

PRactical RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

WESTERN RECORDER

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FOR THE RECORD

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Survey: Pastors and laity differ on spending priorities

Phoenix (RNS)—A survey of Protestant ministers and churchgoers shows significant differences in the ways the groups would spend an unexpected surge in income in their churches.

The top priority for ministers was to improve church facilities. About half as many laypeople agreed, but they also would want to retire church debt and help the needy.

The studies, conducted by Ellison Research, compared responses to companion surveys of 504 Protestant pastors and 1,184 laypeople who attend church at least once per month.

The survey found that 31 percent of pastors would spend a "sudden financial windfall" on buildings or facilities, compared to 17 percent of laypeople.

Ron Sellers, president of Ellison Research, said the differing priorities were a reflection of perspective, with "the typical layperson (having) very little idea of what it takes to run a ministry, and ministers sometimes (losing) sight of what's important to people in the congregation."

Published in the May/June edition of Facts & Trends, a magazine produced by Southern Baptists' Life-Way Christian Resources, the study asked ministers and churchgoers to select their priorities for spending if the church budget suddenly swelled.

The choices included spending money on building/expanding/updating facilities, increasing evangelizing activities, paying off debt, adding staff members, and increasing social programs, such as for homeless outreach.

Eighteen percent of churchgoers and 12 percent of ministers chose paying off debts as a main concern.

Spending on social programs was a priority for 18 percent of laity but just 6 percent of pastors.

Evangelism was identified as a primary concern for both groups, with 26 percent of clergy and 25 percent of laity saying money should go toward those efforts. But pastors leaned toward focusing evangelism on the local community (16 percent) over international (7 percent) or domestic programs (3 percent). Laity were equally divided among the three, with 8 percent favoring community evangelism, 8 percent foreign and 9 percent domestic.

Sellers said "each group probably needs to understand the priorities of the other group more clearly."

The survey also concluded that only 1 percent of ministers would raise staff pay or benefits. Sellers noted that "virtually all ministers are thinking first about their church, their community or the world at large before their own needs."

The 7 things you should know about The Da Vinci Code



NOW SHOWING "The Da Vinci Code" earned \$77 million in the U.S. during its opening weekend and \$224 million worldwide. Are you ready to discuss the story, which suggests a church conspiracy to cover up secrets about Jesus and the origins of Christianity? (Columbia Pictures photo)

If it hasn't happened already, chances are a non-Christian friend soon will ask your opinion of "The Da Vinci Code."

You've got several options. They include:

- Call it the heresy that it is and refuse to discuss it.
- Tell them you'd be happy to burn their copy of the book.
- Explain how you still haven't forgiven Tom Hanks for "Joe vs. The Volcano."
- Whisper that Silas has sworn you to secrecy.
- Explain how you still haven't forgiven Opie for "Backdraft."

Or you could, as some Christian leaders suggest, use the book and film to talk about your faith and explain how author Dan Brown got his facts wrong.

This week, on pages 6-7, we give you the ammo to do just that. First, we explore why "The Da Vinci Code" is such a big deal and why you should care.

Next, we've compiled, from a variety of sources, the strongest arguments against the story's boldest claims and most glaring errors.

Ministry evangelism: 'Go ye,' not 'y'all come'

By Trennis Henderson
Editor

Louisville—What do ministry to the homeless, sports ministry, Mother's Day Out programs, homeless ministry and food pantries have in common?

All are community-based ministries that seek to meet both physical and spiritual needs. And all of them—and more—were represented by participants at a series of "The Word Became Flesh ..." ministry evangelism workshops held last week throughout Kentucky.

Jean White, community evangelism associate for the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, led the four regional workshops sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention's mission service and ministries department.

"The gospel says, 'Go ye'; it doesn't say, 'Y'all come,'" White em-

phasized. She described community-based ministry as "an incarnational ministry where we become the hands and feet of Christ so people can come to know Him."

Regional workshops in Lexington, Louisville, Madisonville and Prestonsburg were designed to help kick off a Kentucky Baptists Connect goal of helping churches start 1,250 outreach ministries during the next five years, explained department director Eric Allen.

"There are people all around you that need to know Christ," Allen said. "How are we going to reach them and get their attention?"

"Jesus went showing the gospel, giving proof of the gospel," he said. "People like to see as well as hear the gospel. ... We want to help you as a church reach those people in your community who need to be reached."



MINISTRY MINDSET Jean White, community evangelism associate for NAMB, encourages churches to minister as "the hands and feet of Christ."

Citing the goal of starting 250 outreach ministries per year, Allen said, "The exciting part is about the people who will be reached for Jesus Christ and will be baptized into our churches as a result of these new ministries."

□ See NAMB consultant: ... *Page 3*

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, May 10.

Page, S.C. pastor, makes SBC presidency two-man race

Third nominee announced for SBC second VP

Westwego, La.
(BP)—Former Kentucky Baptist pastor Jay Adkins will be nominated for second vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention by Kentucky pastor Joed Rice of Central Baptist Church in Ashland.

Adkins, 33, has been pastor of First Baptist Church of Westwego, La., for four years. He previously served in Kentucky as pastor of Fellowship Baptist Church in South Shore.

"Jay Adkins exemplifies the best qualities of a number of young leaders now emerging in the Southern Baptist Convention," Rice said.

Adkins is the third nominee for SBC second vice president, along with Wiley Drake, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church of Buena Park, Calif., and J.D. Greear, pastor of Summit Church in Durham, N.C.

According to Southern Baptists' 2005 Annual Church Profile, the Westwego church lists 18 baptisms and \$4,981—or 6 percent of undesignated receipts—through the Cooperative Program. The churches Drake and Greear serve each give approximately 1 percent through CP.

Greensboro, N.C.—It's official. There will be at least a two-man race next month for the presidency of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Frank Page, pastor of First Baptist Church of Taylors, S.C., confirmed May 19 he will be nominated as SBC president at the June 13-14 SBC annual meeting in Greensboro, N.C. He will face Ronnie Floyd, pastor of First Baptist Church of Springdale, Ark.



Frank Page

This will be the first time since 1994 that the SBC presidency has been seriously contested, with at least two candidates announced ahead of time.

Noting last week that "I have a peace from the Lord" about being nominated, Page said, "I think it is healthy for our convention to have a choice ... about methodology."

First Baptist Church of Taylors, where Page has been pastor more than five years, gave \$535,000—or 12.1 percent of its \$4.4 million in undesignated receipts—to the Cooperative Program last year.

By contrast, First Baptist Church of Springdale, where Floyd has been pastor for 20 years, gave \$32,000—or 0.27 percent of its \$12 million in undesignated receipts—to the Cooperative Program during the same period.

An ad hoc SBC panel report, endorsed both by state convention executive directors and the SBC Executive Committee, has proposed a nine-point plan to boost CP giving. One of the proposals to be considered by SBC messengers encourages Southern Baptists to elect officers whose churches give at least 10 percent of their undesignated receipts through CP.

According to Page, "I just believe that it's time for people to not only

SBC leaders differ on presidential endorsements

Nashville—Two former Southern Baptist Convention presidents, both leaders in the denomination's power structure, are taking differing stands on this year's SBC presidential race.

Paige Patterson, president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, has endorsed Ronnie Floyd for SBC president. His action prompted a public rebuttal from Morris Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee.

Since then, two other seminary presidents—Al Mohler of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and Danny Akin of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary—also have endorsed Floyd.

Floyd's nomination, announced May 7, focused attention on his church's minimal support of the SBC's Cooperative Program

unified budget.

Patterson, an architect of the SBC's conservative shift, praised Floyd's denominational service and support of seminaries, adding: "Southern Baptists need a man whose moral fiber is unscathed by compromise with the world in respect to his home, his purity of life and his integrity. Ronnie Floyd is such a man."

In a May 13 commentary posted online, Chapman took issue with any SBC agency head serving as a convention officer or endorsing a candidate for office.

"Nominating or being nominated for an elected office of the SBC, or endorsing a nominee for an elected office, in my opinion, lessens the importance of the work to which the entity head has been called," Chapman wrote.

say they support the work of Southern Baptists, but to show it. And I hope that my candidacy will bring that discussion to light.

"Our church gives over 12 percent to the Cooperative Program and we have a huge missions program on top of that, so we believe that one can do both," Page said. "And I think that's a model that I would like for people to be able to consider."

"I want it to be very clear that it's not about theology—we're both conservatives," Page said of himself and Floyd. "It's not about personalities. I love Ronnie Floyd and think he's a wonderful man."

Page was courted as a candidate by Oklahoma pastor Wade Burleson and other conservatives anxious for a change in the SBC's direction. Burleson has been an outspoken advocate of the need for new leaders in the SBC who will be more inclusive of conservatives with different

views and not enforce narrow parameters of "conformity."

Despite the low giving percentage of Floyd's congregation, church leaders note the congregation gave an additional \$189,000—about 1.8 percent of undesignated receipts—directly to the Southern Baptist Convention's budget, bypassing the state convention, and another \$300,000 to "Southern Baptist causes," including \$25,000 to SBC seminaries.

Defending his church's giving record, Floyd said, "It's real difficult to spend percentages. You spend dollars and cents. I don't think we need to be judging a church in relationship to what it gives percentile-wise. It violates the whole essence of the Cooperative Program, which is voluntary cooperation."

Floyd's candidacy has been endorsed by three seminary presidents—Paige Patterson of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in

"When a president of an entity publicly endorses a potential nominee or nominates a candidate for elected office, he potentially alienates some who otherwise hold him in high esteem because they differ with the person he has embraced publicly for an elected office" Chapman added.

Anthony Jordan, executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, chaired a task force calling for Southern Baptists to elect officers whose churches give at least 10 percent of undesignated offerings through the Cooperative Program.

Jordan wrote in a May 8 newspaper column that Southern Baptists should elect "a man who has demonstrated belief in our cooperative approach to accomplishing the Lord's work."

Fort Worth, Texas; Al Mohler of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville; and Danny Akin of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.

The endorsements prompted a warning from SBC Executive Committee President Morris Chapman, who said it was inappropriate for agency leaders to become involved in SBC politics (see related article above).

Prior to accepting his current pastorate, Page was pastor of churches in Georgia, Texas and North Carolina. He has served on the executive boards of the South Carolina, Georgia and North Carolina state Baptist conventions.

Page, a graduate of Southwestern Seminary, is the author of "Trouble with the Tulip: A Closer Examination of the Five Points of Calvinism."

Compiled from reporting by Baptist Press and Associated Baptist Press

BAPTIST DIGEST

Third Southern staffer shifts to LifeWay. Brad Waggoner, dean of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's school of leadership and church ministry, has been named director of LifeWay Research at LifeWay Christian Resources. Waggoner is the third Southern Seminary official to accept a position at LifeWay in recent months. Thom Rainer, former dean of Southern's Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Church Growth, became LifeWay president in February. Tom Hellams, former executive assistant to the president at Southern, was named vice president and executive associate to LifeWay's president in February. Waggoner will join LifeWay July 1 after seven years at Southern. He is a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, and Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Chicago.

