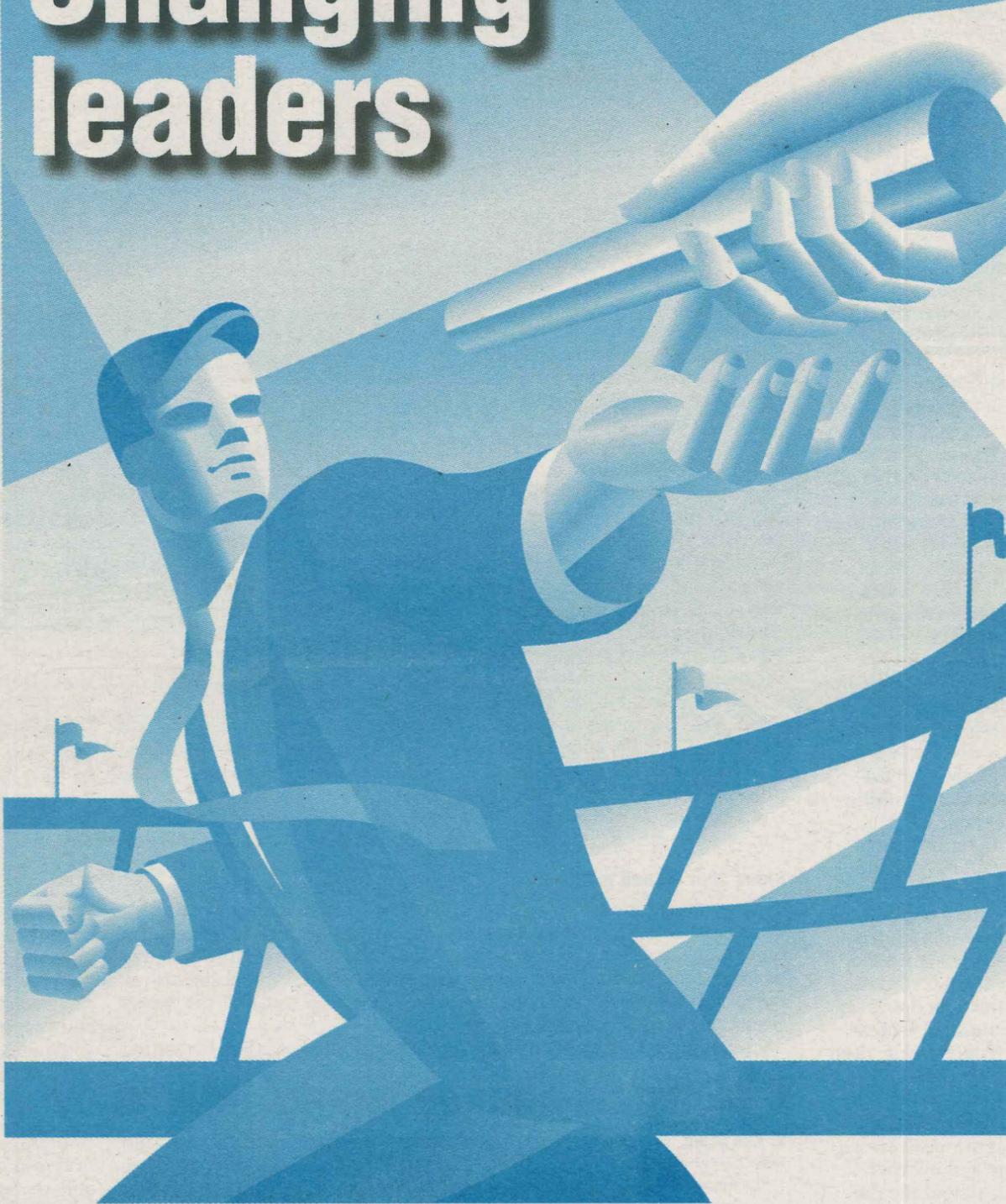
"For years he has said that he won't retire until God retires him," Ross said. "One of these crusades will be his last."

Art Bailey has been setting up massive crusades for Graham for 20 years.

"Our internal joke is that we've been doing the last crusade for 10 years," he said.

□ See *The end?* ... *Page 7*

**Changing leaders**



*Author: Many churches aren't thinking ahead*

By Greg Warner  
Associated Baptist Press

**Columbus, Ohio (ABP)**—As several high-profile pastors recently announced plans to retire, their departures from the pulpit are highlighting the leadership transition challenge facing churches both large and small.

Planning for a successor is the most urgent strategic issue facing most churches, according to Russell Crabtree, co-author of "The Elephant in the Boardroom: Speaking the Unspoken about Pastoral Transitions."

But almost no churches are facing up to this issue, said Crabtree, an organizational consultant based in Columbus, Ohio.

"You know it must be an emotional block, because it makes no

sense," said Crabtree. If anything is certain, it's that a pastor won't be around forever, he said. "Of all folks who should know that we are mortal ..."

Crabtree calls pastoral change the most certain strategic event that will take place in any church, "and it is the one that people talk about least."

"Most churches don't function strategically," he added, "but even those that do, many don't have a transition plan."

Leadership transition is a subject any size church should honestly explore for the continued health of the congregation, Crabtree said.

"Really, the day that you need to begin thinking about that is the day you arrive," he said.

"You want to think strategically about where you believe God's calling this church to go and be," he added. "And if you are following the leadership of Jesus, then I think you think beyond yourself and your own leadership."

Recently, three well-known pastors announced plans to retire from the pulpits of their large churches.

Jerry Vines announced May 1 he will retire next February as pastor of the 28,000-member First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Fla.

First Baptist Church of Orlando announced the same day that David Uth, pastor of First Baptist in West Monroe, La., will be recommended as co-pastor, eventually to succeed Jim Henry, who is retiring.

□ See *Author: Few churches ... Page 9*

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, July 13

# Partner guidelines

## CBF participants approve funding plan for ministry partners

### CBF elects female, African-American to top offices

**Grapevine, Texas—**Members of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship elected a female pastor from San Francisco and an African-American retired pastor and denominational leader to the organization's top offices.

General Assembly participants elected Joy Yee, pastor of New Covenant Baptist Church in San Francisco, as moderator and Emmanuel McCall, retired pastor of Christian Fellowship Baptist Church in Atlanta, as moderator-elect.

McCall, who served 25 years with the Baptist Home Mission Board prior to his pastorate at Christian Fellowship, is vice president of the Baptist World Alliance.

McCall also is a former faculty member at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, where he established the black church studies program.

In recent years, McCall has distanced himself from current Southern Baptist Convention leaders, even apologizing to the CBF Coordinating Council for Southern Seminary President Al Mohler being given an award that bears McCall's name.

"You should know that my loyalty is here and not there," McCall told the CBF Coordinating Council last year.

Based on reporting by Associated Baptist Press and Baptist Press

By Ken Camp and Greg Warner  
Texas Baptist Standard and ABP

**Grapevine, Texas (ABP)—**The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship affirmed a long-awaited proposal for how the moderate group relates to its "partner" institutions and organizations—one of several key actions taken during the Fellowship's annual general assembly June 29-July 2 in Grapevine, Texas.

Participants also approved revisions to CBF's constitution and bylaws, but only after some unexpected debate. A budget of \$21.6 million was adopted for the next 12 months and a new offering for religious liberty and human rights brought in about \$45,000.

The assembly—which drew 2,823 registered participants and about 400 others—overwhelmingly affirmed the report from a committee studying CBF's "partner" relationships, despite concern the plan favors the strongest partners and harms the most vulnerable.

"We've adopted what seems to be a survival-of-the-fittest mentality," said David Hinson, pastor of First Baptist Church of Frankfort, in an interview after the vote July 1.

Rather than owning its own agencies and institutions, CBF channels local church and individual contributions to support the ministry of more than 100 organizations, including 14 theological schools.

Charles Cantrell of Mountain View, Mo., chairman of the study committee, said the approved guidelines are "only the beginning of a process" that will include changes and flexibility, as well as input from partners and others.

### Plans "not etched in stone"

Committee member Michael Duncan, pastor of Eminence Baptist Church, stressed that if the assembly rejected the recommended guidelines, CBF would be left without any clear criteria for determining partner relationships. "It's not etched in

## CBF bylaw change sparks debate over omitted reference to Jesus

By Ken Camp  
Texas Baptist Standard

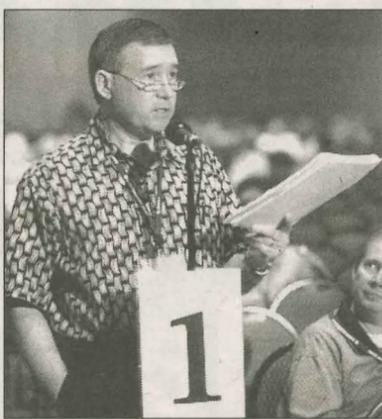
**Grapevine, Texas (ABP)—**The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship approved revisions to its constitution and bylaws July 1, declaring that CBF's purpose is "to serve Christians and churches as they discover and fulfill their God-given mission."

Yet it was not the additional wording, but an omission that sparked debate as participants turned aside a move to keep a commitment to Jesus Christ and evangelism explicit in the purpose statement.

The previous statement said, in part, the Fellowship's purpose is "to bring together Baptists who desire to call out God's gifts in each person in order that the gospel of Jesus Christ will be spread throughout the world in glad obedience to the Great Commission."

Two Kentucky Baptist pastors led the effort to maintain the earlier language.

Jay Robison, pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in Lexington, moved



**FLOOR DEBATE.** Charles Yarbrough of Dallas speaks against proposed guidelines for how the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship relates to ministry partners. Despite his concern that "we're on the verge of going the wrong way in theological education," CBF participants overwhelmingly approved the guidelines. (Photo by Mark Sandlin)

stone," Duncan said. "This is a living document."

The new plan caps funding for partners at 25 percent of an organization's previous year's receipts, and it establishes a three-tiered approach to relationships with theological schools—identity partners, leadership partners and global partners.

Theological schools in all three categories will be eligible for scholarships, collaborative funding and non-monetary resources. But only identity partners will be eligible for ongoing institutional funding. No more than six of the 14 theological education partner schools can be designated as identity partners, but the report does not identify them.

"Criteria for defining of these institutions will include factors such as enrollment, the number of graduates in congregational ministry, level of support for CBF, geographic location, willingness to self-identify as a CBF-affiliated school and historical connection to CBF," the report stated.

Critics claimed that by setting

up loyalty to the CBF as a criterion for institutional funding, the Fellowship was establishing the same kind of conformity moderates had criticized in the Southern Baptist Convention.

"We're on the verge of going the wrong way in theological education," said Charles Yarbrough of Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas. "Only those who do what we want done and say what we want said get funding."

CBF has partnerships with four free-standing seminaries—including Baptist Seminary of Kentucky—and six schools of theology or divinity schools associated with Baptist universities or schools with Baptist roots. CBF also partners with three Baptist studies programs at non-Baptist schools and one theological university—Baptist University of the Americas in San Antonio.

Prior to the meeting, Baptist Seminary of Kentucky President Greg Earwood said he anticipates the school will be named a leadership partner since its only funding from CBF is three scholarships totaling \$15,000.

In other business, participants approved a \$16.47 million operating budget for 2005-06 and total expenditures of \$21.58 million which includes more than \$5.1 million in designated gifts, mostly for missions. During the closing session, 19 new CBF missionaries were commissioned, including five career field personnel.

Participants donated \$45,000 to a new annual offering for religious liberty and human rights, named for Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter, who are CBF supporters.

In a video message played for participants, the former president noted, "My concept of human rights has grown to include not only the right to live in peace, but also the right to adequate health care, shelter, food and economic opportunity. Your involvement will be vital to transform-

ing systems, policies and practices that prevent religious liberty among some of the most neglected people of the world."

"As you know, religious liberty and human rights issues are at the center of our hearts and work," Mrs. Carter added. "We continue to advocate for those who do not have the right to vote, who cannot worship as they please, or who dare not act as their conscience leads."

### "We are world Baptists"

Hardy Clemons of Greenville, S.C., vice chairman of CBF's Baptist World Alliance task force, reported on the growing relationship between the Fellowship and the global Baptist umbrella group—a tie that contributed to the SBC's move to withdraw its membership and funding from BWA.

"We are world Baptists who believe in unity in diversity rather than coerced conformity," Clemons said. "When others withdraw, we engage. When others defund, we fund. When others back up, we step up."

In the closing sermon, CBF Coordinator Daniel Vestal told CBF members global poverty is "the moral issue of our day," and how Christians respond is "the acid test of our faith."

Vestal noted 1 billion people live on less than \$1 a day each and 8 million people die each year "because they are too poor to stay alive."

"Our government must make changes in policy that give a greater priority to poor people," he said. "Our churches must make changes in practice and programs so that more of our money and time is going to the poor, and less to ourselves."

"Our families must make some changes in spending habits, in what we do with leisure and holidays and possessions. And, most important of all, each of us as individuals must make changes in our lifestyle, in our giving and in our attitudes."

committee failed. DeFoor then introduced another motion referring only the article about the organization's purpose back to committee.

"We need to make explicit our commitment to Christ and make explicit our commitment to evangelism," he said. The motion failed.

SBC leaders immediately picked up on the language change in the CBF document. "My central concern is what this means about the true nature of the CBF and its commitment to the gospel of Jesus Christ," Al Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, told Baptist Press. Mohler was a member of the committee that revised the SBC's Baptist Faith and Message.

Russell Moore, theology dean at Southern and a frequent critic of CBF, told Baptist Press: "This represents the eclipse of Christ in the moderate Baptist movement. For years, CBF leaders and divinity schools have rejected the necessity of faith in Christ for salvation. ...

Sadly, this is what happens when a group seeks unity around what they do not believe."

CBF Moderator Bob Setzer said such criticism is misdirected. "Jesus is present in CBF, and anybody who reads that mission statement otherwise is not being fair to (Jesus) or us," said Setzer, pastor of First Baptist Church of Christ in Macon, Ga. "It's hard to believe that a movement whose mission statement is 'being the presence of Christ' isn't committed to Jesus. We are."

Several CBF members later said the discussion and action left the wrong impression about CBF.

"No one who voted to approve the document was voting to not have a commitment to Jesus Christ and evangelism," said Carolyn Anderson, coordinator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Florida. "We voted to approve the documents knowing that we do have a commitment to Jesus Christ and evangelism already stated in our values document."