Texas Baptists investigate church start funds. An attorney will guide an investigation into alleged mishandling of Texas Baptist money to start churches in the Rio Grande Valley. Charles Wade, executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, has asked the convention's officers to hire an attorney to head the probe into how church-starting funds were used from 1996 to 2003 in Rio Grande Valley Baptist Association and what is now Borderlands Baptist Association. Suspicions surround the large number of cell-group mis-

sions reported as church starts in the lower Rio Grande Valley from 1996 to 2003. Critics allege some church starts that received financial assistance from the BGCT never existed, and some individuals profited by claiming to start multiple, nonexistent missions.

Boyce College hires first basketball coach. Bryce Hibbard has been hired as the first men's basketball coach at Boyce College, the undergraduate school of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. Hibbard, who has 20 years of coaching experience including a Kentucky state championship in 1997 and a state coach of the year award in 2001, signed a contract with Boyce May 11. Hibbard coached at Eastern High School and Male High School, both in Louisville, until leaving coaching last year. Hibbard, who remains a science teacher at Male, is a speaker with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and leads basketball-themed international mission trips. Boyce will begin play with the 2006-07 season in the National Christian College Athletic Association's Division II Mid-East region. James Scroggins, dean of Boyce College, said an athletic program "provides an opportunity for men to be masculine and to model a masculine Christianity, which is entirely biblical and appropriate and is something that we're trying to actually promulgate at Boyce College."

New Orleans' commencement celebrates 'mending, healing'

New Orleans (BP)—New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary's 88th commencement exercise May 13 was the first graduation on the school's main campus since Hurricane Katrina.

"There is no heartbreak so great that God cannot mend and heal, and we're celebrating that mending and healing today," declared seminary President Chuck Kelley.

A total of 241 certificates and degrees were awarded to the group of graduates known as "the Katrina class." Many of the graduates were forced to evacuate just days before the hurricane hit Aug. 29, 2005. They finished their ministry education while scattered throughout the country.

"I want all of us to remember that we have been through a time of unspeakable tragedy," Kelley said. "But when I think about what we ought to take away from this experience, there is one thing I hope all of us have discovered anew and afresh—that God is intentional."

God always tests those who are preparing for ministry with life

events, Kelley said. The goal of this testing, he said, is to find out if His followers believe what they know about God.

Kelley related the story of Paul and Silas' experience in the Philippian jail recorded in Acts 16. Despite being beaten, chained and thrown in prison, Paul and Silas continued praising God.

"They believed what they knew about God," Kelley said. "They knew that He is a Redeemer—that He has the power to take any circumstance and transform it for His glory and the good of His children."

As Paul and Silas sang, an earthquake shook the jail. The doors flew open and the chains fell from the prisoners. The jailer was about to take his own life, but Paul and Silas stopped him. Through the experience they were able to share the gospel and the jailer, along with his family, accepted Jesus.

"They believed what they knew about God," Kelley said.

"Faith isn't what we hope or wish," he added. "Faith is what we know God is going to do."

Short mission trip leads to long-term Zambia assignment

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

Paducah—Go to East Africa once, and you just might not get over it.

That's the case for Tommy and Cyndi Morreau, who traveled there with a church team and say that God used the experience to send them there for at least the next two years.

Later this month, the couple will leave for Zambia, where they will help build housing for Southern Baptist missionaries.

The members of Lone Oak First Baptist Church just west of Paducah will serve as International Service Corps appointees.

ISC missionaries serve two- or three-year terms in conjunction with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board.

The Morreaus' journey to Zambia started a year ago when they joined a church team traveling to see how they could help the Morreaus' son, Chad, who is also on a temporary, full-time mission assignment.

Instead, the couple sensed God calling them to full-time service.

"That's what broke our hearts and got our attention," Morreau said of conditions there. "There's a tremendous amount of despair. People are very poor. There's a lot of physical and human needs."

"We came home and couldn't get it off our minds," he recalled. "We

decided maybe God was calling us to go."

First, though, the couple had numerous bridges to cross, including finding someone to take over The Parlor, the restaurant they have operated for 22 years.

The answer was in front of the Morreaus' eyes. Their second-oldest son, Ryan, had returned from Nashville to join the business after being injured on his job.

Tommy said that one morning he woke up and it was as if God said, "This is what you've been praying about, to let go of the restaurant. Ryan is the one who can run it."

Other questions remained, such as whether their lack of college education would prevent them from serving.

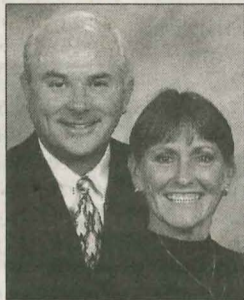
But at a regional conference near Atlanta last August, an official with the International Mission Board encouraged them to apply for temporary, full-time status.

That led to an invitation to another conference in January at IMB headquarters in Richmond, Va.

Finally, their application was approved and they completed seven weeks of training this spring.

Helping church plants

Although their job description is to supervise construction of new housing and remodeling of existing units, Morreau hopes to do more.



The Morreaus

"Everything the board does is geared toward church planting movements," Morreau said. "Our desire is to facilitate that with the people we'll be working with, building those homes."

"From a personal perspective, part of our goal is to walk closer with the Lord," he added.

Pastor Dan Summerlin calls the Morreaus a model for the congregation. "Our church is getting mission minded in a lot of ways," he said, noting that four other families with ties to Lone Oak also are serving on the mission field.

"People are realizing they can answer the call to missions part-time. They can do a short-term trip, or even a two- or three-year trip down the road. More people are open to that."

Missions-minded church

Associate Pastor Mike Williams said the church's missions giving has increased \$57,000 during the past two years, with this year's budget set at \$270,000.

While that can't all be attributed to the Morreaus, the couple's leading of a Bible study at the local Kentucky Baptist Children's Home and other missions involvement has helped, Williams said.

"The idea that individuals from the church cannot only do local and state missions, but around the world, has created an excitement," Williams said. "I've not seen this much enthusiasm in a long time."

Jeff Wallace, minister of global

outreach, worked alongside the Morreaus in Africa and last fall in Gulfport, Miss., where the church has sent numerous teams to help with post-hurricane clean-up and rebuilding.

"They have a real passion for serving the Lord and being where God wants them to be," Wallace said. "I think they're taking it to heart that it's their generation's turn (they are in their late 40s) to lead out in missions."

Although on a two-year appointment, Morreau acknowledged they might extend that term.

Initially, they will live in the capital of Zambia, but will travel to its northern province to build housing for missionaries coming to work with unreached people groups.

Additionally, their daughter expects soon to be working in Africa as well, although likely in a different country. Whitney, 22, graduated from Union University on May 20, and hopes soon to be assigned as an International Service Corps missionary for two years.

The Morreaus have taught various Sunday school classes and served on numerous committees, but Tommy stressed that they are ordinary people who don't like the limelight. (As evidence, Mrs. Morreau declined a request to be interviewed.)

"I hope through sharing that we're ordinary guys with an extraordinary God it will encourage someone else to step up," Morreau said. "This isn't about us. We just stepped up and said, 'We'll do it.'"

"This isn't about us. We just stepped up and said, 'We'll do it.'"

Tommy Morreau

NAMB consultant: Ministry evangelism involves 'go ye,' not 'y'all come'

Continued from page 1

White said ministry-based evangelism helps churches identify prospects, builds witnessing relationships, equips believers to grow in discipleship and reaches people who are unchurched.

Relationships beget prospects

"If your church is out ministering in the community, you will have prospects," she told participants. "Too often people don't see the church as relevant to their community. If you are out there serving in the community, they see you and meet you and get to know you."

"The big thing with ministry-based evangelism is building relationships," she added. "You have to build relationships so you can have an open door to share the gospel with people."

"Sharing the gospel doesn't happen unless it's intentional," she pointed out. "Living a good life is not sharing the gospel. People don't know you're a Christian just because you're good. You need to live a good, exemplary life so you have credibility, but that's not enough."

Urging Christians to be "agents of spiritual transformation and social justice," White said, "It's not enough just to do social justice; we need to share the gospel as well. We have to combine doing social justice with confronting sin and spiritual transformation."

Emphasizing the importance of demonstrating "Christlike servanthood," White said, "I think servanthood is one of the things that is

lacking the most in our churches and our denomination.

"Being a servant is tough," she acknowledged, but "God calls us to be servants. If we're not willing to be servants to the people God brings to our community, we're the ones with the problem."

White said studies show that "people are more than twice as likely to allow a person to share their faith when evangelism is combined with simple acts of servanthood."

"What's your strategy?"

"Does your church have a strategy for reaching your community?" she asked, adding that servanthood evangelism should be a key part of churches' ministry efforts.

She said examples of effective servanthood evangelism projects range from providing free oil changes for single moms' cars to raking leaves for senior adults to giving away bottled water in a park in the summer.

Servanthood evangelism "can be done by anybody," White said.

She cautioned, however, that "it doesn't matter how much we do for a person if we haven't introduced them to Christ."

Urging churches to "uncover the gaps in ministry," White said, "Don't just repeat what somebody else is doing. ... If God gives your church a ministry, there are people in your church with gifts and abilities to do it."

Rick Brenny, executive director of Jefferson Street Baptist Center in Louisville, said he attended the workshop because "I'm always

Seven keys to ministry evangelism

Louisville—Prayer is the starting point for any ministry-based evangelism efforts, Jean White told Kentucky workshop participants last week.

White, community evangelism associate for the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, outlined prayer as the first of seven steps for starting ministry evangelism programs.

"Prayer provides direction," she said. "We need to be saying, 'God, what is Your plan for this community? What is the direction You want us to take?'"

She said other key steps include:

Share the vision. "Schedule testimonies by people who have been affected by the ministry or by people who have been involved in servanthood evangelism," she suggested.

Gather information. A community assessment based on interviews with key leaders such as elected officials, school principals and business leaders can provide information about community strengths and needs. "If you can't find something to do after you've done a com-

munity assessment," White said, "you're not looking for something to do."

Determine giftedness. "We want people to minister out of their giftedness," she explained. "Find out what their gifts are and plug them into something where they can use their gifts."

Match community needs with church's gifts and resources. White encouraged church leaders to use criteria such as level of needs, available volunteers, finances and other resources to help evaluate which ministry to pursue.

Plan the ministry. "The money doesn't come first; the plan comes first," White said. "Know what the purpose of the ministry is so you can be focused on what you're going to be doing."

Equip members to verbally and intentionally share the gospel. Volunteers "need to have a plan they're comfortable with to share the gospel," White noted. She urged congregations involved in ministry evangelism to make verbal, intentional witnessing "an important part of who your church is."

looking to hone skills and get new perspectives as far as determining needs and meeting needs."

Be proactive

Affirming White's insights, Brenny said, "Probably the most significant thing that sticks with me is she stressed over and over again to be intentional and proactive, planning out ministry and following through."

Wesley Pitts, executive director of Long Run Baptist Association, said the workshop emphasized that "ministry evangelism is the practical application of doing ministry in

your community."

During an interview after one of the workshops, Allen cited the Kentucky Baptists Connect goal of 125,000 baptisms in Kentucky Baptist churches from 2005 through 2009. Effective church outreach ministries are crucial to achieving that goal, he said.

"We all have this evangelistic and baptism mindset," he said. "What we have failed to realize is ministry is one of the most effective ways to reach people and get them baptized. People being active in ministry in their communities will play a part in reaching our baptism goals."

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

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Are you in step with Jesus?

By David Jeremiah

El Cajon, Calif. (BP)—Dressed in tatters, Pastor Charles spent the week wandering the streets, seeking work, asking for help during the blizzard. His parishioners looked away, not recognizing him. Describing his adventures the next Sunday, he challenged people to begin exhibiting the compassion of Christ—to walk as Jesus walked.

In 1896 Pastor Charles Sheldon wrote "In His Steps" which posed the famous question, "What would Jesus do?"

1 Peter 2:21 tells us we are to follow in Christ's steps. What does it mean to walk "in His steps"?

When we accept Christ as Savior and Lord, we begin walking in "newness of life" (Romans 6:4). We no longer walk "according to the flesh," but "according to the Spirit" (Romans 8:4).

Jacob Koshy only wanted to be wealthy. His one-man drug-smuggling network landed him in prison in Singapore. He rolled tobacco in the pages of a Gideon Bible. Awaking with only a scrap of charred paper in his hand, he read: "Saul, Saul, Why do you persecute Me?"

Later Koshy read the story of

Saul's conversion. He asked Christ to come into his life and change his steps. He shared his story with other prisoners. Upon release, he got involved in a church, met a Christian

woman, married and became a missionary. He tells everyone, "Who would have believed that I could find the truth by smoking the Word of God?"

Do you need an about-face in some area of your life? Jesus Christ dramatically alters the direction of our lives when we begin walking with Him. He changes our steps.

Imagine walking with Christ each day, following His example of obedience—His cross walk. The spiritual exercise of walking with Christ brings a glow to our cheeks and brightness to our eyes.

We continually must ask ourselves, "What would Jesus do?" Was He concerned for others? Then we must be, too. Did He help the unfortunate? Did He shine light into dark lives? Then so must we.

Those in step with Jesus also walk with new determination. Jesus' face was set, and His feet pointed resolutely toward the cross. There was no turning back. "Now it came to pass, when the time had come for

FIRST PERSON

'Code': It's fiction

I have read "The Da Vinci Code" and thoroughly enjoyed Dan Brown's work of fiction. I am amazed (and a bit disappointed and put off) by all the rhetoric attempting to debunk a work of fiction. I am a Christian, and believe the Bible. I test what I hear and read by the Scriptures and my experience. I do not feel the need to defend God, especially from a work of fiction.

"The Da Vinci Code" does no harm to my faith and Brown is not trying to rewrite history. If a writer

were trying to convince me of his belief in an essay, I could confront those ideas with my belief. This is not Brown's goal, and he clearly sets

out in the introduction what is "fact." Anything else we can safely assume to be fiction since the book is a work of fiction. Some theologians are giving way too much power to Brown, who in no way is trying to destroy my faith. It is a work of fiction, folks.

God does not need to be defended. Much of the rhetoric I am reading and hearing on TV attacking Brown makes Christians sound silly and defensive. George Barna's re-

search indicates that no more than 5 percent of the millions of people who have read the book reported any change in their beliefs.

Brown has succeeded in writing an excellent piece of fiction. Coincidentally, he may have encouraged people who may never have given a second thought to Jesus' humanity and divinity to do so (as did "The Passion of the Christ").

I have read and heard a few preachers on the topic of "What do the Gospels really say about Jesus?" But for most critics that is not enough. Why are we so afraid of reasoned discourse?

Why not get in step with Him? Why not say, in the words of an old gospel song:

"Footprints of Jesus, that make the pathway glow.
"We will follow the steps of Jesus, where e're they go."

David Jeremiah, senior pastor of Shadow Mountain Community Church in El Cajon, Calif., is the founder of Turning Point for God

Raylene Harton
Midlothian, Va.

pregnancy center and a free medical clinic.

Paul Daily of Wild Horse Ministries led another of the outstanding sessions. Paul trained a wild horse in about 90 minutes and rode the horse with a saddle. During the entire process he presented analogies between his work with the horse and how God works with us.

We hope to partner with several associations in conducting a wild horse evangelistic outreach event, according to Dan Garland, leader of the KBC's church development and evangelism team.

KBC and associations partner in Hispanic work, church planting, disaster relief, collegiate ministry, Christian ministries, support of 25 associational programs, prayer ministries, partnership missions in Kentucky and beyond, and numerous jointly sponsored training events and evangelistic outreach ministries.

Please consider the advantages of being a strong partner with your local association and state convention in advancing God's Kingdom in Kentucky and around the world.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

Partnering with associations

The Kentucky Baptist Convention has a strong working partnership with 72 local associations across Kentucky. Fifty-six directors of missions (including about five who serve two associations each) provide leadership.

Recently, I had the privilege of attending the annual directors of missions workshop at Jonathan Creek Conference Center. Additional dialogue time was added this year in order to focus on Acts 1:8 missions.

Other presenters were Gordon Fort, the Southern Baptist International Mission Board's vice president for overseas operations, and Toby Frost, senior director of the North American Mission Board's strategic evangelism coordination team. They both were open in discussing their work and the entities they represent.

I will never forget the story Gordon told of a woman in an unnamed country who was destitute after the death of her husband. She became a Christian and has become an effec-

tive evangelist who has reached 40 women for Christ and baptism. She was arrested but has been released because she helps the poor.

We learned that Dr. Martha Myers, who was killed in 2002 by an armed intruder at the Baptist hospital in Yemen, was buried near the hospital. Her reason for burial there was so her grave would be a testimony to Jesus Christ. There were other encouraging missionary stories about the growth of the Christian faith around the world.

The group also viewed the new movie, "The Touch," based on a story from the women's shelter ministry of the First Baptist Church of Leesburg, Fla. It is about 80 minutes long and is available from Eric Allen, director of the KBC's mission service and ministries department.

The film is very realistic so preview it before showing to groups. Pastor Charles Roesel has led First Baptist, Leesburg, to develop incredible ministries and facilities, including a children's home, a crisis

GIVING

Christian estate planning basics aid stewardship

By Laurie Valentine

A Christian estate plan is one that has been developed by determining God's purposes for distribution of your assets at death and for management of your assets in the event of incapacity during your lifetime.

To accomplish God's purposes for distribution of assets at death, you need a will that provides for distribution of your probate estate (individually-owned assets and amounts payable to your estate or executor at your death).

Fine-tuning the written distribution plan under your will can be accomplished with specific bequests of designated amounts or assets to specific charitable or individual beneficiaries. You also might need to make special provision for managing the shares of your estate that pass to young beneficiaries or incapacitated beneficiaries by including testamentary trust provisions in your will.

It is important to coordinate your written plan for asset distribution (your will) with life insurance and retirement plan beneficiary designations.

You also should review the way your assets are titled. Assets titled as joint tenants with rights of survivorship do not pass under your will; they pass to the surviving joint owner. This might conflict with the provisions of your will that indicate a different overall plan of distribution.

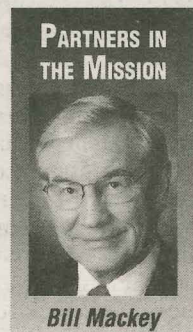
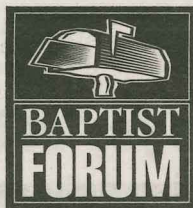
God's purposes for asset management in the event you become incapacitated as the result of a stroke, an accident or illness can be accomplished by executing a durable power of attorney. It allows you to empower someone of your choosing to make decisions for you and manage your finances if you become incapacitated.

A revocable living trust also can provide a mechanism for managing assets in the event of incapacity, as well as distribution at death without probate.

To assure the appropriate people have authority to make healthcare decisions for you if you are incapacitated, a healthcare surrogate designation should be considered. You also might determine that you wish to put in writing your desires regarding life-prolonging medical procedures in the event of a terminal condition by executing a living will directive.

Remember that estate planning is an important part of every Christian's financial stewardship responsibilities.

Laurie Valentine is trust counsel for the Kentucky Baptist Foundation



Should parents permit teen to get a 'Christian' tattoo?

Q: Our 16-year-old daughter has two friends who recently got tattoos. She wants to do the same and says she would like to get a tattoo of a dove or cross on her shoulder blade. How should we respond?

During adolescence, where discovering and establishing one's identity is important, it is not surprising that tattoos are intriguing. Teenagers love to "try on" identities and often do so daily in the form of T-shirts and other clothing.

PARENTING

While tattoos of a dove or cross hopefully express something of your daughter's identification with Christ, it is important to remember that the most important "marks of the Master" are internal. Paul reminded the Galatian Christians that following Christ did not require circumcision; to glory in the cross was to be their central focus (Galatians 4:14-15).

The only place in Scripture that addresses tattooing is Leviticus 19:28, which is written to protest the practices of pagan peoples. Given the lack of direct biblical teaching, let me simply share some concerns regarding tattooing:

First, it is important to understand that a tattoo is a colored scar made with a needle. Of the 400-plus diseases known to mankind, some 375 of them are transmitted with a needle, often in tattoo parlors that are potentially unsanitary. Not only is a tattoo a scar, it is a permanent scar that costs about \$20 to \$30 per square inch to put on and several thousand dollars per square inch to remove.

Scripture reminds us in 1 Corinthians 6:19, "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body."

While the Bible does not prohibit a tattoo, it is wise to think carefully before putting anything in or on our bodies that will be so permanent. Christians do well to remember that it is the inner marks that matter most.—*Scott Wigginton*

Q: What can my child do to help an underprivileged child in Africa?

Rick Reilly writes for Sports Illustrated. He issued a challenge in one of his recent columns that children and families might find intriguing and inviting.

In "Nothing But Nets" (May 1, 2006, issue of Sports Illustrated) Reilly reported that nearly 3,000 African children die of malaria every day. According to the World Health Organization, that number could be reduced by 60 percent if more children had mosquito nets. Unfortunately, many simply don't have the means to get a net.

Reilly discovered that the nets, which are coated with insecticide, cost \$4 to \$6 each. \$10 gets one net shipped and installed. Some nets cover a family of four, and they last four years. Bottom line: A \$10 donation probably makes a difference between life and death for a child living in Africa. Reilly jumpstarted the project with a \$20,000 donation. Within one week, \$345,000 had been raised.

American children need nets for the games they enjoy—soccer nets, basketball nets, tennis nets, table tennis nets, field hockey nets. Many children in Africa need mosquito nets just to survive.

Tell your child about the project and ask them to think about how they might help. Provide a few extra jobs so they can earn money to send. If they play sports, encourage them to get their team to contribute. Consider making "Nothing But Nets" a Sunday school class project.