## Eddyville's White named Kentucky MSC Missionary of the Year

By Jonathan Johnston  
Kentucky Baptist Convention

**Eddyville**—Jerrell White of Eddyville has been selected as the Kentucky Baptist Convention's 2005 Mission Service Corps Missionary of the Year.

White encourages students and staff at the Earl C. Clements Job Corps Academy in Morganfield where he has served since July 1999.

Each year, White helps 1,300 young people from various parts of the United States earn their general education degrees and acquire job skills through training.

He also offers a Tuesday night Bible study and a chapel program on Thursdays. Through White's ministry, each year more than 150 young people have made commitments to follow Jesus Christ.

"Jerrell has been so effective at the job corps because he truly loves the students and knows that Christ can make a difference in their lives, no matter what their background or previous experience has been," said Eric Allen, state missions director for the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

"Jerrell may be retired, but he doesn't know the meaning of the words 'slow down,'" Allen continued. "He is always busy giving of himself so that others may know Jesus in the same way he does."

Mission Service Corps is a program of the Southern Baptist Convention in which adults serve a minimum of 20 hours per week for four months or longer in a variety of ministries. The missionaries provide their own financial support in an assigned ministry. Assignment are made through the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board.

Currently, there are 150 Kentucky connected MSC missionaries. This includes missionaries serving in Kentucky as well as missionaries from Kentucky serving outside the commonwealth.

"It's a great honor to be selected," White said. "It's a greater honor to serve our Lord as a Mission Service Corps missionary."

White said he is especially thankful for fellow Mission Service Corps missionaries Harrell Riley and Eddie Henson who serve with him.

White will now be Kentucky's nominee for NAMB's national MSC Missionary of the Year, which will be determined this fall in Atlanta.

Nominees are selected based on criteria such as unusual commitment to serving God and demonstration of "going the second mile."

## Serving soldiers

*BG volunteers travel to Germany to help strengthen families*

By Ken Walker  
State Correspondent

**Bowling Green**—A church team from Bowling Green traveled to Germany recently to help improve the marriages of couples who never will visit their church.

But Pastor Rod Edmondson said the members of Crossland Community Church got a great deal from the congregation's first mission trip.

"It gave them an opportunity to understand there's a great need outside our church and community," Edmondson said of the year-old church.

The spring trip, he said, gave members "an Acts 1:8 understanding of missions, that this is a responsibility Christ has given us."

Eight members traveled to Kitzingen to conduct a marriage and family enrichment weekend at Kitzingen/Wuerzburg Baptist Church for Army soldiers and spouses.

A small city 90 minutes southeast of Frankfurt, Kitzingen is located near five military bases. Composed primarily of military families, the church has an average Sunday attendance of 75.

Approximately 35 people attended the event. Most of the soldiers had just returned from a year in Iraq.

Edmondson and his wife, Cheryl, led the seminar while other members cared for about 20 children.

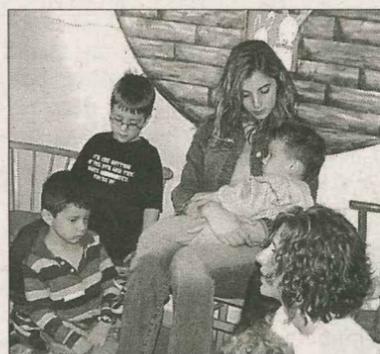
On Friday night and Saturday, Edmondson reviewed the purpose of marriage, as well as its problems, provision, power and permanence. He led a parenting seminar for a crowd of 100 on Sunday morning.

### Soldiers & separation

Military couples face special pressures, including the strains of separation and readjustments when a spouse returns from field duty, Edmondson said.

In a troubled marriage, the reunion makes conditions even tougher, he added.

The pastor, who also does counseling and marriage enrichment programs through his Mustard Seed Ministry in Bowling Green, said the seminar helped at least two marriages avoid divorce.



**CHILD CARE** Jordan Stivers (in chair) and Natalia Estes care for children whose parents are in the workshop. This was Stivers' second overseas mission trip. "It changes you in a good way."

"I didn't hear directly, but other couples came to me and said, 'This couple was ready to break up,'" Edmondson said. "At least this gave them the encouragement to keep trying."

Edmondson said he also heard numerous comments from people in happy homes who said the sessions enhanced their marriage.

Edmondson stressed that men's greatest need in marriage is respect and a women's greatest need is love, and how couples can achieve that.

"A lot of people didn't realize this," the pastor said.

This was the second mission trip for Jordan Stivers, a 17-year-old senior at Greenwood High School. She went to Jamaica last year with



**STORY TIME** Alisa Sutman reads a story to children whose parents are attending the marriage workshop.

the youth group from Rich Pond Baptist Church.

In addition to a pleasant experience working with children, Stivers gleaned spiritual insights from the visit, particularly the need for a spiritual revival in Germany.

Many residents, particularly young people, treat religion as something outdated, she said.

### German Baptists "struggling"

Stivers, who hopes to one day return to Germany, said every Kentucky Baptist who hasn't been on a mission trip should consider going.

"It changes you in a good way," said Stivers, who plans to major in international relations in college. "I'm more aware of things that go on in other countries. You can get caught up in the busyness of life here."

Shirley Stuart, a mother of three and grandmother of six, enjoyed taking care of children during the seminar.

She also saw the work needed to establish a Baptist church overseas, where the congregation changes constantly because of military deployments and transfers.

"They've been there 40 years and are still renting a space," Stuart said. "They're struggling."

Crossland Community got involved in the trip through the Kentucky Baptist Convention's partnership with the International Baptist Convention in Europe.

While attending a church planting conference at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville last fall, Edmondson learned the IBC had requested a mission team conduct a marriage conference.

The convention has asked Crossland to consider returning next year to lead a similar session for pastors throughout Europe.

Whatever someone does, they can do for God, Edmondson said, pointing to the wide age range of volunteers on the trip.

"That was exactly what they needed," Edmondson said of the children members cared for during the conference. "They needed a human touch and people who spoke their (emotional) language."

### MARRIAGE SEMINAR

Ron Edmondson leads a marriage workshop for soldiers, many of whom recently had returned from Iraq. The group is considering a similar mission trip next year to conduct a workshop for ministers and their families from throughout Europe.

## WESTERN RECORDER

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

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## Our children's future begins with us

By Bill Glass

Dallas (BP)—Words matter.

Words can bless or bleed.

Words spoken are very hard to take back.

I've heard parents say almost flippanantly, "You're stupid."

Or, "Don't be so dumb."

Or, "You're so irritating."

Some parents believe these words will make the child shape up and fly right. It's like a challenge, with the parent saying, "Prove me wrong." All they do is injure the self-image of the child.

What a dad whispers in a child's ear sounds like a scream, and the message can heal or wound. A parent's voice is a megaphone straight to the heart of the child.

My own son, Bobby, said to me, "Remember when you yelled at me?"

I don't remember it that way. I know I didn't yell, I only said something very quietly and calmly—yet in his mind, that was screaming in his ear.

I was always very careful never to make negative statements to my children. Even since they've been adults, I've noticed they are very anxious to hear only positive words from me. So I've made an art form of saying things that lift them up, not tear them down. They are now in middle age, and they still want—and need—a blessing from their father.

Words we heard as children can haunt us into adulthood. Words that blessed us as children can accompany us into old age, long after the person who spoke them into our lives has died.

The Book of John opens by telling us, "In the beginning was the Word." God spoke the world into being. Creation was accomplished through the spoken word of God. And we can speak life into the souls and hearts of our children.

Words are how we are to begin blessing our children, as my own father demonstrated. He died at the age of 45. I was 14. I still remember his presence, his words, his touch,

his blessing.

Parents can inspire or destroy dreams in a single sentence. Children don't need parents to act like coaches, because many coaches praise to squeeze just a little more out of the athlete. This might work in sports, but not at home.

Children need a parent, especially a father, who speaks the words of love, hope and belonging into their lives. Even if you don't know how, or if this sounds strange to you, your children need it. And you can do it.

In fact, you must do it.

The future of your children, and your children's children, and even their children depends upon it.

Numbers 14:18 declares: "God does not leave the guilty unpunished, He punishes the children for the sins of the fathers to the third and fourth generations."

What happens to our children? Our children's children? Their children and the generations to follow? It can begin with us.

*Bill Glass, a former All-Pro NFL football player, is the founder of Champions for Life, which conducts citywide crusades, prison ministry events and youth outreach*

## FIRST PERSON

## 'Will we ever learn?'

The Southern Baptist Convention always produces familiar "slogans" and time-honored declarations of piety. This recent meeting was no different than those of past decades.

Of interest this year was the tentative approach to the Woman's Missionary Union quagmire. The ladies have refused to be owned, controlled or manipulated by the present leadership in Nashville. After causing the capitulation of all other entities, this represents a thorny and ongoing problem for dominance.

With the surrender of New Orleans Seminary, WMU is the last hurdle to be circumvented. And yet there are no strident actions in place to force the "matrons of missions" to bow to the whims of

political clout. They are, in fact, a separate entity and cannot be dominated by dogma and decree. The ladies cannot be enticed to give away their independence.

Roy Fish, speaking to the Pastors' Conference, said Southern Baptists "seem to be losing a sizable portion of our evangelistic passion." This is not news. For the last 25 years, Baptists have announced great programs and watched them wither in the heat generated by the "course adjustment" tactics used to align the convention with the narrowly defined mandates of perceived doctrine.

Evidently, the next "push" will be a million baptisms. The first thrust of this intent took place in Nashville with balloons flying and hands waving. This hype will last only until some more urgent problem, like

the WMU for instance, arises. Then the cannons of Christology will be moved from the front line and silenced while the commanders seek a way to usurp the feisty WMU by beginning a "new" program of missions that includes only those women who know their place.

And then, depending on the time needed for such battle, we will be reminded that we have, once again, lost our zeal for evangelism. Will we ever learn?

*Edward Clark  
Danville*

## What are you thinking?

The Western Recorder considers letters on any subject for publication, provided they don't make a personal attack. The maximum length for a letter is 300 words. Submit by mail, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253; fax, (502) 244-6474; or e-mail, wesrec@earthlink.net.

## New work growing in Batalha, Brazil

A new work was launched in Batalha, Piaui, Brazil, 15 months prior to the arrival of a Kentucky partnership missions team June 7. It was obvious that God was at work well in advance to prepare the place, the people and the Kentucky team for the way in which He would work during the team's visit.

Batalha is a quiet town of 27,000 people. Batalha Baptist Mission is one of 10 mission churches started since 2003 when a goal was set to launch 30 churches in the largest cities where there was no Baptist work.

The church has wonderful potential to become a powerful force for the gospel in the region.

Pastor Marcos Ribeiro is an inspirational leader. In 15 months, the mission has established a preschool and built relationships with the mayor and the secretary of education, who has become a member.

When team members visited the schools, most of the students knew Pastor Marcos. His wife, Joselia, is

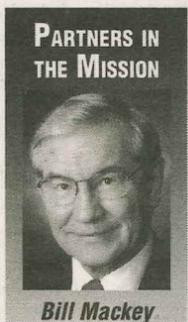
outgoing and active in the community and church.

John Shultz, pastor of New Bethel Baptist Church in Benton, led the partnership team. Alan Taylor, guitarist and vocalist, and two college students from New Bethel, Luke Thomas and David Riley, assisted him.

The interpreters were equally talented and effective. Twenty evangelistic home visits were made by appointment to 87 people, and 43 of them prayed to receive Jesus Christ. In many cases, Pastor Marcos had made previous contacts. In one home, neighbors gathered and 12 people prayed to receive Jesus Christ.

During visits to six schools, about 150 students indicated by raised hands that they had sincerely prayed to invite Jesus Christ into their lives. An outreach Valentine banquet attracted more than 100 people who purchased tickets.

New converts will participate in a four-week course for new believers



Bill Mackey

## STEWARDSHIP

## Are you preparing adequately for 'new' retirement?

By Don Spencer

A century ago, retirement was virtually unknown to most folks. Individuals generally continued to work until death. Of course, very few lived to their 70s and 80s.

Fifty years ago, retirement was becoming a regular part of American culture, but it generally was a relatively short period of years marked by reduced activity and decreased financial need.

Modern retirement has different characteristics from earlier retirements. Your planning for retirement should reflect these changes. Here are six ways your retirement will differ from previous generations:

■ Many retirees will live a long and active life in retirement that might be as much as a third of their total life span.

■ Retirement will be divided into several phases: A. Retirement earnings phase with continued work. B. Active "go-go" phase marked by pursuit of the "good life." C. Passive "slow-go" phase. D. Final phases characterized by failing health.

■ The cost of one's retirement lifestyle will be similar to the cost of pre-retirement lifestyle. Increased activity, added interests and new technologies mean the cost of living in retirement will be much higher in proportion to one's working years than was true in the past. With longer life expectancy, increased medical costs will be an increasingly important factor.

■ Inflation will increase the need for income by two or three times during retirement.

■ Taxes, estate planning and insurance have become vital parts of the retirement planning process. Recent changes in tax laws increase the need for awareness of these issues as you plan for retirement. A few years ago, long-term care insurance was virtually unheard of for most people. Now, many have purchased or are considering the need for long-term care insurance.

■ More people are retiring early. This compounds all the factors listed above—longer retirement, increased cost, more impact by inflation, etc.

You likely have seen evidence of these changes in our society. Have you applied these factors to your own retirement planning? Too many people are barely saving enough for the old retirement. Has your retirement planning factored in the changes? Are you saving enough for the new retirement?

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



## Good manners play important role in successful marriages

**Q: I have noticed many young people lack good manners. But if you look at many married couples, they also act as if they were never taught good manners or believe marriage is a license to practice bad manners. Is this a widespread problem in marriages today?**

As you have observed, poor manners are a problem in many marriages. Good manners are taught in order to show respect and display acceptable social norms. Respectful behavior in a marriage is important. One resource I use

in my practice is Jed Baker's "Social Skills Picture Book." It provides photographic role-plays for developing social skills. Consider these skills for your marriage:

**Listening position.** Make eye contact. Keep hands and feet still. Do not talk while your spouse is talking.

**Greetings.** It is friendly and polite to say "hello" when you see your spouse. In the morning, say, "Good morning." When you walk by your spouse, say, "Hi." When your spouse is leaving, say "Bye" or "See you later."