To find out more, go to UNFoundation.org/malaria and look for the Sports Illustrated "Nothing But Nets" logo. Or call (202) 887-9040.—*David Garrard*

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



CP giving: What message will SBC send?

Does Cooperative Program giving really matter? While Kentucky Baptist Convention leaders have taken several recent actions that indicate their answer is a resounding "yes," some Southern Baptist Convention leaders have been sending mixed signals about the significance of giving to the 81-year-old unified budget plan.

On the state level, KBC Mission Board members affirmed a plan earlier this month that calls for employing a CP strategist and implementing a CP communications/marketing plan. The proposals from a special CP study committee also call for establishing a long-term goal of 60/40 distribution of CP receipts between the KBC and SBC and endorsing a nine-point SBC Cooperative Program strategy to be considered next month by SBC messengers.

The KBC Mission Board also approved a redistribution of former Georgetown College funds that includes almost one-fourth being channeled to SBC Cooperative Program causes. Taken together, those actions clearly communicate the state convention's commitment to enhanced CP giving.

What about on the SBC front? The SBC Executive Committee has taken the lead on CP promotional efforts by endorsing the work of two committees—an SBC funding study group and an ad hoc committee of state convention executive directors. The proposals from the ad hoc group include encouraging all Southern Baptist churches to "contribute at least 10 percent of their undesignated receipts" through CP and encouraging "the election of state and national convention officers whose churches give at least 10 percent of their undesignated receipts" through CP.

While the two national CP studies remain in the proposal stage and the recommendations are presented as suggested goals rather than directives, the mixed response comes in the CP giving levels among the churches of announced nominees for SBC office.

So far, five nominees have been announced, including two candidates for SBC president and three

for second vice president. Four of the five are pastors of congregations that give far below the suggested CP giving level of 10 percent—and three of the five are around 1 percent or less.

Ironically, SBC messengers could elect officers from churches with minimal CP support at the same meeting where they vote to encourage officers' churches to set a strong example of CP support for state, national and international mission and ministry causes.

The most glaring example is First Baptist Church of Springdale, Ark., where presidential candidate Ronnie Floyd is pastor. His church gave 0.27 percent—approximately one-40th of the proposed 10 percent level—through traditional CP channels last year.

While church leaders point out that the church also gave about 1.8 percent of undesignated receipts directly to the SBC budget, bypassing state convention ministries, the percentage still remains low.

Adding to the mixed signals is that SBC seminary presidents Danny Akin, Al Mohler and Paige Patterson—whose institutions rely heavily on CP funding—have endorsed Floyd's nomination. While CP giving certainly isn't—and shouldn't be—the only criterion for electing someone to lead the SBC, Southern Baptists deserve to have elected leaders whose churches show strong financial commitment to denominational ministry efforts at home and around the world.

According to Anthony Jordan, executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma and chairman of the ad hoc CP committee, "We do not need leaders who would return us to a less effective way of doing our work. ... We need great 'cooperators' if we are to preserve the largest mission-sending denomination in the evangelical world."

As SBC messengers gather next month, it will be interesting to see what message they choose to communicate about the importance of Cooperative Program giving.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

Pray for persecuted Egyptian believers

By Erich Bridges

Cairo, Egypt (BP)—Some time ago, the elder sister in an Egyptian Muslim family decided to follow Jesus Christ as Lord.

Instead of keeping her faith a secret, as many Muslim-background believers do, she told her younger sister—who also became a believer. One day, their mother overheard the sisters whispering about Jesus. Distracted, she slipped poison into the family's food—a little taste for everyone, a deadly dose for the older sister. The police later concluded it was an accident.

Better for her own daughter to die, the mother reasoned, than to bring shame and dishonor on the family. Such is the reality facing many new believers in Egypt, particularly in conservative Muslim families and communities.

"Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid," Jesus told the disciples when He came to them, walking on water amid the storm (Matthew 14:27).

But some storms are stronger than others.

Until you walk in their shoes, do not judge Egyptian believers too harshly if they sometimes respond as Peter did when he joined Jesus on the water. He stepped toward Jesus, but looked at the storm and began to sink beneath the raging waves. Later, in Jesus' hour of deepest suffering, Peter denied knowing his Savior.

In turn, Jesus forgave Peter, filling him with holy boldness and strengthening him to lead the fledgling church in Jerusalem.

When Peter eventually died at the hands of his persecutors, he was not alone. The One he had failed in moments of fear did not fail him.

Egyptian followers—and seekers—of God need to know that they, too, are not alone. The peoples of Egypt are the focus of this year's Day of Prayer and Fasting for World Evangelization, set for June 4, which will unite Southern Baptists and other Christians in prayer for Egypt.

Egyptians have good reasons to fear following Christ—or leading others to follow Him. Persecution of the traditional Coptic Christian minority goes back many centuries and continues today. The smaller evangelical community also faces opposition. Islamic extremism finds some of its deepest roots in Egypt. A watchful government periodically cracks down on any group—Muslim, Christian or otherwise—that it considers a potential threat.

But the deepest fears find their source closer to home: extended family, friends, local communities. Community is everything in Egypt. If the community casts you out, you essentially cease to exist.

"This culture is harsh," a Christian believer says. "There is no one to turn to. They are scared of each other. They don't trust each other.

Everybody is an informer."

Such fear doesn't just oppress spiritual seekers or secret believers. It afflicts the church. Even if followers of Christ overcome the ethnic divisions or social taboos that divide Christians from Muslims in Egypt, they fear the possible consequences of sharing the gospel: personal rejection, conflict, persecution.

"Until that fear is broken, people will not pick up the cross," a Christian believer says. "But when they say, 'I don't care anymore' (about the consequences of reaching out), that is when the tide will turn and the church will start growing."

It might be through someone like "Rafik," a Coptic-background evangelical believer. He has endured the scorn of his own community and the rejection of others to go far from home. He shares Christ with Muslim Bedouin, who exist on the fringes of Egyptian society.

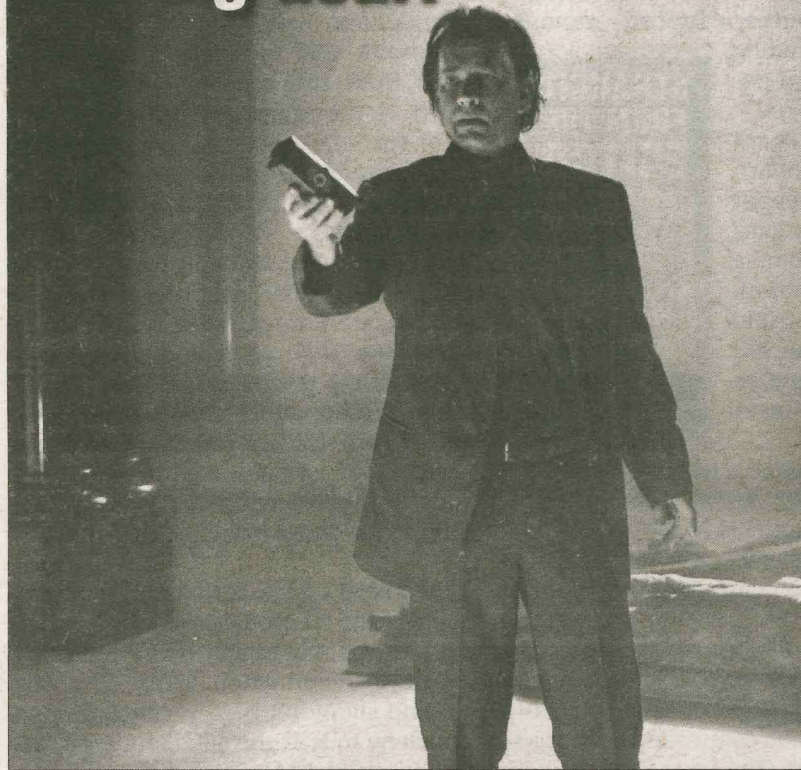
"I started my ministry for Christians only," he reflects. "But God opened my mind. He told me, 'I am sending you out for all people and all nations'—perhaps even beyond Egypt's borders.

When the tide turns, scattered believers will gather. Churches will multiply. "Persons of peace" will become spiritual doorways to their communities.

When the tide turns, persecution will not end. It likely will increase. But when the tide turns, the fear will be gone.

Erich Bridges is a senior writer with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board

#1: What's the big deal?



Quite simply, "The Da Vinci Code" is one of the most successful works of fiction of its time.

More than 60 million copies of the book have been sold worldwide, about double the number of Rick Warren's "The Purpose Driven Life." Sales will continue to rise now that the book has been released in paperback.

More people are becoming familiar with the story (and, critics would say, Dan Brown's beliefs) with last week's release of the movie. Its eventual release on video will perpetuate it even more.

Just how pervasive is the story? Consider:

■ Approximately one in every five U.S. adults has read "The Da

Vinci Code," according to Barna Research Group.

■ Despite lukewarm reviews, the movie grossed approximately \$224 million worldwide during its opening weekend.

■ Barna estimates the movie could break the \$300 million box office barrier, placing it among Titanic, Star Wars and others as one of the top 20 movies of all time based on domestic gross revenue.

"Once the movie hits theater screens, Christians will be surrounded by people who are curious about spiritual matters that are generally not topics of polite conversation in our society," Christian researcher George Barna wrote recently.

#3: Dan Brown would fail history 101

Dan Brown's claim to accuracy for "all descriptions of artwork, architecture, documents and secret rituals" has been countered by a variety of writers:

The Da Vinci Code: Characters in the book repeatedly refer to the 15th century artist as "Da Vinci."

Fact: "Da Vinci" is Italian for "of Vinci," the town near Florence where Leonardo grew up. Serious art scholars and historians refer to the artist as Leonardo or Leonardo Da Vinci. Calling him "Da Vinci" would be akin to referring to Jesus by simply "of Nazareth."

The Da Vinci Code: Leonardo da Vinci had hundreds of Vatican commissions.

Fact: He had one.

The Da Vinci Code: Silas is a murderous monk for the Opus Dei society of the Roman Catholic Church.

Fact: Opus Dei is an actual society of priests and laypeople, but it has no monks.

The Da Vinci Code: The Louvre's glass pyramid has 666 panes of glass, an ominous number.

Fact: It has 673 panes of glass.

The Da Vinci Code: The Dead Sea Scrolls were found in the 1950s and speak of Jesus as a mere mortal.

Fact: The scrolls were found in 1947 and make no mention of Jesus.

The Da Vinci Code: To prove Jesus was married to Mary Magdalene, the book's Leigh Teabing states that the Gospel of Philip describes Mary as Jesus' companion. He further states that the Aramaic word for "companion" actually means "spouse."

Fact: The Gospel of Philip is not written in Aramaic. The Greek word used for companion is accepted among scholars as meaning only companion or colleague.

Sources:

■ Jim Denison, pastor of Park Cities Baptist Church in Dallas

■ Bart Ehrman, chair of the department of religious studies at the University of North Carolina, quoted in *Belief.net*

■ Peter Smith, staff writer for the *Louisville Courier-Journal*

■ Jeffrey Weiss, staff writer for *The Dallas Morning News*

The 7 things

you should know about

The Da Vinci Code



#2: Why should I care?

Fact: ... All descriptions of artwork, architecture, documents and secret rituals in this novel are accurate.

With this claim to historical accuracy on page one, author Dan Brown implies "The Da Vinci Code" is a well-researched work of historical fiction.

Critics say readers are left to assume that the characters' arguments against the Bible's accuracy are comparable to those made by some church historians.

Likewise, the "secrets" that Jesus married Mary Magdalene and that the Council of Nicea invented Jesus' divinity are presented with an air of scholarship that sound convincing to uninformed readers.

"Most of the attacks in the past have come against the Scriptures themselves. But these are against church history," author and Christian apologist Josh McDowell said. "Almost everyone is claiming it is factual."

A work of influence

As a result, the book already has influenced some people's faith.

■ Barna Research Group found that 24 percent of those polled who have read the book said "The Da Vinci Code" helped them in relation to their "personal spiritual growth or understanding."

■ A National Geographic poll found 32 percent of Canadians who had read the book believed its theories.

■ According to Barna, 5 percent of Americans who had read the book (which translates to approximately 2 million) said the book led them to change some of their beliefs or reli-

gious perspectives.

"Any book that alters one or more theological views among 2 million people is not to be dismissed lightly," Barna writes.

"That's more people than will change any of their beliefs as a result of exposure to the teaching offered at all of the nation's Christian churches combined during a typical week."

Despite its influence, both conservative and liberal religious scholars have charged Brown with shoddy research.

Bart Ehrman, a religious studies professor at the University of North Carolina, has written "Misquoting Jesus," a book that questions the accuracy of the Gospels. Nevertheless, he criticizes several elements of history in Brown's book.

"Most of the descriptions of ancient documents, in fact, are not factual—they're part of his fiction. But people reading the book aren't equipped to separate the fact from the fiction," Ehrman told *Belief.net*

Billy Graham also weighed in. "I know of no reputable Bible scholar or historian (Christian or non-Christian) who would agree with its claims about Jesus or take it seriously."

McDowell and others say Christians should be aware of the stories and its claims in order to correct its inaccuracies among friends and family.

"We have a chance to take a public, contemporary and controversial issue and use (the book and movie) to build the faith of our children, men and women if we do it in a positive way. It's easy to do," said McDowell, who wrote "The Da Vinci Code: A Quest for Answers" to counter Brown's book.

#4 Are secret societies warring over the truth about Jesus?

Right. And Dale Earnhardt faked his death so he could spend the rest of his life in seclusion in Graceland.

Authorities ranging from church scholars to 60 Minutes agree that the organization at the center of Dan Brown's novel is a hoax.

"The Da Vinci Code" is based on the idea that a secret group called the Priory of Sion protects the centuries-old secret that Jesus married Mary Magdalene and had descendants of royal blood in France.

The book pits the Priory against Opus Dei, a Roman Catholic society that Brown characterizes as stopping at nothing to hide evil church secrets.

Brown's page one "fact" declaration claims the Priory was founded in 1099 and included such noted members as Isaac Newton and Leonardo da Vinci.

But, according to New Testament scholar Darrell Bock, "What the book plays on is a complete hoax."

Some experts agree that the earliest traces of a "Priore de Sion" appear in 1099 as a Hermetic or Gnostic society that combined paganism and Christianity. Later known as the Order de Sion, led by First Crusade leader Godfroi de Bouil-

lion, it might have become the founding group for the Knights Templar, a medieval military order created to ensure the safety of Christian pilgrims to Jerusalem. Other historians, however, say the group simply turned into Jesuits in 1617.

Any recent references to the Priory of Sion, they add, are the result of bogus documents created by a deluded anti-Semite named Pierre Plantard, now dead, whom the French government convicted of fraud.

Scholars have worked for years to disprove Plantard's claims, which culminated with him claiming a right to the French throne through connection to the ancient bloodline.

One of the most recent investigations into the Priory of Sion came last month in a 60 Minutes report, which determined Plantard's claims to be utterly false.

"The Da Vinci Crock"

French records do show a society registered July 20, 1956, and they list Plantard at the helm. Plantard's integrity, however, remains suspicious. Laura Miller wrote in a Salon.com article titled "The Da Vinci Crock" that Plantard had a history of

"fraud, embezzlement and membership in ultra-conservative, quasi-mystical and virulently anti-Semitic Catholic groups."

The Priory, as keeper of supposedly ancient bloodlines, "sought the reunification of Europe under the dual leadership of an orthodox Roman Catholic Church and a divinely ordained monarch, somewhat like the Holy Roman Emperor and preferably French," she wrote.

In the 1960s, Plantard and his cronies fabricated parchments alluding to a line of Merovingian and Frankish kings. Plantard used this "evidence" to substantiate his claim to the throne. During

the same time, Plantard deposited the parchments into the French national library, hoping later to use the library as outside verification for his scheme.

But Plantard's scheme eventually unraveled. In 1993, an investigative judge searched Plantard's home and uncovered evidence that Plantard's claims to royal blood were a fraud.

Plantard eventually admitted under oath that he had fabricated everything. He had to cease all activities related to the Priory of Sion. He lived in obscurity until his death in Paris in 2000.

"The Priory of Sion is a complete hoax by four Frenchmen in the 1950s," said Bock, a New Testament professor at Dallas Theological Seminary and author of "Breaking the Da Vinci Code."

And if the society doesn't exist, much of the historical "facts" in Brown's book crumble as well.

When considering whether such a coverup could last through the centuries, perhaps it's best to remember the words of Watergate mastermind G. Gordon Liddy: "Two people can keep a secret if one's dead."

Compiled from reporting by Hannah Elliott for Associated Baptist Press

#5 Jesus didn't file His taxes jointly

"If Jesus were not married, at least one of the Bible's Gospels would have mentioned it and offered some explanation for His unnatural state of bachelorhood."

Brown's characters cite three major arguments for why Jesus was married:

■ **The Bible didn't say He wasn't.** Robert Langdon says Jewish custom "virtually forbid a Jewish man to be unmarried." So, the argument goes, if He was single, the Bible would have explained why.

But others note that the same argument can be made to prove Jesus was single.

"Why, then, did the apostle Paul, himself celibate, not mention Jesus and Mary (in 1 Corinthians 9:5) when he argued that apostles could marry?" writes Collin Hansen, associate editor of Christianity Today magazine in a response to the book.

Apologist Mike Licona agrees, pointing to the cross.

In John's Gospel, Jesus told John to care for His mother, wrote Licona, director of apologetics and interfaith witness for the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board.

John writes that Mary Magdalene also was there, but Jesus made no plans for her care. "This would be very odd if she was Jesus' wife."

■ **Da Vinci's "Last Supper."** Character Leigh Teabing states that in the famous painting the person to Jesus' right is not John "the beloved" but a woman, specifically Mary Magdalene.

But Hansen counters that art history doesn't concur. "Artists often gave characters feminine features to portray youth," he writes. "John was the youngest of the disciples."

Licona adds that if it were Mary, the painting would be lacking one of Jesus' 12 disciples.

■ **The Gospel of Philip.** Brown cites this extra-biblical book as describing a Jesus who loves Mary more than the other disciples and "used to kiss her often on her mouth." Furthermore, Teabing states that the Aramaic word for companion in the gospel literally means "spouse."

Not only was the book written centuries later than the four Gospels and suspect in its accuracy, Licona states, but Brown has his languages wrong.

"The 'Gospel of Phillip' was written in Coptic, not Aramaic," he states. "And the Coptics had borrowed the Greek word employed here for companion (koinonos), which usually meant 'friend, colleague' rather than 'spouse.'"

#6 Christianity isn't based on a popular vote

By Mike Licona
SBC North American Mission Board

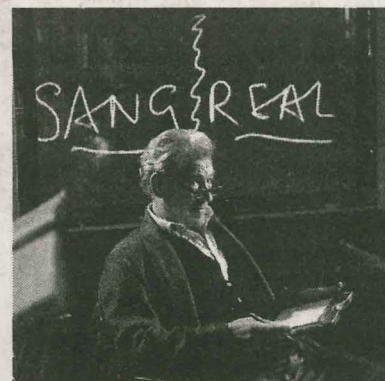
One of the more important claims in "The Da Vinci Code" is the position that Jesus was regarded by the early Christians as a mortal man who was a great prophet, but nothing more.

In fact, the book and movie claim that the belief that Jesus is the Son of God was not held by Christians until the early fourth century. Shortly afterward it was brought up and voted on at the Council of Nicea. The "new belief" that Jesus is the Son of God supposedly was adopted at Nicea, having passed by a narrow margin. At least, this is what "The Da Vinci Code" author Dan Brown tells us.

But history is quite clear on the matter, and it weighs heavily against Brown's view. The Gospel of John was written in the first century and clearly presents Jesus as the divine Son of God, even God Himself (John 1:1, 18; 8:58; 20:28). The Synoptic Gospels, which include Matthew, Mark and Luke, do not state this as clearly to the modern reader. Nevertheless, the first-century Jewish reader would have recognized Jesus' claims to divinity in the Synoptic Gospels.

Jesus' favorite manner of referring to Himself was as the Son of Man. This term had three meanings in first-century Judaism. It could be a synonym for "human." It could be a manner of referring to oneself. And it also could refer to a figure known to first-century Jews as the future Son of Man. This figure is described in Daniel 7:13-14 as one who will come in the clouds of heaven, be given an everlasting kingdom, and all will serve Him.

Although a number of Greek words are translated as "serve,"



"HISTORIAN" Ian McKellen stars as Leigh Teabing in "The Da Vinci Code." (Columbia Pictures photo)

this particular use of "serve" is used more than 130 times in the Old and New Testaments. With only one exception, it always refers to an act that is done to or for a deity. Jesus was aware that God is the only one who should be served in this manner (Matthew 4:10; Luke 4:8). Thus, it is noteworthy that although Jesus used the term "Son of Man" in all three senses, He especially saw Himself as this future Son of Man.

In His trial confession, Jesus tells all present that He is not only the Messiah and the Son of God, but also the Son of Man described by Daniel (Mark 14:61-64). Those present knew exactly what He was saying. When asked if He was the Messiah and Son of God, Jesus said, "I am; and you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven." It becomes very clear why Jesus was charged by the Jewish leaders with blaspheming God. He was claiming divinity.

Mike Licona is director of apologetics and interfaith evangelism at the North American Mission Board

#7 What now?

While some Christian leaders are calling for a boycott of "The Da Vinci Code," other theologians urge Christians to see the movie in order to talk with non-Christian friends about its content.

"I truly believe it has given us one of the most wonderful opportunities and greatest platforms to present in a positive way the claims of Christ," apologist Josh McDowell said.

"But we need to be positive, we need to be winsome and we need to be wholesome."

Craig Blomberg, a professor of New Testament at Denver Seminary, agreed.