**Sharing.** Think about reasons to share (such as wanting to make your spouse happy). Offer to share with him or her. (This could be time, information or intimacy.) If your spouse asks you to share something, then share.

**Keeping calm.** If you get upset with your spouse, stop and count to 10. Take three deep breaths. Do something fun to feel better. Tell your spouse how you are feeling.

**Showing understanding for your spouse's feelings.** Look for signs that your spouse is sad, angry or needs help. Ask, "Are you alright?" Ask, "What happened?" Ask if you can help. If your spouse says yes, then do something helpful.

These are some of the basic social skills needed at an early age that should continue to be honed throughout our relationships. Coaches often remind players of the basics. Review the basics for your marriage relationship and see how your skills rate. If you are not doing the basics, make a change now. If you do practice good social skills in your marriage, great job!—Valerie Vincent

### Q: How can I help my child's baptism be meaningful?

We celebrate birthdays. We celebrate graduations and other achievements. Consider the following ways to help make your child's baptism special and memorable:

**Prepare properly.** Have a conversation with your pastor or children's minister about the meaning of baptism.

**Include family.** Invite family members to be present and ask them to sit together in the service. Ask the pastor to recognize family members by having them stand as part of the baptism.

**Have a party.** Plan a luncheon or open house after the baptism. Invite friends from school and other relationship circles outside church. Take a moment during the party to express thanks and to highlight the importance of what has happened. Be sure to include Sunday school teachers and others who played a part in helping your child choose to follow Christ.

**Take a picture.** Ask the pastor to pose with your child for a keepsake snapshot. Consider getting pictures of others who influenced your child for Christ. You might even want to arrange to videotape the service. (Be sure that taping and photography are done discreetly and do not distract from the reverence of the occasion.)

**Write a memoir.** While the memories are still fresh, help your child make a few notes about his or her baptism. What was the weather like? Did family members or friends attend? Were you scared? Who helped you get ready? What are some other things that happened in the service?

**Give a gift.** Visit a Christian bookstore and find a special CD, DVD, Bible or other appropriate gift. Make sure your child also receives a certificate of baptism. If your church does not provide this, print one yourself.—David Garrard

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## Baptist editors reflect on 'Everyone Can'

"Everyone Can," Southern Baptists' effort to baptize 1 million converts in 12 months, was the major focus of the recent Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Nashville. It also was the primary topic in most state Baptist newspaper editorials after the annual meeting.

While several editors also tackled such issues as the SBC dropping its Disney boycott and adopting a resolution urging parents to "investigate" public school curricula, SBC President Bobby Welch's evangelistic emphasis garnered the most attention. Reflections by Baptist editors across the denomination include:

**Bob Terry, Alabama Baptist:** If one ever doubted the influence of the president of the Southern Baptist Convention on the affairs of the national body, one has only to look at the impact of Bobby Welch to see the power of this office.

From the moment Welch was elected SBC president in 2004 to the closing gavel of the 2005 annual meeting, ... (Welch) seized the agenda for Southern Baptists. Going into his second term as president, he shows no sign of letting up. Welch's passion is evangelism and he is using every available tool to make evangelism the passion of all Southern Baptists.

The theme of this year's convention—"Everyone Can"—reflected that commitment and emphasized that every Southern Baptist can be used of God to witness and win someone to faith in Jesus Christ during the coming church year.

Welch's personal goal of seeing 1 million people baptized into membership by a Southern Baptist-related church during the 2005-2006 church year has become the most recognized goal of the national convention.

This did not happen because of detailed planning or careful study. It happened because of the powerful personality of the SBC president.

**Lonnie Wilkey, Tennessee Baptist and Reflector:** In college or high school football lingo, we had a pep rally (at the recent SBC) and now it is time to play the game. ... The 11,600-plus messengers and numerous other visitors who attended were challenged by President Bobby Welch over and over again, as well as other program leaders, to boldly share their faith.

Welch's "Everyone Can!" challenge to witness, win, and baptize 1 million people from Oct. 1 of this year through Sept. 30 of 2006 is a bold, seemingly impossible goal.

After all, Southern Baptist churches last year baptized 398,283 people. How can we increase by 601,717 to reach 1 million in just a year? While it may be humanly impossible, it is well within reach if we allow God and the Holy Spirit to take control. ...

With all the emphasis on evangelism (where it should be), the business seemed secondary this year. Southern Baptists passed the traditional resolutions covering the usual topics. Noteworthy was the call to end the Disney boycott.

The resolution on educating children was fair and basically left the decision up to parents to decide what is best for their children. The resolution affirmed both home schools and private schools as well as commending teachers and students who seek to be a light for Christ in the public school arena. ...

As Southern Baptists return home and get back to their daily grind, my prayer is they will take the "Everyone Can!" challenge seriously. The pep rally is over. The game is at hand.

**John Yeats, Oklahoma Baptist Messenger:** In recent days, people have asked powerful questions about what's on the horizon for Southern Baptists. Some are worrying and wringing their hands with fear that the SBC will deteriorate into the status quo and will eventually be relegated to a denominational bone yard, a bone yard filled with once great and glorious Christian groups who settled for personal pleasure and theological accommodation instead of passionately pursuing lost souls for Christ. ...

However, I am more convinced than ever we are on the precipice of a new era, a new day, a new passion for the souls of men and women in our nation and our

world. The Southern Baptist Convention is not a huge organization going nowhere. Our SBC president, Bobby Welch, has challenged Southern Baptists to be fully engaged in doing everything everyone can to reach the lost with everything we have, now! ...

President Bush has his "no child left behind" education initiative, and Southern Baptists need a "no church without baptisms" evangelism initiative.

**Charlie Warren, Arkansas Baptist News:** It was a great convention, presided over by a great leader. It was a convention far more focused on evangelism than controversial issues or disagreements.

The secular press, in its search for controversy, latched onto resolutions, primarily the one urging parents to monitor schools to assure they are not promoting homosexuality as a "morally legitimate" lifestyle. But that resolution is not at all controversial for Southern Baptists.

The world calls homosexuality an alternative lifestyle. The Bible calls it sin. Baptists tend to stick with the Bible.

I am pleased that the resolution stopped short of asking Baptists to pull their children from public schools. I also appreciated the amendment adding support for teachers, parents and students who choose to remain as "light" in public schools. ...

Throughout the convention itself, President Bobby Welch challenged messengers with his "Everyone Can" emphasis on evangelism. He also presided with grace, fairness and humor, putting everyone at ease. I like the guy. He's the real deal. His enthusiasm is contagious. If he can't lead us to win and baptize a million people this year, it won't be because he didn't put his whole heart into it. It will be because we drop the ball.

**Don Kirkland, South Carolina Baptist Courier:** It is too soon, of course, to know just what impact the recent meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville will have on the tenor of denominational life in general, and what influence convention President Bobby Welch will have on the SBC's commitment to evangelism in the years ahead.

It does seem, however, that our convention is in a process of change both for its own good and for the spiritual well-being of our nation and world. ...

Evangelism can, should and must become the common denominator that creates more harmony among Southern Baptists than we have known for years. ...

To keep our concentration on what is most important for the cause of Christ will require discipline, dedication and a lot of determination. Not all Southern Baptists will be willing to do this, but, to borrow from Bobby Welch, "Everyone can."

**Tony Cartledge, North Carolina Biblical Recorder:** As messengers to the 2005 Southern Baptist Convention entered the Gaylord Entertainment Center in Nashville, they passed by a rather unassuming display inviting them to the 2006 convention, which will be held next June 13-14 in Greensboro, N.C. ...

After years of declining attendance, meeting planners recognized that the SBC, no longer drawing large numbers to put up their spiritual dukes in denominational conflict, could easily fit into smaller markets. This opened a number of possible sites in areas where Southern Baptists are concentrated. ... When the SBC comes to Greensboro next year, it will be the first time in 90 years that the convention has been held in North Carolina. ...

With a significant portion of Southern Baptists feeling that they have been excluded from the tent of full participation, SBC meetings are much smaller and calmer these days, with plenty of preaching and annual reports featuring impressive videos, but little to decide that isn't cut and dried. That is unlikely to change in Greensboro.

To stir up a little excitement, I suggest that we introduce fellow Baptists to a fine Tar Heel tradition by staging a big Eastern-style vs. Western-style barbecue cook-off in the coliseum parking lot, and really spice up the meeting. We'll just have to explain that "Western" means west of the Cape Fear, not the Mississippi.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

## SBC, European leaders consider 'like-minded' international group

Warsaw, Poland (ABP)—Twelve conservative Baptists from Europe met with several Southern Baptist leaders July 1-2 in Warsaw, Poland, in what one participant said would be a precursor to a new international organization of "like-minded" Baptists.

The participants said their intent was not to criticize the Baptist World Alliance, the 100-year-old organization that unites 210 Baptist bodies worldwide.

But the Warsaw meeting was an outgrowth of dissatisfaction among Southern Baptists and other conservatives who claimed BWA has not distanced itself from perceived "liberal" influences. The Southern Baptist Convention withdrew from BWA last year, in part because BWA accepted the moderate Cooperative Baptist Fellowship into membership.

The 12 European Baptist participants came from six countries—Bulgaria, Germany, Hungary, Moldova, Poland and Romania. The meeting reportedly was initiated by Paul Negrut, a leading conservative pastor in Romania.

Among Southern Baptist participants were four members of the SBC committee that recommended withdrawing from BWA: Morris Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee; Paige Patterson, president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary; retired Houston judge Paul Pressler; and Jerry Rankin, president of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board.

"This meeting may prove in time to have been the inaugural meeting of a network that shall extend to every corner of the earth, creating a close fellowship among like-minded conservative Christians," Chapman said.

He predicted Southern Baptists will hold other "exploratory gatherings" around the world.

Denton Lotz, general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, said earlier that such a movement would be "a slap in the face to Baptists in the rest of the world," particularly since the meeting was held the same month as the 100th anniversary meeting of BWA July 27-31.

## BWA meeting to go on despite bombings

Birmingham, England—Worldwide Baptists will continue with plans to meet July 27-31 in England, despite the "horror" caused by deadly bombings that struck London July 7.

British Baptists, who will play host to the Baptist World Congress in Birmingham later this month, voiced their desire "to stand alongside all those who are the victims of such brutality," but confirmed plans for the meeting of Baptists worldwide will go on.

"When we gather in Birmingham, it will give us an opportunity to pray together for our broken world and to show solidarity with all who suffer," David Coffey, general secretary of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, said in a statement issued hours after the attacks.

Explosions on three subway trains and one bus in London killed more than 50 people and injured as many as 700 others, according to initial reports.

Between 10,000 to 15,000 Baptists from around the world are expected in Birmingham—105 miles northwest of London—for the centenary meeting of the Baptist World Congress, marking the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Baptist World Alliance, a fellowship of 210 Baptist unions. The BWA was formed in London in 1905.

"This is a time when we are called to answer the evil of violence

with an unswerving commitment to the ways that make for peace and justice," Coffey said. "We join our Christian hope with all who seek the common good at this critical time."

Other British church leaders also urged prayer for the bombing victims, and Muslim leaders condemned the violence as a desecration of the Islamic faith.

Responsibility for the attack was claimed by a group calling itself the Secret Organization Group of al-Qaida in Europe.

The leader of the Church of England, Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams, was meeting with

Muslim leaders in Yorkshire when the bombings hit London's morning rush hour.

"We were all one in our condemnation of this evil and in our shared sense of care and compassion for those affected in whatever way," he said. "Such solidarity and common purpose is vital for us all at this time of pain and sorrow and anger."

In Scotland, where G-8 leaders had gathered for their annual summit, leaders of the Church of Scotland urged the United Kingdom to "strengthen and uphold what terrorism seeks to destroy."

Based on reporting by Associated Baptist Press and Religion News Service

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## The end? Billy Graham's crusade staff not even sure

Continued from page 1

Graham, who will turn 87 this year, has long been struggling with the challenges of age. Last year he broke his hip twice. He suffers from Parkinson's and prostate cancer and has undergone three surgeries for hydrocephalus, or water on the brain.

Despite this, he appeared vibrant and relaxed in the pulpit. He welcomed former President Bill Clinton and Senator Hillary Clinton and New York Mayor Bloomberg on Saturday night, cracking jokes about Bill Clinton's future career as an evangelist. "It's hard for me to say president and senator because I've known them as Bill and Hillary for so long," Graham said.

Graham delivered a sermon on each of three days, despite heat that became downright punishing, touching on his trademark themes of personal salvation and the need to be born again.

His audience in New York, estimated at 242,000 over three days, gave him a standing ovation at every appearance. The crowd was representative of a culturally diverse New York and sermons were translated into 20 languages. The venue was Flushing Meadows Park, in the heart of a Queens neighborhood where more than 100 languages are spoken. During his messages every night Graham said he was thankful for the multi-cultural crowd and asked audience members to try to make a friend of someone with a different ethnic background.

New York historically has turned out record crowds for Graham. In 1991, more than a quarter of a million people turned up in Central Park to hear him preach, his largest single audience in North America. Art Bailey, who organized that event, thought at the time it was a goodbye to the Big Apple. But Graham returned in force this summer, and spoke about returning yet again in the future.

"There are no plans for that," Bailey said. "But God is sovereign. There were no plans to extend the 1957 crusade."

Graham's 1957 crusade in New York was slated to last six weeks at Madison Square Garden but was eventually extended three times. During the 96 nights of that marathon summer Graham preached to more than two million people, catalogued more than 50,000 decisions for Christ and lost more than 20 pounds.

Whether Sunday in Flushing Meadows was Graham's last crusade or not, the crowd listened to his words with particular attention. He returned to a topic that has been a favorite over the years—the end of the world.

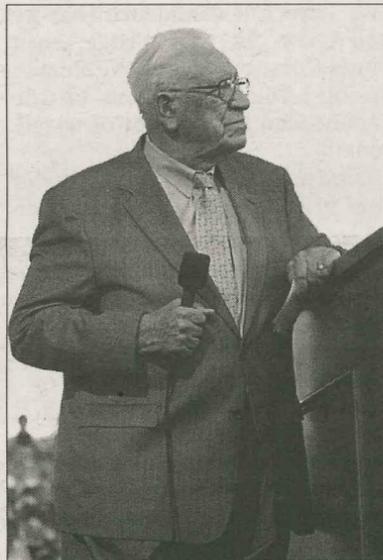
### Mixing humor & urgency

"You've come to this crusade expecting to live many more years," Graham said. "This may be the last opportunity for you. This is the moment."

That message might go a long way in explaining his 10 years of goodbyes. For Graham, every crusade is the last crusade. Preparing for the end of the world has been a part of his message since his earli-



**LONG-DISTANCE WORSHIPPERS** Jennifer Garrison and Elizabeth McClure traveled from Kansas City, Mo., to take part in the New York crusade in Flushing Meadows. An estimated 242,000 people attended the three-day event. (RNS photos by Michael Falco)



**LONGTIME COMPANIONS** Soloist George Beverly Shea (left), 96, and music director Cliff Barrows (right), 82, joined Billy Graham (center), 87, during the crusade. Graham's last New York crusade was in 1991.

est sermons under the shadow of the Cold War. In 1950 he told the Georgia legislature that that he never expected his young daughters to reach high school.

On this theme, he managed to work in a joke about his failing health. "If I die right now—and that's a possibility—I'd go straight to heaven and see Jesus," he said.

William Martin was in the audience, working on an additional four chapters of his Graham biography, "A Prophet with Honor," which first came out in 1991. He has thought his work was through several times. "I have attended some of those 'last crusades,'" he said.

But Martin said New York would make a fitting final chapter. The three early successes that made Graham a household name in the 1950s were in Los Angeles, London and New York. "It's almost a storybook way to end up a career, to visit the three cities that have been meaningful to his crusade," he said.

"I wouldn't be shocked if he went to London," Martin said, referring to a much anticipated, but not yet finalized, crusade there. "I would be surprised if he went to

another crusade in the U.S. That would be surprising, and it would be an anticlimax."

### London calling

London, meanwhile, is waiting expectantly to hear whether Graham will hold his next "last crusade" in their city. A London pastor was on the platform when Graham preached on Sunday in New York.

"Our heart is very much to have Billy Graham," said Coreen Williams of London's Evangelical Alliance, which represents more than a million British evangelicals. "We've put dates in the diary—we're expecting him."

If so, Graham's crew likely will swing into action.

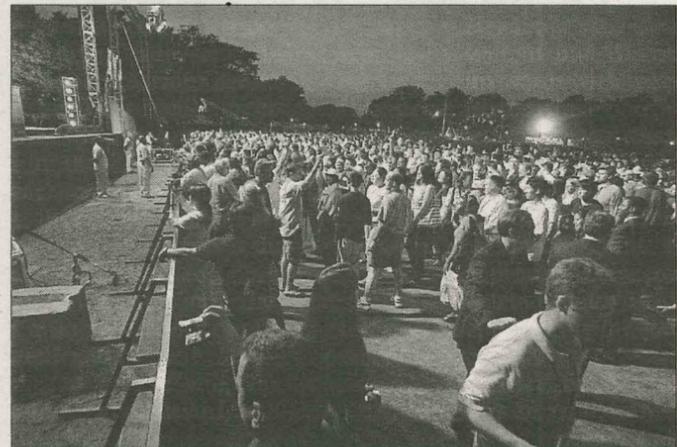
The Graham who appeared on Larry King seemed frail and said London was a "small possibility." But the Graham who appeared in front of almost a quarter of a million people in Flushing Meadows seemed filled with the Spirit, almost unstoppable.

"I was asked in an interview if this is the last crusade. I said it probably is—in New York!" said a smiling Graham, to laughter and applause. "But I also said, 'I never

say never.'"

Graham called his two close friends to the podium, Cliff Barrows and George Beverly Shea. The two have shared the stage with him for the last 60 years. Shea, who always sings just before Graham preaches, had this to say about the future.

"I was 37 when I went with Mr. Graham. Now I'm 96," said Shea with a perfect deadpan. "That means I'm almost through it."



**COMING FORWARD** People respond to Graham's invitation to make a spiritual decision. More than 9,400 people committed their lives to Jesus at the crusade. (BP photo by James Edward Bates)

**"I was 37 when I went with Mr. Graham. Now I'm 96. That means I'm almost through it."**

Crusade soloist  
George Beverly Shea

## Could Supreme Court ruling lead to church land seizures?

Washington (RNS)—Religious institutions might be more vulnerable to takeover through eminent domain after a June ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court, according to some religious and civil rights advocacy groups.

The ruling gives local governments greater power to seize properties for private economic development.

Churches, mosques, synagogues and other nonprofit religious entities are considered especially at threat because they generate no tax revenue for cities.

But developments like hotels or shopping malls are seen to be economic boons for urban renewal projects.

"Because all houses of worship are tax-exempt, they will continue to be attractive targets for seizure by revenue-hungry local governments," said Jared Leland, media and legal counsel of the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty.

The Becket Fund is a nonprofit, interfaith legal organization that advocates for the free expression of religion.

The Becket Fund, Southern Christian Leadership Conference and other groups filed friend-of-the-court briefs supporting seven residents of New London, Conn., who fought the city's plan to raze their homes to allow private developers to build a commercial complex.

Leland warned that taking land and property strictly for economic interests is a dangerous slippery slope.

He noted that religious organizations threatened by this decision offer community services and aid that are immeasurable by monetary standards.

"Religion is something that may not have an economic impact on communities, but does have a tremendous social impact on communities," Leland said.

John Whitehead, president of the Rutherford Institute, said public furor may protect some religious institutions from takeovers, but warned they still will be vulnerable.

"If push comes to shove, churches, synagogues and anyone who they don't consider tax-generating entities will come under this," Whitehead said.

## Court post tests evangelicals' influence

By Kevin Eckstrom and Adelle Banks  
Religion News Service

Washington (RNS)—For Jerry Falwell, the battle to replace retiring Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor isn't quite Armageddon, but almost.

"This is do or die," Falwell said July 1.

For religious conservatives who have spent more than 25 frustrating years toiling in the political vineyards only to see their positions on many key issues—abortion, gay rights, church-state disputes—rejected by the high court, O'Connor's retirement is the moment they have been waiting for.

The contentious fight over her replacement will be perhaps the most important test of their organization and political clout. If they don't win on this one, Falwell said, there's little hope for either.

The court opening is especially crucial because, as conservative religious leaders have learned, presidents may come and go, but Supreme Court justices tend to remain for a generation or more.

At the same time, a re-energized progressive faith community that emerged in last year's elections faces an uphill challenge in trying to steer the court down a more centrist path, a fight in which activists say the stakes are equally high.

"Conservative Christians did play a major role in helping elect George Bush twice, and they haven't gotten all that much in return," said Alan Wolfe, director of the Boisi Center for Religion and American Public Life at Boston College.



Jerry Falwell

"This is the one that is important to them."

The recent Senate fight over lower-level judicial nominees would reinforce how much conservatives want to see an end to "activist judges" whom they accuse of making law, not interpreting it. In many ways, the courts—and especially the Supreme Court—have become ground zero for every issue on the conservatives' agenda.

### Expecting payback from Bush

Leaders of the Christian right say now is when they expect a return on their investment in electing President Bush to a second term. They vowed to hold him to his promise to nominate someone in the mold of conservative Justices Clarence Thomas or Antonin Scalia. "We have full confidence that he will carry out that pledge," said James Dobson, founder of Colorado Springs, Colo.-based Focus on the Family, who left no hint of wiggle room.

The optimism and confidence of the Christian right was sharply con-

trasted by the doomsday scenarios painted by liberal groups, who say losing O'Connor's moderate voice is a brightening prospect.

Barry Lynn, director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, said if Bush nominates a favorite of his conservative religious base, it could be "a declaration of Armageddon."

"If the person that replaces Sandra Day O'Connor is not a centrist conservative, then I can see the street sign for 'Doomsday,'" he said. "We're not on it yet, but I can see the street ahead."

Indeed, the cards are stacked in conservatives' favor, with a president whom they support and a Republican majority in the Senate that is wide enough to nearly assure a confirmation.

The bigger challenge will be for liberals—religious and otherwise—to try to oppose a well-funded, well-organized push by conservative Christian leaders for a conservative justice. Mark Pelavin, associate director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, said he's preparing "for the worst-case scenario."

"I know ... that some of the Christian right groups are going to devote astronomical resources to this fight," he said. "That's going to be part of a challenge, to make our voices heard without the same kind of money behind us."

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# Author: Few churches consider leadership change

Continued from page 1

Likewise, three-time SBC president Adrian Rogers retired this year from Bellevue Baptist Church near Memphis, Tenn. On July 10, Bellevue members voted overwhelmingly to call Steve Gaines, pastor of First Baptist Church of Gardendale, Ala., as Rogers' successor.

Many people watch with interest the departure of a mega-church pastor because successful transitions at larger churches are so rare.

First Baptist Church in Dallas has struggled to replace its world-famous pulpiteer, W.A. Criswell. And First Baptist Church of Atlanta unsuccessfully tried to hire a co-pastor to work with Charles Stanley, who is nearing retirement.

Crabtree, executive director of Holy Cow Consulting, said large churches have a particularly hard time with succession if they develop "icon" cultures, in which strong-personality pastors are the "entry point" for members. The culture of the church often does not permit "healthy, open communication" about leadership transition, he said.

This happens, he said, if the pastor fears he will become a "lame duck" once he mentions retirement, if the congregation develops "unhealthy dependencies" on a single leader, or if the identity of the pastor is wed to the position.

But smaller churches also can struggle if they nurture a "family culture."

"When that pastor goes, it's like the death of a family member. So you have a significant amount of grieving that takes place after that," he said. "The loss there is much more personal than in a large church."

Crabtree said Jesus modeled succession planning "on both ends" of His earthly ministry—graciously accepting leadership from John the Baptist and then later preparing His disciples for His ascension. "He was very clear about what He was doing," he said. "It's an issue of discipleship."

"Today it's the opposite," he added—laypeople are anxious to talk about pastoral transition but pastors often are reluctant.

"If you love the church, you should do what Jesus did and make provision for leadership once you are gone."

## "Should I stay or should I go?"

One question churches should answer is what role, if any, an outgoing pastor has in the transition process.

Especially when a successful senior pastor retires from a larger church, his charismatic personality can cast a large shadow over the incoming pastor, observers said.

A pastor who follows a legend inevitably encounters problems if the previous pastor, or even his "persona," is still around, said Joel Gregory, who wrote "Too Great a Temptation" about his unsuccessful experience trying to follow Criswell at First Baptist Church of Dallas.

"Immediately, you get caught



in a trap of dismantling the program that got them where they were," said Gregory, now an itinerant preacher based in Fort Worth, Texas, who also is a distinguished fellow at Georgetown College.

"But in many instances the program that got them where they were won't get them where they need to go," he said.

His advice for pulpit legends: "Get out of the picture. I know that's not easy for them to do."

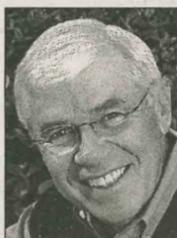
Crabtree said he, too, believes retiring or departing pastors usually should move on, but adds they might play a role in the transition.

"There are five key players in putting together a transition plan," he said. "There's the departing pastor, there's the board, there's the personnel committee, there's a search consultant and then the arriving pastor."

Using a computer analogy, Crabtree said some churches have a "downloading" transition in which the previous pastor shares his insights with the incoming pastors.

Other churches, he said, have "firewall" policies, in which no conversation occurs between the outgoing and incoming pastors.

"There may be a role to play in the transition process, but after that I think it's generally important for the pastor to move on," Crabtree said. "I think when the pastor can't do that that creates real difficulties."



**NOTABLE TRANSITIONS** Recent retirement announcements for well-known Southern Baptist pastors (from left) Jim Henry, Adrian Rogers and Jerry Vines has some observers asking how their churches will face the transition and how well any church is prepared for leadership change.

## Small churches & transition

Talking and planning about transitions are two things small congregations can do to prepare for the eventual change in leadership, he added.

"There needs to be the ability to talk about this," he said, noting that most non-retirement pastoral changes are handled in a "culture of secrecy."

"When a pastor feels that he is coming to the end of his call to a church, then often it's a very surreptitious process by which he begins to explore other options and talk with other people. Nobody knows what's going on," he noted.

Second, every church, regardless of size, can have a generic transition plan.

"It's like, 'Whenever the pastor is going to leave—whenever that is—what are the steps that are going to take place when that happens? What do people need to be prepared to do?'" Crabtree explained.

"You know what? Pastors don't always stay to the end of a long call. They get sick. They die. They may be let go," he said. "So having something in place that's clearly thought out is important."

With additional reporting by News Director David Winfrey

## Crabtree: Depth of leadership helps ministries with transition

Columbus, Ohio—Any church or ministry can be better prepared for an eventual leadership transition if it develops a depth of leadership, according to Russell Crabtree.

Crabtree said he encourages churches and ministries to measure "the degree to which the effectiveness of that ministry depends on one person or whether there is what we call 'depth in the leadership' or 'bench strength.'"

Ministries, and churches, can reach at least four levels of maturity, he says.

■ Those that are completely ineffective.

■ Those that are effective "because of what resides in one person's head or heart."

■ Effective ministries where several people understand how the ministry works.

■ Ministries where workers understand the ministry and are willing to innovate and study how to grow the ministry.

In that last category, a depth of understanding and leadership permeates the whole organization, Crabtree said.

He uses the phrase "Kinko's culture" to describe that depth of leadership. It refers to the copying company's philosophy of training workers throughout the organization to take leadership roles. "That is kind of their driving strength."

Such congregations, he said, "know how to get leadership at all levels and effective ministries up and down the line in their churches, but they also know how to get bench strength and depth of leadership in positions so that when somebody moves on, for whatever reason, then you've got somebody else there who can lead it, but that requires a culture of training and of replication of ministry."

Crabtree said he realizes developing a depth of leadership in smaller churches can be difficult because people often wear many different hats.

"But I still find that it's often the case that there are people within the organization who have something to give and they don't know how to give it," he said.

"I still believe that in most organizations that the people are really underutilized," he said. "There may be a few people that are running their tails off, but broadly there are often more resources available than what people realize."



Crabtree

## Bellevue calls Steve Gaines as Rogers' successor

Cordova, Tenn. (BP)—Steve Gaines, pastor of First Baptist Church of Gardendale, Ala., for the past 14 years, was called July 10 as pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in suburban Memphis, Tenn.

Gaines, 47, takes over for Adrian Rogers, the church's pastor for 32 years who retired earlier this year.