"If we react as if we're threatened, if we censure the book and movie, we play into the hands of those who are already deceived into thinking we have something to hide, or that we're anti-intellectual, or that the facts aren't on our side," he said.

Kendall Harmon, an Episcopal theologian in South Carolina, told the Dallas Morning News that the recent controversy reminds him of how Celsus, a second-century critic of Christianity inspired early Christians to develop thoughtful responses.

A Christian who can explain why "The Da Vinci Code" is wrong is a more effective Christian, he said. "As Celsus strengthened the early church, so Dan Brown is strengthening us."

Compiled from reporting by Baptist Press, Associated Baptist Press and News Director David Winfrey

E. Ky. ministry entrepreneur honored for MSC service

"I'm hopeful that more adults entering retirement will follow the example set by Dr. Norfleet."

Eric Allen, director of the mission service and ministries department of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

By Jessica Perkins and Jonathan Johnston
Kentucky Baptist Convention

Nancy—When most people think of retirement they usually think of relaxation, not hard work, new business ventures and full-time mission work.

But most people haven't met Morris Norfleet, a man who has accomplished as many things in retirement as he achieved during his career as an educator and businessman.

Norfleet has been anything but idle during his retirement. He typically works 16-hour days, serving as a missionary through the Kentucky Baptist Convention and president of the Mountain Missions Development Corporation, managing several small businesses and serving on a lot of local and national committees.

"Morris approaches his work with great enthusiasm. ... There's no one else who gives more hours of his time per week than he does," said David Aker, a missionary who works alongside Norfleet as director of Mountain Missions Development Corporation.

Norfleet, 75, recently was honored as the Kentucky Baptist Convention's 2006 Mission Service Corps Missionary of the Year.

Mission Service Corps missionaries are self-supported ministry workers who serve a minimum of 20 hours each week in a long-term assignment. They are assigned by the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, in cooperation with the state convention where they work.

A life of education and church

"Being a part of Mission Service Corps is a calling from God that I responded to after I retired," said Norfleet, who retired from his post as president of Morehead State University in 1984. "I wasn't looking to do anything like this."

Norfleet was raised on a farm in a rural Eastern Kentucky community in the 1930s and '40s. His father and uncle were both lay ministers and taught him to faithfully serve by their example and leading.

Spiritual issues and education were two important concepts in the Norfleet home.

"My mother kept pushing me to

get more education all the time," said Norfleet, who earned degrees from the University of Kentucky and Purdue University.

He taught at Purdue and Morehead State University before rising through the ranks of administration at Morehead.



Morris Norfleet

During his 26 years at Morehead, Norfleet developed a passion for the people of Eastern Kentucky that would lead him to serve those communities in full-time mission work during his retirement.

"I developed a great admiration for what they've gone through," Norfleet said. "I get the greatest satisfaction out of working with young people."

Working with the Kentucky Baptist Convention, Norfleet began putting together the groundwork for a non-profit, interdenominational corporation that would serve the spiritual and physical needs of individuals and families in Eastern Kentucky. This was the beginning of the Mountain Missions Development Corporation.

Mountain Missions Development Corporation's primary objectives are to serve underprivileged families in Eastern Kentucky with educational opportunities such as job training and literacy programs, as well as through social programs, including establishing homes for unwed mothers, drug rehabilitation centers and assisted living centers for the elderly.

Mountain Missions reaches 47 Eastern Kentucky counties, helping families with a variety of social needs. They work with 700 area churches and thousands of volunteers who come from throughout the country to serve.

"(The program) has grown leaps and bounds," Norfleet said. "The Lord opens doors faster than you can walk through them."

In 2002 Mountain Missions introduced Family Start, a faith-based program aimed at helping Head Start eligible families get ahead educationally and economically. Thanks to a grant, Family Start works with Head Start-eligible children and their families teaching life skills.

"Our goal is to instill a new attitude and a new spirit in these children before the welfare syndrome is beaten into their brains," Norfleet said. "We want to create an opportunity for them to do things."

An inspiration to others

Norfleet's work has been inspiring to many people.

"Dr. Norfleet has been an encouragement and support to other missionaries because of his willingness to help them acquire property and resources for ministry," said Eric Allen, director of the mission service and ministries department of the Kentucky Baptist Convention. "Dr. Norfleet has been involved in economic and educational development for quite some time. But most



MSC MISSIONARY OF THE YEAR Morris Norfleet is president of Mountain Missions Development Corporation, which serves families in 47 Eastern Kentucky counties.

important to him is the spiritual development of the people of Eastern Kentucky.

"I'm hopeful that more adults entering retirement will follow the example set by Dr. Norfleet and share their talents and life experiences through missions and ministry," Allen added.

Norfleet's schedule might overwhelm most people, but he keeps a healthy perspective on his work and doesn't take all of the credit for the things being done in Appalachia.

"The good Lord gives me motivation and an opportunity to serve. He gives me wisdom to deal with what I deal with every day. It's not me, it's Him," Norfleet said. "He has given me good leadership and the support of my wife and many, many friends. I depend on a lot of people, but the Lord is the mainstay of it all."

Single Adult Conference

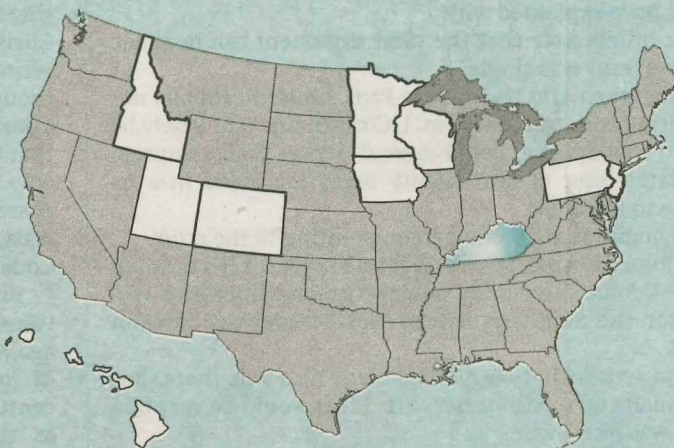
Music will be by the Christian music trio, Hope's Call. We will also have a great lineup of breakout speakers on issues of relevance to single adults.

\$45 at Door
\$30 Advance Tickets
Breakout Workshops: Sat. Only

IMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH
3100 Tates Creek Rd. • 859-665-3215 • www.ibtch.org

June 9th: 6:30pm Registration, 7pm Conference
June 10th: 8:30am Registration, 9:40am Conference

Our mission doesn't end at the state line



For more than 10 years, the Western Recorder has helped state conventions in newer work areas with their newspapers.

We work with local convention leaders, combining their local news with other resources, the stories we generate and news from wire services. As a result, the Western Recorder's ministry extends from the Bluegrass to the Colorado, Hawaii-Pacific, Iowa, Pennsylvania-South Jersey, Minnesota-Wisconsin and Utah-Idaho conventions.

PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING
WESTERN RECORDER



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Cuba Mission Trip-November 17-24, 2006

- ◆ Travel under U.S. license to Cuba
- ◆ Over 12 years of experience in Cuba
- ◆ Light construction, training, witnessing, and children's work - something for everyone to do
- ◆ Total cost from Miami - \$1,190
Includes: airfare, departure taxes, meals, motel, Cuban visa, personal insurance, and travel while in Cuba
- ◆ Contact Allen Harrod at (859) 626-5731

KENTUCKY

OVER

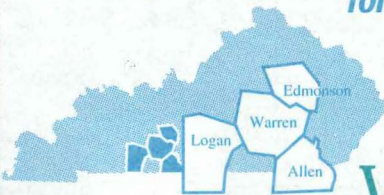
CROSS

July - November, 2006



Lifting Christ In The City

Purpose *Cross Over Warren Association of Baptists is an effort to reach the area for Christ. This will be accomplished by mobilizing churches from all over Kentucky to be involved in mission and evangelism projects in the Warren Association of Baptists area from July - November, 2006.*



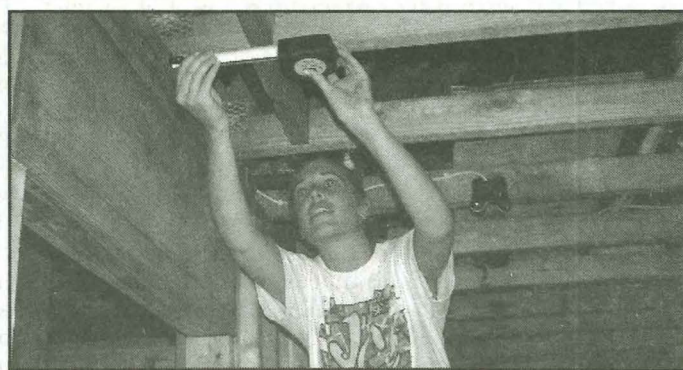
WARREN ASSOCIATION OF BAPTISTS IN SOUTH CENTRAL KENTUCKY

Overview of Projects

New Hispanic Church Building

Time Frame: Mid July - November 11, 2006

Needs: Framing walls, hanging drywall, finishing drywall, trim work, painting, cleaning up building site, etc.



Please pray about coming to the Bowling Green area and helping Lift Up the Cross of Christ and connect people to Jesus Christ. Call Amy Smith at the Warren Association of Baptists office at (270) 842-4160.

Servant Evangelism Projects

Time Frame: Wednesday - Saturday, November 8-11, 2006

Note: Groups can assist with one or more of these dates.

Needs/Projects: Winterization of homes, small repair projects, building wheelchair ramps, leaf raking, free car washes, etc.

Prayer Walking/Journeys

Time Frame: October 1 - November 1, 2006

Needs: The Prayer Walking/Journeys will consist of walking, riding or driving targeted areas and praying for the residents of each house/dwelling/dorm to be receptive to the Gospel. (see general instructions on page 2)

Community/Prayer Needs Surveys

Time Frame: Saturday, November 11, 2006 - 9:00 am to noon

Needs: Homes in targeted areas will be surveyed to determine community needs and personal prayer needs. (see general instructions on page 3)

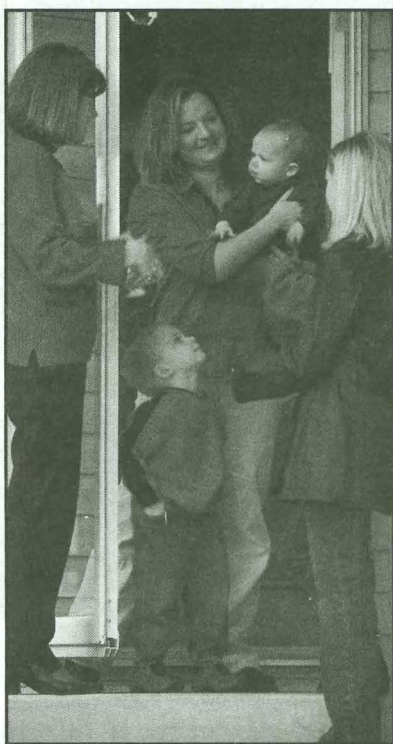
Youth Events/Emphasis

Time Frame: Saturday, November 11, 2006

Youth and youth groups are encouraged to participate in one or more of the Cross Over projects. Particular emphasis will be on Saturday, November 11 and Servant Evangelism Projects and/or the Community Needs Surveys.