Search committee chairman Chuck Taylor said his 10-member team received more than 170 recommendations.

Rogers, Bellevue's pastor emeritus, was on hand for the vote. "I am so happy. I am so thrilled," Rogers said. "I've been sitting out there weeping and laughing, praising our great God."

Gaines served as president of this year's Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference and last year preached the SBC annual sermon. He was a member of the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message Study Committee chaired by Rogers.

Gaines previously was pastor of West Jackson Baptist Church in Jackson, Tenn., and Lake Shore Baptist Church in Lake Dallas, Texas. He is a graduate of Union University in Jackson, Tenn., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

A close friend of Rogers, Gaines said he doesn't foresee any problems with succeeding Bellevue's longtime pastor.

"I won't in any way feel like I have to emulate or imitate him," Gaines noted.

"I'm not here just because of his influence, although we knew he would prefer us to come," he added. "As best we can tell, it's not simply because Dr. Rogers wanted us to be here but because the Lord wanted us to be here."

He will begin his ministry at Bellevue Sept. 11.

## Religious Freedom Amendment introduced in Congress

Washington (RNS)—Rep. Ernest Istook, R-Okla., introduced a constitutional amendment in the U.S. House of Representatives June 30 intended to reverse a recent Supreme Court ruling that bars the display of the Ten Commandments in courthouses.

The Religious Freedom Amendment would "preserve the original balance of the First Amendment, protecting religious expression by Americans while preventing the establishment of any official religion," Istook said.

The proposal, which has 107 co-sponsors, would need the support of two-thirds of the House and Senate in order to pass as well as ratification by three-fourths of the states in order to become a part of the Constitution.

The text of the Religious Freedom Amendment says: "To secure the people's right to acknowledge God according to the dictates of conscience: The people retain the right to pray and to recognize their religious beliefs, heritage and traditions on public property, including schools. The United States and the States shall not establish any official religion nor require any person to join in prayer or religious activity."

# Mixed message?

## Court ruling on Commandments leaves wake of confusion

By Adelle Banks  
Religion News Service

Washington (RNS)—The U.S. Supreme Court's ambiguous, split decisions on Ten Commandments displays has left everyone from community activists to lawyers grappling over what happens next.

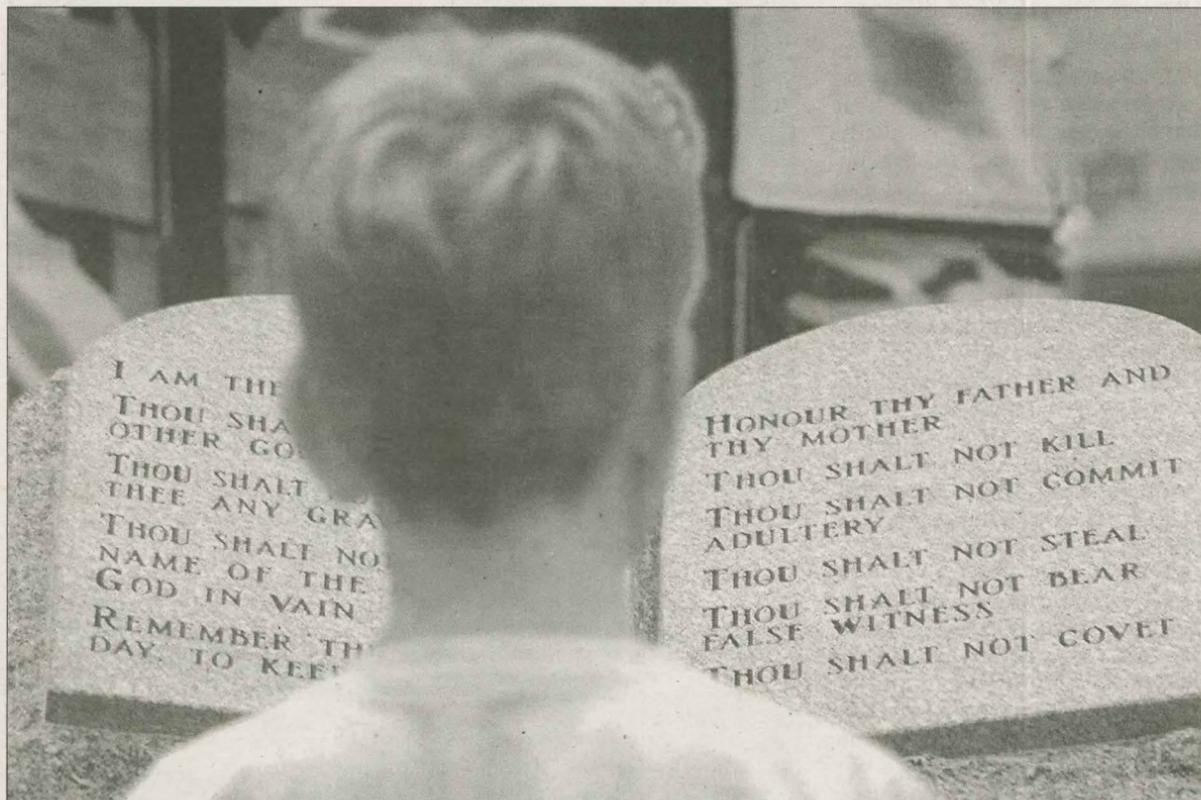
One religious leader sees a legal opening to erect scores of new Ten Commandments monuments across the country, while an atheist group says the rulings give it license to push for a monument at the Texas Capitol with "an anti-Bible passage."

In a nation with hundreds, if not thousands, of Ten Commandments displays, many agree the rulings give little specific guidance to communities wondering whether they are lawful or unlawful. Since the justices did not establish an overarching principle, battles are likely to persist on a case-by-case, community-by-community basis.

"It was never clear before (the ruling) what you could and could not do with regard to the Ten Commandments and it's still not clear," said Francis Manion, senior counsel of the American Center for Law and Justice, a conservative Christian law firm.

On June 27, the high court permitted a decades-old granite monument to the Ten Commandments at the Texas Capitol but declared unconstitutional framed copies of the biblical laws in two Kentucky courthouses. The next day, the high court made several rulings that did little to clarify.

The court decided to let lower court decisions stand in several cases involving Ten Commandments displays, including two in which the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that both an Ohio judge's courtroom poster and stone monuments placed outside several high schools in Adams County, Ohio,



were unconstitutional.

Despite the confusion, some community activists—religious and nonreligious—are taking steps to move ahead.

Patrick Mahoney, director of the Washington-based Christian Defense Coalition, announced plans to try to place displays similar to the monument at the Texas Capitol in 100 cities and towns across the country within the next year. He made the announcement in Boise, Idaho, where an interfaith community network's efforts to get a monument returned to public property have been boosted by the ruling.

Mahoney hopes to work with Christian lawyers to draft a resolution that can be used nationwide by local residents to request the return or the placement of monuments on public land.

"We felt all along that the public display of Ten Commandments unites communities," he said in an interview. "They don't divide. ... The public realizes that communities are better off when we don't steal, when we don't lie, when we don't

kill."

More than seven in 10 Americans polled in August 2004 expressed support for displaying the Ten Commandments, the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life found. But that means there's still a minority of Americans who aren't thrilled with such monuments.

Annie Laurie Gaylor, co-president of the Wisconsin-based Freedom from Religion Foundation, will now work with local groups to seek permission to erect a monument in honor of freethinkers on the same Texas Capitol grounds where the Ten Commandments are displayed.

"We can stick our anti-Bible passage up," she said in an interview. "We will plan to fight fire with fire."

### Communities react to decision

In other communities, reaction reflects the disparate decisions:

■ In the eastern Oklahoma town of Stigler, Haskell County commissioners said they have no intention of taking down an 8-foot-tall granite slab monument erected on the courthouse lawn in November.

While some legal experts argue that the monument violates the First Amendment, county commissioner Henry Few pointed out that it has a copy of the Mayflower Compact written on the back. "To me, this is all historical," he said in an interview. "To me, I don't see where it has any effect on church or state or whatever they want to say. ... Our forefathers founded this country on the Ten Commandments and the Mayflower Compact and things of this sort."

■ In Elkhart, Ind., a monument was moved from city land to private property on Main Street after the Supreme Court decided in 2001 to let stand a lower court ruling declaring it unconstitutional.

"I don't see that this ruling has sufficiently pried open that door giving Elkhart license to move it back with impunity, and I don't wish to spend more taxpayer dollars to fund the likes of the ACLU," said Mayor David Miller in an interview.

■ John Giles, president of the Christian Coalition of Alabama, said his organization is taking a "wait and see" attitude about the possibility of future monuments in his state.

But he thinks the Supreme Court rulings demonstrated that former Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore correctly placed a monument—later removed—on state property. "Based on the ruling, certainly the monument was unjustly removed from the judicial building," Giles said.

Manion, whose American Center for Law and Justice is handling 10 cases involving the Ten Commandments, said he thinks it's doubtful that Mahoney's plans to add more monuments to the many that already exist will actually happen in a year's time.

"Seems optimistic to me," he said. "City attorneys and county attorneys and government attorneys are going to be reviewing the same opinions as I'm reviewing and scratching their heads."

With additional reporting by RNS correspondents Nancy Glass, Bobby Ross, Heather Horiuchi and Dennis O'Connor

## Ruling sparks variety of reactions

"The decisions today solve nothing. Current Ten Commandments display cases ... will now proceed as this court picks, and chooses which displays offend them and which they deem worthy."

Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council

"I think that this is a sign of a turning in the thinking of the court. Up until now the court was really starting to exhibit a consistent hostility toward any religious expression in public places. This seems to indicate a change in that direction. And we consider that a really hopeful sign."

Rob Schenck, president of Faith and Action

"The problem is, 'What's next?' If you can put the Ten Commandments on public property, maybe you can put a cross on public property."

Ellen Johnson, president of American Atheists

"We won more than we lost. And I think that many displays, including any that take place in our government-funded schools, will now be clearly forbidden."

Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State

"There is a religious witch hunt under way, one which has infected virtually every level of our government. It is nothing less than historical revisionism to try to use the First Amendment as an excuse to scrub away all governmental reference to the Ten Commandments and our Judeo-Christian heritage."

James Dobson, chairman of Focus on the Family Action

"I am sure it will come as a surprise to the many people of genuine faith in Texas—Baptists, Methodists, Catholics, Jews, Unitarians, Presbyterians etc.—when they discover that their state has adopted a Lutheran version of the Ten Command-

ments as the official Ten Commandments of the state."

Paul Finkelman, visiting fellow at the Center for Inquiry, home of the Council for Secular Humanism

"If this came to a vote down here, it wouldn't be an issue; we'd have the Ten Commandments posted in the courthouse in Somerset. ... What's frustrating is that as a county, we've voted for the people who put them into office, and yet they've gone against how we live and believe. It's very disappointing."

Monica Wallace, staff member of Beacon Hill Baptist Church in Somerset

"It doesn't bother me that we can't have the Ten Commandments posted in a public place. What is important is that people believe and are living the tenets of Christianity."

Larry Ping, pastor of Lakeside Church of Christ in Somerset

### Celebrating Youth Week at Cedarmore

**As ministry changes, thanks to Smoot for 30-year impact**

July 1 was a special and emotional day at our ministry for many reasons. The day marked the end of what was a difficult week due to the intense summer heat, injuries, fatigue and a full dose of spiritual battles. The net result was 48 salvation decisions at Jonathan Creek and several others at Cedarmore.

**KENTUCKY BAPTIST ASSEMBLIES**



David Melber

From a long-term perspective, we celebrated the history of Youth Week at Cedarmore. Youth Weeks officially ended their 30-year history on July 1. When anything ends, a variety of emotions are present. Tom Smoot of the Kentucky Baptist Convention has been intimately involved with camp for a number of years, and the total impact of the camp program stretches far and wide.

This year, the four-week program served approximately 950 students and adults from a three-state area. Many decisions were made this summer, and July 1 was a reminder of how these decisions shape lives for years to come.

We presented Tom with several tokens that in some way capture the essence of camp. The most sig-

nificant token to me was a picture of the old Tabernacle that sat on top of the hill overlooking Byrdwell Conference Center. Tom shared his story of God's call upon his life in that building when he was 11 years old, a call that led him on a path of ministry service that ultimately directed a camping program spanning 30 years.

In Tom's closing remarks to the campers of the week, he challenged them to obey God's direction in their life and to seek to make His name known in all they do. Tom shared that God's call is not easy, but the eternal results far outweigh any present difficulty.

While Youth Weeks have ended, camp continues on at the main campus of Cedarmore. The next chapter continues with Crossings at Cedarmore. To some degree, it already has begun as hundreds of youth have preregistered to come during the 2006 camp season. The gospel message and the desire to see students changed by camp will continue during the new chapter at Cedarmore. Many thanks to Tom and his family.

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

### Adoptions

**Schools and ministers are also worthy of your support**

Of what do you think when you hear the word "adoption"? You probably think of a couple adopting a child. As wonderful as that is, I want to introduce you to another kind of adoption available through the Kentucky Baptist Foundation. By establishing an endowment fund, or contributing to an existing fund, you can adopt one or more of your favorite Baptist ministries. Let me suggest these financial adoption opportunities:

**KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION**



Barry Allen

**Adopt a student.** We live in a world slouching toward Gomorrah. We need future leaders who have been prepared not only in how to make a living, but also equipped in the ways of faith so they will be able to live their faith through their vocations. Providing scholarships for an education in a Christian values environment is a way to make a lasting difference in the world. Consider endowing scholarships for students attending Campbellsville, Cumberland, Georgetown, Clear Creek, Oneida, Mid-Continent and Southern Seminary/Boyce.

**project.** Help ensure the future of state, national and international missions through the KBC Mission Board, Kentucky WMU, North American Mission Board and International Mission Board.

**Adopt a child/family.** Through Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children you can touch the lives of children from birth through college. These are not traditional orphans; they are orphans of the living who suffer from abuse and neglect.

**Adopt a camper.** Provide financial assistance for young people to attend Cedarmore and Jonathan Creek. At camp, many accept Jesus, rededicate their lives to Jesus and respond to God's call to full-time ministry or missionary service.

**Adopt a missions support news journal.** Enhance the communication of information and activities of Baptists in Kentucky and around the world through the Western Recorder.

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

**Adopt a missionary/mission**

### Kudzu

Doug Marlette



### For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



### Bible Crosswords

Evelyn Boyington

#### Across

- 1 "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the \_\_\_\_" (John 20:25)
- 6 "Bring forth ... every living thing ... that they may abundantly" (Genesis 8:17)
- 11 "Take heed and beware of the \_\_\_\_ of the Pharisees" (Matthew 16:6)
- 12 Occupied an apartment
- 14 More than a kernel
- 15 Wife of Abram
- 17 Tavern brew
- 18 Mideast dialect (abbr.)
- 19 "\_\_\_\_ up a child in the way he should go" (Proverbs 22:6)
- 20 Buffalo college
- 21 "The \_\_\_\_ of the temple was rent in twain" (Matthew 27:51)
- 24 "This gospel ... shall be preached in all the world ... and then shall the \_\_\_\_ come" (Matthew 24:14)
- 25 1,061, to Claudius
- 27 Bloopers
- 29 "Ye shall appoint you cities ... of refuge ... that the \_\_\_\_ may flee thither" (Numbers 35:11)
- 31 Cereal grain
- 32 Son of Bela (Numbers 26:40)
- 33 Grouped together
- 36 Claudius \_\_\_\_, who wrote a letter to Felix on Paul's behalf (Acts 23:26)
- 39 \_\_\_\_ is more
- 40 The Gilded Age, for one
- 42 Say "whoa"

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- 43 Printer's measure
- 44 Shasta \_\_\_\_
- 46 Hawkeye state (abbr.)
- 47 Red, for one
- 49 "I am \_\_\_\_ and Omega" (Revelation 22:13)
- 50 Put it in writing
- 51 English or western, in the tack room
- 53 Item to do
- 55 "The angels shall come forth, and \_\_\_\_ the wicked from among the just" (Matthew 13:49)
- 56 Tizzies

- 9 Greek letter
- 10 Super-duper
- 11 "For thou wilt not \_\_\_\_ my soul in hell" (Psalm 16:10)
- 13 King of Eglon (Joshua 10:3)
- 16 Headed for the hills
- 22 Golfer's gear
- 23 Large quantities
- 25 Mystery writer Ngaio
- 26 Seller of purple from Thyatira
- 28 Highway (abbr.)
- 30 "Now I \_\_\_\_ me down ..."
- 33 "I will \_\_\_\_ thy name for ever and ever" (Psalm 145:1)
- 34 Man sick with the palsy for eight years (Acts 9)
- 35 Wheeler follower
- 36 Speaks angrily, with "out"
- 37 Not citizens
- 38 "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to \_\_\_\_ against the wiles of the devil" (Ephesians 6:11)
- 41 Tear
- 44 Roy's partner
- 45 Storyteller's specialty
- 48 Summer drink
- 50 Almost too reasonable, as an excuse
- 52 Wounded ex-soldier (abbr.)
- 54 Eastern U.S. state

#### Last week's solution

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| 9  | M | O | A  | T  | 37 | E  | N  | T  | E  | R  |   |   |   |
| 10 | R | E | P  | E  | N  | T  | 41 | R  | A  | T  | E |   |   |
| 11 | E | V | E  | R  | 43 | H  | O  | U  | R  | 45 | R | E | D |
| 12 | N | E | A  | R  | 46 | E  | L  | S  | E  | 48 | E | R | R |
| 13 | O | N | L  | Y  | 49 | N  | E  | E  | D  | 50 | E | R | R |
| 14 |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | 53 | D | A | Y |



Because 'Desperate Housewives' probably isn't your best source for family advice.



## NATIONAL NOTES

**Graham daughter charged with battery.** The eldest daughter of Billy Graham has been charged with battery after an alleged July 1 incident of domestic violence. Virginia "Gigi" Graham Foreman, 59, was charged after a dispute with her husband on a New Smyrna Beach, Fla., roadway, according to a report on the Web site of "The Smoking Gun," which finds and posts public documents about celebrities. A Larry Ross, spokesman for her father, said her parents were aware of the allegation. "Mr. and Mrs. Graham have expressed their ongoing unconditional love for their daughter."

**Fearing discrimination charge, ABC drops show.** After accusations the show violates the Fair Housing Act, ABC has shelved a reality series that had white Christians picking the winner of a new house in their neighborhood from a pool of ethnically and religiously diverse families. "Welcome to the Neighborhood" had seven families—including an African-American family, an Asian family, a family that practices Wicca and a gay couple with an adopted infant—compete against each other for the approval of three judging families.

**Religious donations increased in 2004.** Donations to U.S. religious congregations rose by nearly 2 percent last year, to an estimated \$88 billion, according to a study by the Giving USA Foundation. Charitable contributions overall were at a record high last year, increasing by 5 percent to an estimated \$248.5 billion, the foundation reported.

**Court ruling forbidding Christian prayers stands.** The U.S. Supreme Court decided June 28 that it would let stand a lower court ruling that a South Carolina town council violated the Constitution by opening meetings with Christian prayers. The case was brought by a follower of the Wiccan faith, who argued that when the town of Great Falls, S.C., opened its council meetings with prayers invoking the name of Jesus Christ, it excluded non-Christians.

**UCC votes to support same-sex marriage.** Meeting in Atlanta earlier this month, delegates to the General Synod of the United Church of Christ overwhelmingly approved a measure to endorse same-sex civil marriage and encourage their congregations to extend religious marriage to gay couples. The resolution is the first action fully supporting same-sex marriage by any major U.S. Christian denomination.

## Judge: Pentagon can't financially support Boy Scouts

**Chicago (RNS)**—A federal judge in Chicago last week ruled that the Pentagon's support of the Boy Scouts of America is unconstitutional because of the Scouts' pledge to honor and obey God.

Eugene Winkler, a retired United Methodist minister, and Rabbi Gary Gerson were the lead plaintiffs in the suit filed in 1999 to block the Scouts from receiving taxpayer money for their National Scout Jamboree, which is held every four years at a military base in Virginia.

"Government must be neutral because we are a nation of many religious views," Winkler, a former pastor of the First United Methodist Church in Chicago, said, according to a press release from the American Civil Liberties Union.

Gerson said the suit was not an attack on the Boy Scouts organization, but a challenge to the government for preferential treatment of a religious organization.

"Government simply cannot give special treatment to a private group that excludes young men who do not profess a particular religious faith," Gerson said.

The government is expected to spend more than \$7 million for the upcoming jamboree, which begins July 25, but the ruling would affect future jamborees.

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said in December the longstanding relationship with the Boy Scouts should continue.

A justice department spokesman said July 7 that the government still was considering its options.

## Canadian Rockies Tour Offers 'Cool' Vacation

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For brochure, information, reservations & letter from Rev. Billy Williams call 7 days a week:

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## Homecoming 2005

### Alumni return for hymn sing, meal and remembering former president Sparks

By Myrtle Cooke

Oneida Baptist Institute Alumni Director

June 25 was the big day. The call had gone out to all Oneida Baptist Institute alumni, friends, former staff and former students to make their way to our campus for Homecoming 2005. For weeks OBI staff members had been busy making the necessary preparations. Class representatives had written letters several months back encouraging classmates to attend. We had hoped for good weather, and God certainly blessed us with a beautiful, warm, sunny day.

I knew we were off to a good start when Oneida Baptist Church was filled by 11 a.m. for our annual hymn sing. Many of our alumni, driving from other states, would not get here until noon, just in time for lunch. Our hymn sing has become a special part of our day-long celebration.

The singing is enthusiastic as the audience requests favorite hymns. Leading the singing this year was John Saldaris, a member of the class of 1989. John asked for volunteers who would like to share special memories about their days at Oneida. Several alumni shared that they had been saved and baptized in Oneida Baptist Church when they were students. Many expressed gratitude for the education and guidance they had received at Oneida. Bob Halcomb (a 1954 alumnus) noted that James Bowling (also a 1954 alumnus), who had been recognized in the 50th anniversary class last year, had died the day before. Noon arrived too quickly, and we dismissed for lunch.

For the past 10 years or so, we have served

lunch under the tents on our athletic field. Because Homecoming is held the last Saturday in June and can get uncomfortably hot, we also serve lunch in our air-conditioned dining room. I, along with my sister and brother—both returning alumni—chose the air-conditioning. Many others had the same notion. We were pleased to see so many of our classmates. Martha Bain Rice, our English teacher, was among former staff who attended.

The featured event of the day was held after lunch in the Melvin Davidson Chapel. We were honoring our seventh president, D. Chester Sparks, president from 1948-1962. The program included the unveiling of an oil painting of Sparks.

Many of his family members came Friday evening and spent the night in Anderson Hall, where "Papa" Sparks and his wife, "Mai Mai," had lived. Daughter and former OBI teacher Ferne

Sparks Williford was here, along with four of her five children, spouses and grandchildren. Son Mendell Sparks was here with nephew Billy Sparks Thompson, representing his mother, Lorna Thompson (a daughter who was unable to attend). Many cousins, including Peggy Sparks and Martha Bowman Adams (both 1956 alumni) were present. A nephew of Mai Mai's, Lee Deming, also attended. Frances Sheperd, teacher during the Sparks years, gave the formal account of the life and works of D. Chester Sparks.

What a day, Homecoming 2005. Just a small sample of what heaven will be like.

W.F. Underwood is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, Box 67, Oneida, KY 40972; [www.oneida.org](http://www.oneida.org); e-mail: [president@oneidaschool.org](mailto:president@oneidaschool.org)

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

## Two hearts united in one mission

### Ohio students committed to share God's love with world

Psalm 68:5 promises that God is "a father of the fatherless," and Kip Rager has experienced that reality. His father died when he was 8.

Committed to a career in the military, his father was a Viet Nam veteran. "It was hard when Dad died. I didn't see what God could do for a while, but His Word is true," Kip said.

Kip soon begins his fourth year at Clear Creek. His youth pastor in Ohio told him about the school. The call to ministry came in high school. "I fought it about a year in the back of my mind." Kip said. "On a mission trip to the inner city of Philadelphia it came back to the front."

A team from his church, in cooperation with Dove Ministries, made gardens, held prayer walks and conducted a Christian fair with an established mission in Philadelphia. Kip participated in two Youth With A Mission trips to Mexico. The teams used drama and clowning as evangelism approaches. These trips encouraged him toward missions.

While at Clear Creek, Kip has helped GAP Fellowship, a new

church in Middlesboro. "I worked with the sound board and helped with the set up each Sunday," Kip said. "I've been eager to get there each week."

With Clear Creek noted for an emphasis with older married adults, how has it been for a young single student? "The professors are awesome," Kip said.

"I've enjoyed walking with Dr. Lucas, and eating breakfast with him at the lodge. If you're looking for a spouse, you might want to consider another school. We don't have that many single women; but that also means there is not as much distraction from study."

Apparently, when Kip made that observation he had some "distraction" going on. On July 23 he will marry Stephanie Criswell, also a student from Ohio. Her parents, Doug and Denise, are 1992 graduates and serve Grace Baptist Church in Dayton, Ohio. Stephanie is committed to missions; she's never gotten over a mission trip to China. We're thankful for these two hearts united on one mission.

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

# Hungry to help

## Ambassador Tony Hall's Christianity fuels quest to eliminate hunger fight

By Kim Lawton  
Religion & Ethics Newsweekly

Rome (RNS)—For more than 20 years, first as a member of Congress and now as a U.S. ambassador to United Nations humanitarian agencies in Rome, Tony Hall has made it his life mission to end hunger and poverty—at home and abroad.

It's a mission fueled by his Christian faith.

"I don't know how people sustain this or do this, day after day, week after week, month after month, without faith," he said on the PBS show "Religion & Ethics Newsweekly."

"I know some people do, but I could never do it," he adds. "It's what keeps me strong; it keeps me going."

Hall, a Democrat, was appointed by President Bush in 2002 to be the U.S. envoy to the U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organization and other U.N. Rome-based agencies that deal with food and hunger. Through the years, his passion to fight hunger has earned him three Nobel Prize nominations.

In his current position, Africa—where some of the world's worst and most persistent cases of poverty and hunger exist—has become a special concern.

"Of the 35 most difficult nations of the world, 25 are in Africa," he said.

And Africa is at the top of the agenda for the G8—the heads of government of the eight major industrialized nations—meeting this month. Those leaders are under pressure to come up with policies to sharply reduce hunger and poverty in Africa, including putting the finishing touches on a new debt relief program.

Some anti-hunger activists have criticized the G8 and especially the United States for being "stingy" with aid effort.

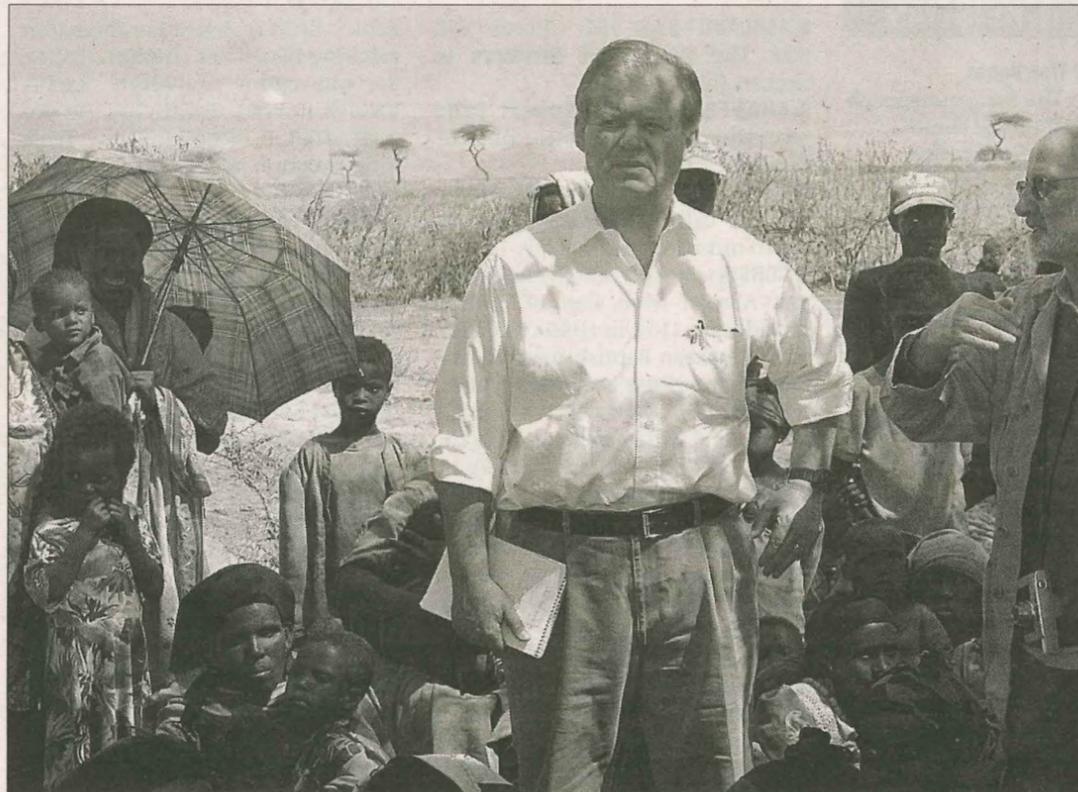
It's a criticism that doesn't sit well with Hall, who argues that the United States contributes more than 50 percent of all the humanitarian aid that goes through the U.N.