Youth Nights: Sunday & Monday, November 12 & 13, 2006

A special youth event is being planned with CHAOS and Christian illusionist Brock Gill on Sunday night November 12 and Monday night, November 13, beginning at 7 p.m. More information will be available later in the summer. This event is intended to be an outreach event for students to bring unchurched friends/classmates to hear the gospel in understandable way.



Building Project New Hispanic Church Building

The **Warren Association of Baptists** is building a new **Hispanic church** building beginning the summer of 2006. This project is intended to be completed and the first service held on Sunday, November 12. Volunteers are needed beginning in July to assist with **FRAMING WALLS, HANGING DRYWALL, FINISHING DRYWALL, TRIM WORK, PAINTING, CLEANING UP BUILDING SITE, ETC.**

The volunteers can consist of groups or individuals. Volunteers will need to coordinate with the project needs and plug in according to skill level/ability and current needs. Volunteers will need to provide their own tools.

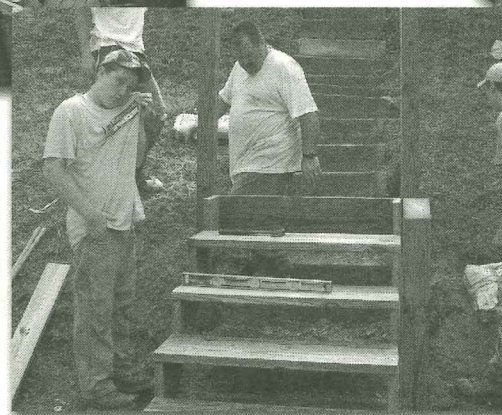
NOTE: HOUSING AND MEALS WILL BE PROVIDED FOR THE VOLUNTEERS WHO CAN COME HELP COMPLETE THE BUILDING FOR THE NEW HISPANIC CHURCH BUILDING IN THE WARREN ASSOCIATION.

Servant Evangelism Projects

Beginning **Wednesday, November 8, and ending Saturday, November 11**, volunteers are needed to help with the following: **WINTERIZATION OF HOMES, SMALL REPAIR PROJECTS, BUILDING WHEEL-CHAIR RAMPS.**

On **Saturday, November 11** volunteers are needed to assist with **LEAF RAKING, CLEANING OUT GUTTERS and FREE CAR WASHES.**

For those who can help multiple days – housing and meals will be provided.



Prayer Walks/Journeys

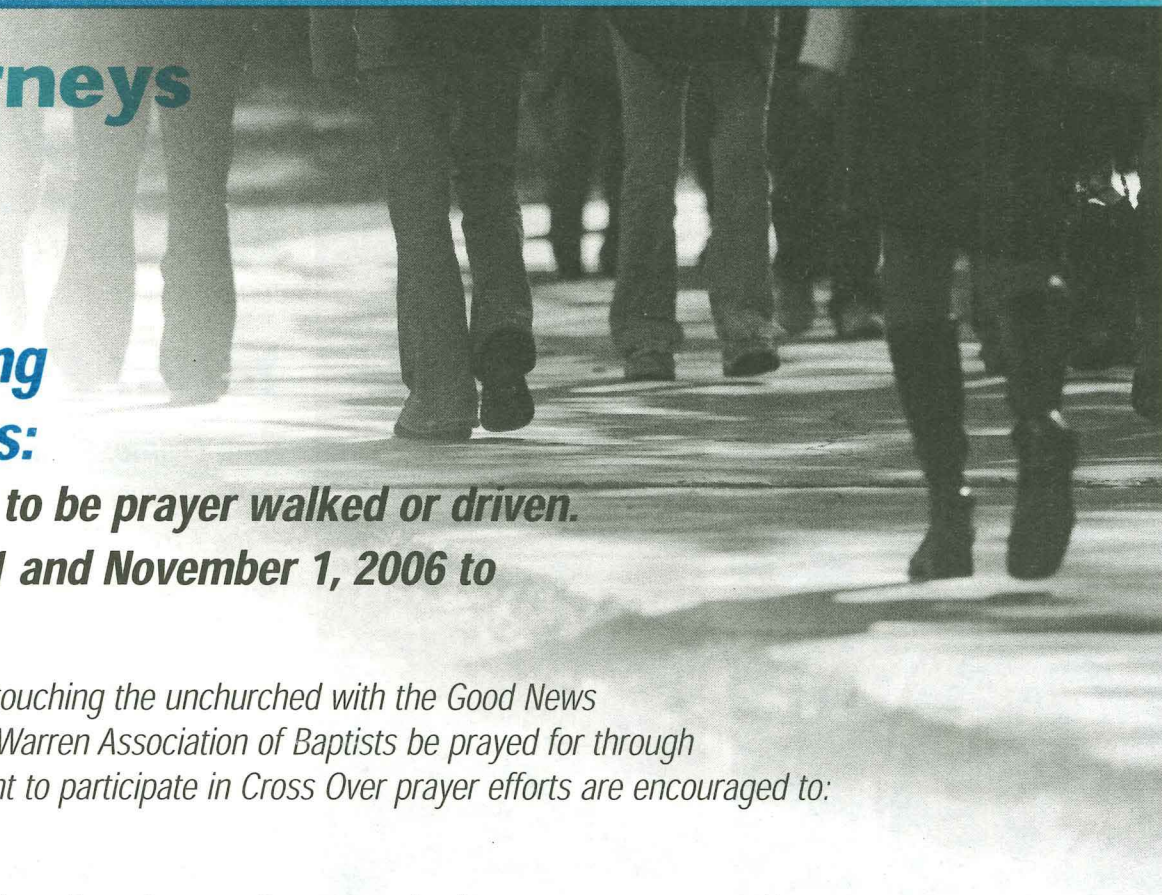
The Prayer Walking/Journeys will consist of walking or driving targeted areas and praying for the residents to be receptive to the Gospel.

INSTRUCTIONS For The Churches Participating In The Prayer Walks/Journeys:

1. Prepare maps of the targeted areas to be prayer walked or driven.
2. Designate a time between October 1 and November 1, 2006 to do the Prayer Walks/Journeys.

The key to both calling out laborers for Cross Over and touching the unchurched with the Good News is prayer. It is our desire that every targeted area of the Warren Association of Baptists be prayed for through prayer walking or driving targeted areas. Those who want to participate in Cross Over prayer efforts are encouraged to:

1. Put Cross Over on their prayer list.
2. Sign up to be part of the prayer effort for Cross Over and choose a targeted area.



A sample of the Community/Prayer Needs Survey is provided below. The basic format is that teams of three people will be assigned specific areas to survey. The teams will be given packets of materials to use. As each team goes through the survey with residents, an opportunity is extended to share a witnessing booklet with interested individuals. Each team will be assigned approximately 30 homes to survey.

COMMUNITY/PRAYER NEEDS SURVEY

- Not at home Busy Refused Survey Refused Materials

Names of Surveyors _____

Address of Home Surveyed (First print the address and then knock on the door or ring the doorbell) _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

At The Door Say:

Hello, I'm _____ and this is _____ and _____ (use first names only).

We are with _____ Baptist Church and we are trying to help our church effectively meet the needs of our community by conducting a brief community needs survey.

May we ask you a few questions?

1. What do you believe is the biggest need in our community?

2. How could our church best help our community and your family?

3. When you attend church, where do you attend?

4. Our church would like to pray for you and your family. Are there prayer concerns our church family can pray for at this time?

5. May we call and make an appointment to share with you the ministries of our church? If yes, may we have your name and phone number?

Name _____ Phone _____

6. Comments: _____

Conclusion - After each survey, please complete the information below:

- Shared witnessing booklet Profession of Faith Assurance of Salvation

This person is a prospect:

Name _____

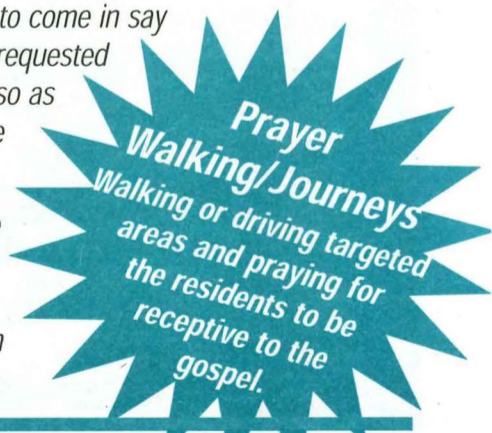
Phone (optional) _____

Comments _____

General Instructions for Community/Prayer Needs Survey

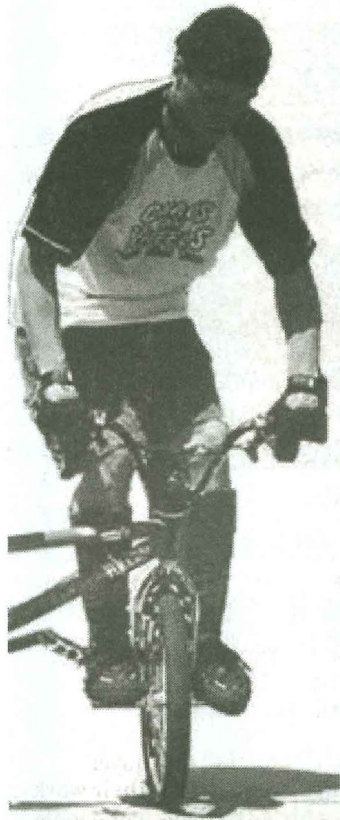
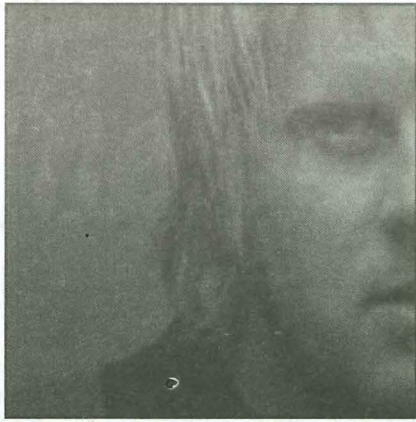
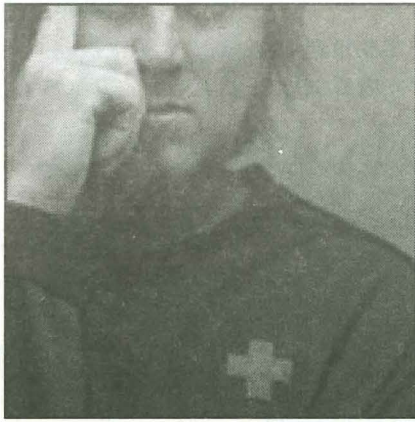
The following are general instructions for the Community/Prayer Needs Survey to be conducted in the targeted areas.