"I believe that good nations, great nations, are evaluated by what they do for other people, especially poor people.

"We (the United States) have a lot," he says. "And we should give a lot."

### "Showing a sermon"

Hall traces his passion for the hunger issue to when he was a member of Congress from Ohio and made a 1984 trip to Ethiopia to



investigate the famine there. He was stunned by what he saw.

"Most children were dying," he recalled in a recent speech at Georgetown University in Washington. "Many were dead. And in a period of a few minutes, I saw 25 children die."

As a result, he said, he felt God calling him to focus his political work on humanitarian issues.

"You can take anybody of faith, any religion, and you will see the tremendous number of Scripture verses dealing with the issue," he said in his Georgetown speech. "I like the one in Proverbs where it says that God says if you help the poor you lend to Me."

In an interview, Hall said he tries to be careful not to flaunt his faith.

"I don't want to be a hypocrite," he said. "I don't want to wear God here (pointing to his lapel) and say, 'Look at me. I love God and I'm doing this and I'm doing that.'"

"By working with the poor, you're kind of showing a sermon. You're not giving a sermon."

Hall's work with suffering children has a deeply personal dimension as he lost his 15-year-old son to leukemia eight years ago. He described that experience earlier this year at the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington.

"One day he had an especially bad day, and he had a lot of compli-

cations," Hall said of his son. "I got so mad that night that I screamed and cursed and swore, yelled, asked God to come down, confront me, talk to me, (answer the question) why?"

He said God answered that prayer by showing him the mystery of faith that survives tragedy—and it is that faith that keeps him going beyond the tragedies.

"I don't understand why my son is gone. I don't understand the tsunamis. I don't understand 25,000 people dying every day," said Hall, referring to the U.N. estimate of the number of lives taken daily by hunger.

"But you know? That experience with my son has made my faith stronger. I came through that experience with more love for God. I cannot explain it. It's the truth, though."

Hall is fond of telling a story about Mother Teresa, the Roman Catholic nun who is a hero to this evangelical Presbyterian.

"People asked Mother Teresa once, 'Don't you think what you do is kind of a drop in the bucket?' I get asked that question often, too.

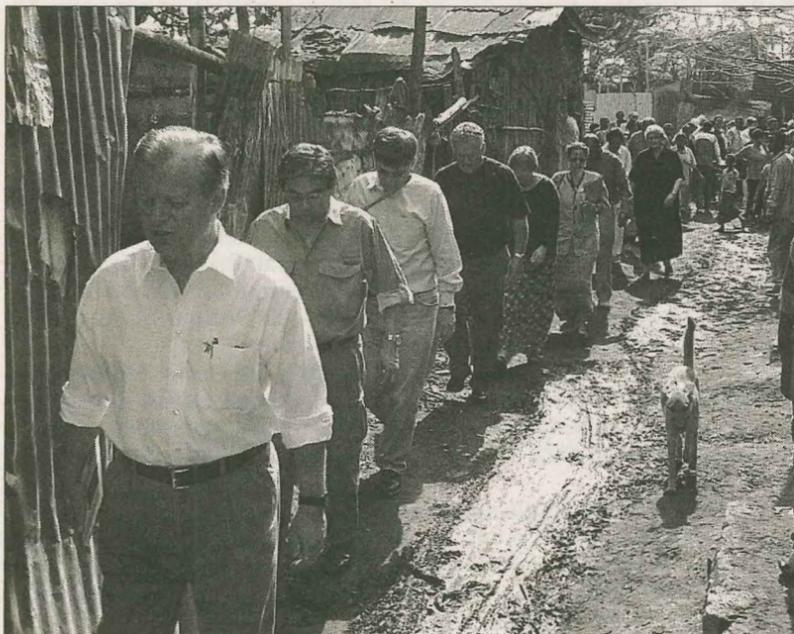
"And she said, 'No, it's a drop in the ocean. But,' she said, 'if I didn't do it, it'd be one less drop.'"

"I kind of feel that way, too."

Kim Lawton is managing editor of "Religion & Ethics Newsweekly," broadcast by PBS.

### FAITH-BASED PASSION

Through the years, Tony Hall's passion to fight hunger has earned him three Nobel Prize nominations. Hall is surrounded here by the people of Arabogosa in Ethiopia's Oromiya region, where children are showing acute signs of malnourishment. (RNS photos courtesy of the U.S. Mission to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization.)



**FACT FINDING** Tony Hall leads a U.S. delegation in Nazareth, Ethiopia, to visit an 8-year-old orphan with HIV/AIDS. Hall, a Democrat, was appointed by President Bush in 2002 to be the U.S. envoy to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization and other Rome-based U.N. agencies that deal with food and hunger.

## U.S. ministers travel to London's G-8 to advocate for poor countries

London (RNS)—A delegation of Christian leaders from the United States recently was in London to urge leaders of wealthy nations attending this month's G-8 Summit to do more to defeat global poverty.

"It is not time for pilot projects and symbolic gestures, it is time for real substance," said Jim Wallis, executive director of Sojourners, a progressive Christian group that has helped organize a London conference of religious leaders dedicated to fighting poverty. "What is lacking is the moral and political will."

The U.S. religious delegation met with White House officials June 27 and held a news conference in Washington before departing for London. Wallis said the group is seeking an additional \$2 billion for African poverty relief in the 2006 federal budget.

### 29,000 Natalie Halloways

Richard Stearns, president of World Vision United States, said the global epidemic of hunger and poverty is underreported in the news media while more sensational stories, like the recent disappear-

ance of Natalie Halloway in Aruba, saturate TV news.

"On the same week Natalie Halloway disappeared, 29,000 other children disappeared. They died, more specifically," Stearns said. "They died because the world looked the other way. The news media did not make this their No. 1 priority—it's not news if it happens every day.

"What we have lacked is a sense of moral outrage," he said.

While religious leaders say they're optimistic that their message will be heard, several acknowledged the potential difficulty of ral-

lying politicians to increase foreign aid.

"Neither party has shown the kind of leadership we need," Wallis said.

David Beckmann, president of Bread for the World, urged President Bush to deliver on previous foreign aid programs increasing U.S. funds to fight poverty.

"We ask that he recommit himself to fight in Congress," Beckmann said. "We want him to first say that he's going to get his majority party in Congress to deliver on the promises he's already made."

## How to BECOME A CHRISTIAN

By Troy Dobbs

The Scriptures teach that a little three-letter word called "sin" has ginormous implications for our lives.

**First, sin is universal in scope.** "All have sinned and fallen short of God's glory" (Romans 3:23).

**Second, sin is terminal in its penalty—death.** "The wages of sin is death." (Romans 6:23).

**Third, denying sin reveals self-deception.** "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8).

Because of sin, we are in ultimate danger of not making it to heaven, which is why Jesus left heaven and came to earth to deal with our sin once and for all. 1 John 3:5 declares, "He appeared to take away our sins. And in Him is no sin."

Jesus Christ's sinlessness makes Him the only One able to deal with our sinfulness. The Apostle Paul tells us Christ dealt with our sin in an astounding way. 2 Corinthians 5:21 explains, "God made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God."

Our sin was poured into Jesus at His crucifixion and His righteousness is poured into us at our conversion. Jesus, the innocent One, died for the guilty so the guilty could be declared innocent.

Jesus Christ has done for us on the cross what we could never do for ourselves. Turn from your sin and run toward the cross of Jesus and receive God's free gift of a never-ending life.

Troy Dobbs is pastor of Crestwood Baptist Church in Crestwood

## MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **ASHLAND**—Rose Hill Church will host **The Blackwood Brothers** in concert July 15, 7 p.m.

■ **BRADFORDSVILLE**—**Robert Judd** recently resigned as pastor of Bradfordsville Church.

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Elk Horn Church called **Michael Julian** as youth minister effective July 10.

■ **CORBIN**—A team of Acteors Abroad from Central Church served June 11-18 in Quito, Ecuador, with Southern Baptist international missionaries **Russ and Kyleen Bare**.

■ **FRANKFORT**—Crestwood Church's praise band will be in concert on the Old Capitol Grounds July 31, 2-4 p.m. **Wallace Kent** is pastor.

■ **HODGENVILLE**—Pleasant Grove Church will host a "Basics of Financial Success" seminar July 30, 2-4 p.m. For information, call (270) 358-8877. **Bryce Parks** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Cloverleaf Church will host **Ed Crawford** and the **Mystery Men** in concert July 16, 7 p.m.

Parkland Church will host the **Southwood Gospel quartet, The Blackwood Brothers**, July 14, 7 p.m.

■ **MOUNT EDEN**—**Tim Bailey**, former youth minister of Mount Moriah Church, drowned May 26 in the

Saluda River in South Carolina after rescuing two of his children. Bailey, 34, was pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Ware Shoals, S.C. He was instrumental in building the Team Kids program while at Mount Moriah Church.

■ **MURRAY**—Retired Baptist pastor **Jack Jones**, 81, died June 27. Jones, a World War II Army veteran, retired from the pastorate in 1987. He previously was pastor of Poplar Spring Church and Locust Grove Church. He is survived by his wife, Martha, two sons and four grandchildren.

■ **PIKEVILLE**—**Bob Norman** resigned May 29 after 18 years as pastor of Grace Church.

■ **RUSSELLVILLE**—First Church honored **Eugene and Irene Gooch** on their 50th wedding anniversary July 26.

■ **SHELBYVILLE**—Henderson House Church honored **Pastor Jesse and Daisy Baxter** on their 50th wedding anniversary June 25.

Indian Fork Church recently called **James Edrington** as youth minister.

■ **WADDY**—Pigeon Fork Church recently called **Brian Owens** as minister of children and youth.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### July

15-16 World Missions Unlimited, Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.

18-20 Mission Adventure Camp for Boys Express Camp, Campbellsville University.

20-23 Kentucky Secretaries Retreat, Campbellsville University.

21-22 Quarterly Prayer Meeting for Spiritual Awakening, Columbia Baptist Church.

25-27 Mountain Missions Conference, Oneida Baptist Institute.

### August

13 Super Saturday, Immanuel Baptist Church, Lexington.

20 Super Saturday, First Baptist Church, Prestonsburg; Second Baptist Church, Hopkinsville.

27 Super Saturday, Central Baptist Church, Corbin; First Baptist Church, Paducah.

For more information, call (800) 266-6477 or visit [www.kybaptist.org](http://www.kybaptist.org)

## Campbellsville to host Bible study preview

**CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Mark McEntire, associate professor of religion at Belmont University in Nashville, will lead Campbellsville University's annual January Bible Study preview Aug. 4.

Southern Baptists' 2006 January Bible Study will focus on the book of Nehemiah. McEntire is the author of "The Function of Sacrifice in Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah."

Dwayne Howell, associate pro-

fessor of Old Testament and Hebrew at Campbellsville, said the preview "provides helpful outlines and teaching tips to be used in the local church."

The preview will be held in Campbellsville Baptist Church's fellowship hall from 1 to 8:30 p.m. An evening meal is available for \$10 per person.

For more information, contact Betty Hatfield at (270) 789-5029 or at [mehatfield@campbellsville.edu](mailto:mehatfield@campbellsville.edu).

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**BOOKS:** We buy quality used Christian books. Christian Book Nook, 2116 South Preston St., Louisville, Ky. (502) 637-8881.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor to lead New Hope Community Baptist Church in Jackson, Ky. (an interim pastor is currently filling the pulpit). If you believe God might be leading you to fulfill the pastoral responsibilities of this position, please submit your resumé and cover letter by July 31 to: New Hope Community Baptist Church, 484 Robinson Road, Jackson, KY 41339, Attn: James Fugate, deacon.

**SEEKING:** Custodian. Send resumé to: Property & Space Committee, Central Ave. Baptist Church, 401 Central Ave., Elizabethtown, KY 42701.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for Dry Ridge Baptist Church in Dry Ridge, Ky. Dry Ridge Baptist Church is a Southern Baptist church in a fast-growing community, with 200-plus attending weekly worship service. Send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, PO Box 14, Dry Ridge, KY 41035; or e-mail to: [office@dryridgebaptist.org](mailto:office@dryridgebaptist.org).

**SEEKING:** Pastor of students & discipleship for fast-growing, 650-member congregation in Lexington, Ky. The ideal candidate will have a passion for students, be self-motivated and have excellent organizational skills. College degree and seminary training preferred. Send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Victory Baptist Church, 2261 Armstrong Mill Road, Lexington, KY 40515, or e-mail [wddowns@insightbb.com](mailto:wddowns@insightbb.com).

**SEEKING:** Senior pastor for Centerfield Church, a contemporary Baptist church in fast-growing Oldham County, Ky. Please reply to: Centerfield Church, 4200 S Highway 393, Crestwood, KY 40014.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of music for blended worship service for church in central Kentucky. Please contact the Music Committee at Springfield Baptist Church, PO Box 286, Springfield, KY 40069. Phone: (859) 336-3544.

**SEEKING:** Pastor for Brooksville Baptist Church (Bracken County). Send resumé to BBC, PO Box 126, Brooksville, KY 41004. Phone: (606) 735-2455.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for Liberty Point Missionary Baptist Church. Church has two Sunday morning worship services (one contemporary and one traditional) and averages 180 in Sunday school attendance. Send resumé to: Liberty Point Missionary Baptist Church, 187 Old Dover Road, Cadiz, KY 42211.

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

**SEEKING:** Experienced payroll accountant for Southern Seminary, a Christian working environment. The successful candidate will have proven accounting, computer, critical thinking, interpersonal and time-management skills, along with a strong customer service orientation. Send resumé with pay history and pay requirements to: Personnel Services, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2825 Lexington Road, Louisville, KY 40280, or e-mail to [personnel@sbts.edu](mailto:personnel@sbts.edu).

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for Grace Baptist Church located near Pikeville, Ky. Church averages 150-175 in worship attendance. College degree preferred with some seminary training. Send resumé to: Search Committee, Grace Baptist Church, PO Box 1485, Pikeville, KY 41502.

**SEEKING:** Full-time senior pastor—Rosemont Baptist Church, Lexington, Ky. Job requirements at [www.lifewaylink.com/8592776147](http://www.lifewaylink.com/8592776147). Send resumé: Search Committee, Rosemont Baptist Church, 556 Rosemont Garden, Lexington, KY 40503.

**SEEKING:** Director of music for SBC church. Bivocational will be considered. PO Box 1917, Henderson, KY 42419.

**SEEKING:** Part-time youth minister to lead growing youth group in south-central Kentucky. Interested applicants may send resúmes to: Horse Cave Baptist Church, 301 East Main St., Horse Cave, KY 42749, Attn: Search Committee; or call (270) 786-2970.

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister with youth for Broadway Baptist Church, an established, forward-looking congregation in Louisville, Ky., affiliated with CBF. A job description and other information are available at [www.broadwaybaptist.org/position-MinisterWithYouth.html](http://www.broadwaybaptist.org/position-MinisterWithYouth.html).

**SEEKING:** Southeastern Kentucky church seeks pastor who loves the Lord, teaches God's Word, relates to all ages and has strong leadership/organizational skills to guide the church to be a glory to God. Small-town church with the unique opportunity of ministering to community and Oneida Baptist Institute. Housing provided; insurance negotiable. Resúmes to: Oneida Baptist Church, PO Box 98, Oneida, KY 40972, Attn: Pulpit Committee.

**SEEKING:** Pastor for rural Southern Baptist church. Send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, 529 Ada Drive, Harrodsburg, KY 40330-1011.

**SEEKING:** Pastor. Send resumé to Piney Grove Baptist Church, c/o LaVetta Mahan, 3009 Mountain View Lane, Corbin, KY 40701.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for Second Baptist Church, located in the Western region of Kentucky. College degree preferred, with some seminary training. Send resumé to: Search Committee, Second Baptist Church, 633 Bishop St., Madisonville, KY 42431.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of youth at Bagdad Baptist Church in Shelby County. Candidate should be energetic, self-motivated, able to lead by example, to relate to all ages on a spiritual and personal level and be willing to make a long-term commitment to our youth ministry. Please send resumé to: Youth Minister Search Committee, PO Box 8, Bagdad, KY 40003.

**SEEKING:** Director of administrative support services for Southern Seminary, a Christian working environment. Scope of position includes purchasing, accounts payable, project planning and tracking. The successful candidate will have proven interpersonal, computer and critical thinking skills, along with a strong customer service orientation. Five years of appropriate experience and a bachelor's degree are preferred. Send resumé with salary history and requirements to: Personnel Services, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2825 Lexington Road, Louisville, KY 40280, or to [personnel@sbts.edu](mailto:personnel@sbts.edu).

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

## Faith healer Benny Hinn investigated by IRS, paper says

Dallas (RNS)—A yearlong inquiry by the Internal Revenue Service has focused on the ministry of flamboyant faith healer Benny Hinn and questions about his organization's operations and finances, according to a newspaper report.



Benny Hinn

The issues at the center of the IRS review underlie the tax-exempt status of Hinn's organization as a church, The Dallas Morning News reported July 6.

The IRS declined to discuss the case, and the newspaper report said it's unclear whether the agency's concerns about the ministry are close to being resolved or will open an audit.

The paper estimates that Benny Hinn Ministries raises more than \$100 million annually.

Hinn spokesman Ronn Torossian confirmed the inquiry and told The News the ministry has "fully cooperated with the IRS" and is not being audited.

He said the IRS each year sends "thousands of letters of inquiry to a sampling of non-profits."

Torossian dismissed the possibility that Hinn's tax exemptions—worth millions a year—could be at risk, repeatedly warning the newspaper that it should "be very careful about what it reports."

Hinn's World Healing Church has administrative and mail-processing headquarters in the Dallas suburb of Grapevine.

Documents provided to the newspaper by the Trinity Foundation, a Dallas-based religious watchdog group, indicate the IRS has asked for dozens of detailed answers from Hinn's ministry.

In a March 25 letter contained on the Trinity Foundation's Web site ([www.trinityfi.org](http://www.trinityfi.org)), the watchdog group's president, Ole Anthony, cited its 13-year investigation of Hinn's ministry and urged the IRS to deny it church status.

Anthony said the Trinity Foundation began its investigation of Benny Hinn Ministries in 1992 after complaints to its national victims hotline.

"We now have extensive documentation obtained from public records, informants and 'dumpster diving' at various locations, including Florida, Texas and California," Anthony wrote.

He said the watchdog group, which condemns Hinn's leadership as autocratic and his lifestyle as lavish, "most strongly disagrees" with the ministry's claims that it deserves tax-exempt status as a church.

## Skating crashes church

Ministries find teens receptive to innovative outreach

By Helena Andrews  
Religion News Service

Portland, Ore. (RNS)—Tattoos, piercings, skateboards—and Jesus? That combination seemed too heretical a decade ago, but now mainstream churches have flipped a "one-eighty," using skateboarders to bring teens into the fold.

"I think it often takes time for Christians to catch up on culture trends," said Kevin Palau, executive director of the Oregon-based Luis Palau Evangelistic Association. The religious group produced "Livin' It," a 40-minute DVD featuring skateboarders who also are Christians.

"Livin' It" has been one of the most popular skateboard videos of all time, and now PalauFest Productions, the production arm of LPEA, is making a second DVD, "Livin' It LA," set for release in October. It will feature big-name skaters Christian Hosoi, Matt Beach, Lance Mountain, Lynn Cooper and others.

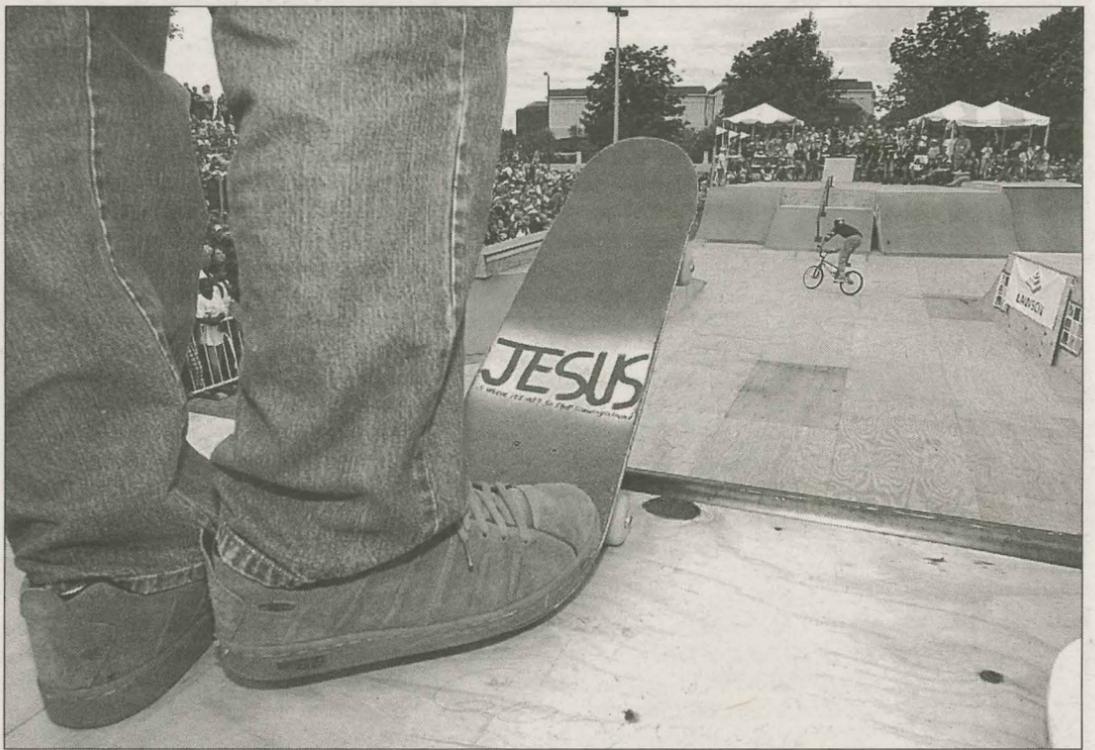
In addition, a "Livin' It Tour 2005" launched in May, with skateboard demonstrations and Christian testimonies planned for 20 cities.

"It takes time for churches and larger ministries to feel safe and comfortable with something new," Palau said. But thanks to the ministry his father started in the mid-1960s, mainstream churches are seeing the advantage of blending boards and Bibles.

### Overcoming bad reputation

Skateboarding, which has gotten a bad reputation over the past 20 years as leading boarders into drugs, alcohol and sex, isn't the rebellious teen subculture it once was, Palau said. It's a powerful evangelistic tool, he said.

The definition of Christian skateboarding is loose, but the Palau method melds wicked tricks on the half pipe with a Billy Graham-style evangelistic message. After demonstrating the newest moves, skateboarders then tell their personal stories to an onlooking



crowd of teens.

Palau "festivals" have attracted young people to festival cities with a combination of skateboarding, BMX biking, contemporary Christian music, food and a message from Luis Palau, the 70-year-old evangelist. The next festival is Oct. 8-9 in Washington, D.C.

Tom Fain, a former pro skater turned youth pastor, says the Palau's have put a new spotlight on Christian skateboarding, but it has been around for years.

"My first experience with a skateboard ministry was actually in the late '70s, and there were a few organizations doing it back then," Fain said.

In 1987, Skatechurch, arguably the nation's first organized skateboard ministry, was founded by two friends in the parking lot of Central Bible Church in Portland, Ore. Other groups followed, and traveling skateboard ministries sprouted across the country.

There are the King of Kings Skateboard Ministries based in Idaho, Steel Roots in North Carolina and Glory Skateboards in California, among others. Estimates of how many skateboard ministries exist nationwide exceed 300.

Fain said the connection be-

tween grinding and the gospel is obvious.

After winning the National Skateboarding Association's world championship in 1978, he said, he found his life empty.

"The fame and the money wasn't making me happy, so I just walked away from my career," Fain said. So for most of the 1980s he wandered the streets of Ventura, Calif., homeless, an alcoholic, sleeping on beaches and landing in the local jail.

Getting locked up, he said, is what saved him.

"I cried out to God one night and someone gave me a Bible in jail," Fain said. A week later he stopped drinking and in 1995 he convinced Sap Skateboards, a Christian skateboarding company with religious-themed boards, to sponsor him.

He traveled around Southern California demonstrating the company's religious-themed boards and telling his story.

### Cutting-edge ministry

Now the owner of Sap and a youth pastor in Ventura, Calif., the 43-year-old Fain considers himself "a cutting-edge type of a Christian."

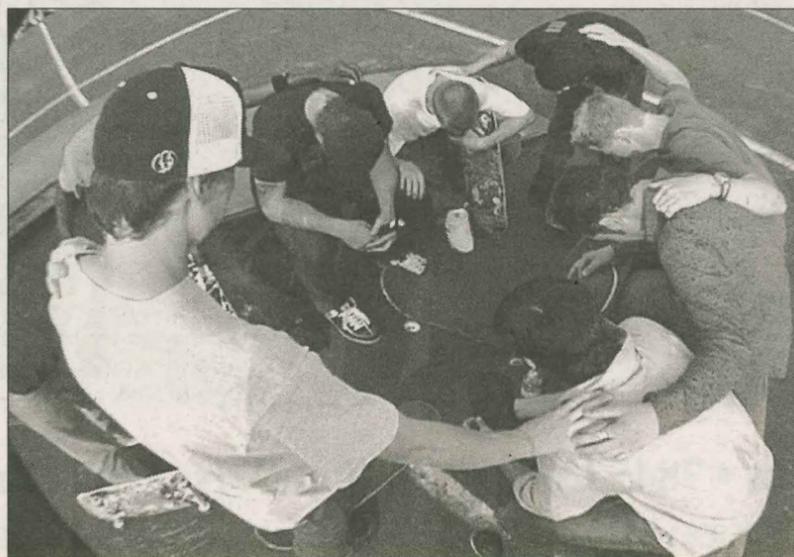
The Palau's want to be on the cutting edge of evangelism.

Since 1999, the ministry has been using skateboarding to grab the attention of the new extreme-sports generation. It builds a 10,000-square-foot skate park at each of its U.S. festivals, which have seen nearly 2 million attendees in the past six years. About 30 percent of those are young people.

"Our vision was to take an evangelical celebration outdoors and make it more appealing to not just the Christian community, but the community at large," said Craig Chastain, director of communications at LPEA.

By their count, about 52,000 people have converted to Christianity at these revivals. They want to add as many teens to that number as possible.

"More kids are riding skateboards now than are playing organized baseball," Chastain said.



PRAYER CIRCLE Skateboarders form a circle of prayer at a Palau-sponsored event.

**TRICK TIME** A Christian skateboarder prepares to perform a stunt at a "festival" sponsored by the Luis Palau Evangelistic Association. The Palau team has discovered skateboarding is an effective evangelistic tool to reach youth who may not attend church. (Photos courtesy of Luis Palau Evangelistic Association)

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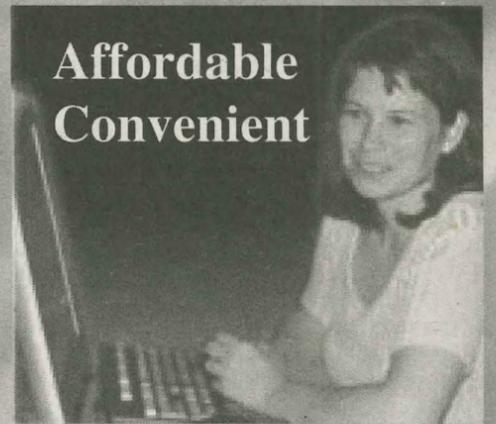
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