- ▶ You will be assigned to a team of three people with at least one person of the opposite sex on each team and one person from the church you are representing.
- ▶ You will be given a packet of material that contains a map that locates the area to be surveyed, the Community/Prayer Needs Survey cards and information about the church you are representing. Take time to pray together as a team for those homes you will visit and the people you will talk with.
- ▶ As you approach the residence to be surveyed, fill out the top portion of the survey including the address.
- ▶ A designated person in the group should introduce the team and share the purpose of the survey. One person on the team should record the responses while another person asks the questions. Go through the survey and, if appropriate, seek to share the gospel using the "Steps to Peace with God" witnessing booklet.
- ▶ If possible, obtain the name or names of the persons in the household and fill out the survey card before going to the next residence.
- ▶ Leave materials about the church and the witnessing booklet. If no one is home, mark this on the top portion of the survey card indicating the address and leave materials about the church.
- ▶ Do not enter the residence or go to the back door. If residents ask you to come in say that you have been requested not to enter homes so as not to inconvenience anyone.
- ▶ After completing the surveys of assigned areas, return to the church to turn in your report forms.



If you have not yet committed to **Cross Over KENTUCKY**, NOW is the time! For more information or to participate in one of many events planned, call Amy Smith at **Warren Association of Baptists** at **(270) 842-4160**.





Youth Nights

**Sunday and Monday,
November 12 & 13, 2006**

A special youth event is being planned with CHAOS and Christian illusionist Brock Gill on Sunday night November 12 and Monday night, November 13, beginning at 7 p.m. More information will be available later in the summer. This event is intended to be an outreach event for students to bring unchurched friends/classmates to hear the gospel in an understandable way.



CHAOS on Wheels will perform on youth nights.

Saturday, November 11

Youth and youth groups are encouraged to participate in one or more of the Cross Over projects. Particular emphasis will be on Saturday, November 11, and Servant Evangelism Projects and/or the Community Needs Surveys.



Cross Over Leadership Team

Dr. Jerry Oakley, Director of Missions
Warren Association of Baptists
Secretary: Mrs. Amy Smith 270 842-4160

OTHER LEADERSHIP TEAM MEMBERS: YOUTH

John Beach – First Baptist Church
270-842-0331 or 270-782-0868

SERVANT EVANGELISM

Mark Baldauff – Forest Park Baptist Church
270-843-3419 or 270-779-1364

Fred Brown – State Street Baptist Church
270-843-8016 or 270-782-0972

Kevin Hash – Burton Memorial Baptist Church
270-842-1931 or 270-393-8524

BUILDING PROJECT

Bill Jackson – Eastwood Baptist Church
270-781-5303 or 270-792-1936

Steve Ayers – Hillvue Heights Church
270-842-0012 or 270-842-1686

HOMELESS

Linda Cooper – Forest Park Baptist Church
270-782-9004 or 270-779-1238

Prayer Walk / Community Prayer Needs
Jim Doyel – Greenwood Baptist Church
270-781-2378 or 270-782-0467

Common Questions:

Who Can Participate in Cross Over Kentucky?

Youth Groups, Men's and Women's Groups and Individuals

Where Will We Stay?

There are churches where groups/individuals can stay.

Note: Housing is limited and will be provided on a first come basis.

What is the Time Frame for the Cross Over Projects?

There are different time frames depending upon the project. Please carefully note the time frame or the specific dates of each project and plan accordingly.



This event helps achieve the evangelism and missions objective of the Kentucky Baptists Connect emphasis.



Church Development and Evangelism Team

P.O. Box 43433, Louisville, KY 40253-0433
502-489-3571 or Toll Free 866-489-3571

Please visit our web site at:

www.kybaptist.org/crossover

for "Up to the Minute" information about Cross Over Kentucky and ways you can help by donating items of need.



This publication is made possible by the Cooperative Program.



'Unprecedented' crisis



FLOOD Recent rains have flooded villages along the Tapanahoni River of Suriname's interior. A radio ministry by Southern Baptist missionaries is providing information, gaining respect and spreading the gospel among area residents, (IMB photos)

IMB relief opens door to share gospel in Suriname

By Don Graham
SBC International Mission Board

Paramaribo, Suriname (BP)—As the muddy floodwaters of Suriname's Tapanahoni River recede, thousands of Aukan villagers who live along the river are welcoming a flood of a another kind: help, and lots of it.

Rice, anti-malaria drugs, gasoline and relief funds are pouring into the country's waterlogged interior.

The Southern Baptist International Mission Board is playing a critical role in addressing what the Surinamese government calls an "unprecedented" crisis.

Days of torrential rains swamped Suriname's remote rainforest during the week of May 8, forcing an estimated 22,000 people from their homes and severely affecting another 15,000, according to a United Nations disaster assessment and coordination team.

At their height, floodwaters inundated from 10,000 to 15,500 square miles as rivers rose to levels not seen in recent history.

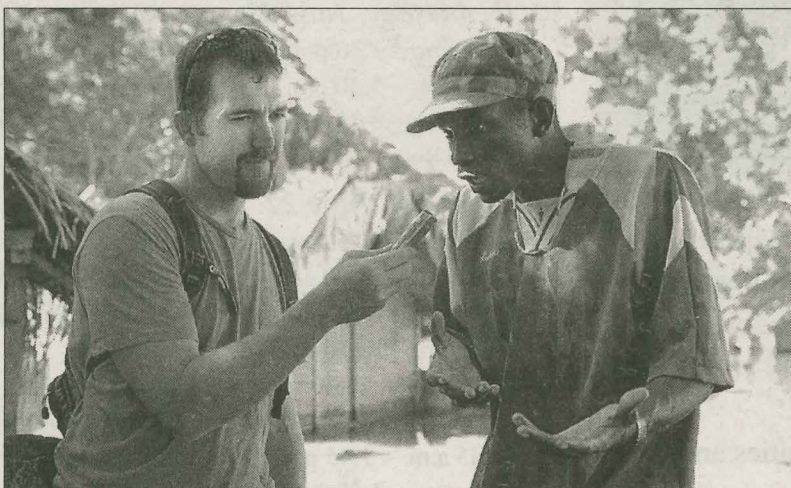
Approximately 60 percent of the population along the Tapanahoni River was displaced by the flooding. Members of the Aukaner people group evacuated from four island villages near the home of Southern Baptist missionaries Charles and Brittany Shirey.

Radio Paakati

The Shireys run "Radio Paakati," a radio ministry to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with the Aukans.

Since the flood, the station has pulled double duty, broadcasting both Bible stories and news about the disaster.

Charles Shirey said the station serves as a communications hub due to the isolation of the Aukan people. More than 100 miles from the nearest road, their villages are accessible only by air or boat. They live so deep in the jungle that no television, cell phones or other



RADIO PAAKATI Southern Baptist missionary Charles Shirey (left) and radio DJ Baa Beele travel by boat to villages on the banks of Suriname's Tapanahoni River to interview flood victims for radio programming.

means of electronic communication can reach them, except Radio Paakati.

Besides rallying prayer, the station's biggest boon has been coordinating logistics, letting villagers know when and from where help is coming. Shirey said Radio Paakati is airing reports about locations for food distribution, tips for combating flood-spawned illnesses such as malaria and diarrhea and even live interviews with aid organizations and government officials working to get more help to people in the interior.

Most villages have no electricity, but Aukans listen to the station with battery-powered radios. Paakati broadcasts most nights from 5 to 11, but since the floods the Shireys have added two more hours of programming in the morning and afternoon.

Shirey said the station has remained on the air since the flooding began, thanks to a gas generator, 15-foot stilts as the studio's foundation and a back-up plan: a DJ and emergency studio on top of the mountain where the radio station's transmitter stands. Most important, Shirey said, the Bible stories and

Christian music the station plays have continued, as well.

Shirey said it is crucial for the station to continue broadcasting, especially during a crisis. He said after three years of operation, Aukans depend on Radio Paakati. Though its gospel message recently met resistance from a few Aukan leaders, the station's service during the flood has only strengthened its standing in the community.

Food, gas & transportation

The International Mission Board also has released an initial \$22,000 for relief work. IMB strategy coordinator Tim McClard said the money is used mostly to airlift thousands of food packets and other aid from Suriname's capital, Paramaribo, to dozens of small airstrips throughout the interior. Such charter flights aren't cheap, and McClard said the cost was preventing aid groups from getting enough supplies to the people who needed them. So far, the IMB has sponsored more than 20 flights. Returning planes are loaded with evacuees fleeing to Paramaribo.

Some of the relief money also has purchased gasoline so boats

can carry food packets to outlying villages. Shirey has helped hand out more than 600 food packets in his area alone.

"It has given us huge credibility steps with men," Shirey said. "When I showed up with the food, they just kept saying, 'Charles, we really thank you for this. This is a big thing. You came out here when we needed help, and you're still here now.'"

Long-term spiritual results

Short-term humanitarian needs aside, Shirey hopes the biggest impact from the IMB's relief work in Suriname will be eternal. He said God is using the flood to soften hearts to the gospel, and he already has witnessed God at work.

Shirey recalled a man who approached him while unloading food from a relief flight at an airstrip. The man asked if he could get his wife and children to the city. Shirey told the man the plane was ready to leave and could take his family. Once they were safely in the air, Shirey said, the man asked how he could learn more about the Bible stories he heard on the radio.

As the floodwaters continue to retreat from the thatched-roof homes along the Tapanahoni River, dark clouds mark the horizon—literally. Meteorologists in Suriname say more heavy rainfall might be on the way, making possible a second round of flooding.

Many villagers are watching and waiting to see what happens next.

As far as the radio station is concerned, Shirey said he isn't wasting any time. He is in the process of installing a stronger transmitter on the tower. If the rivers do rise again, Radio Paakati will be ready.

Contributions to relief efforts in Suriname can be sent, via check, to the International Mission Board, World Hunger and Relief Ministries at Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230-0767. Write "Suriname flood—general relief" on the check's memo line. For more information, call (800) 999-3113.

Prayer requests

Missionaries Charles and Brittany Shirey offer three prayer requests for their work with the Aukan people group in Suriname:

- That God would hold back any more rain so villagers can return to their homes.

- Good health, as some villagers struggle with digestive problems from flood contamination and a possible outbreak of malaria.

- That the Aukan people will respond to the gospel during their time of need.

Sharing...

What Fellowship People Do

2006 General Assembly

General Sessions – June 22-23
Auxiliary Events – June 21 & 24
Georgia World Congress Center
Atlanta, Ga.



Celebrate the sharing spirit of Fellowship Baptists as we gather at this year's Assembly to explore "Being the Presence of Christ ... For a World in Need." Highlights of the event include opportunities for personal and professional development including:

- close to 100 workshops, worship opportunities and preaching experiences
- an ongoing Bible study
- "The Art and Craft of Preaching"
- worship samplers
- "Breaking the Silence: Compassion for an HIV Positive World"
- a Theological Education Banquet



Trevor Hudson
featured speaker



Al Staggs
worship leader

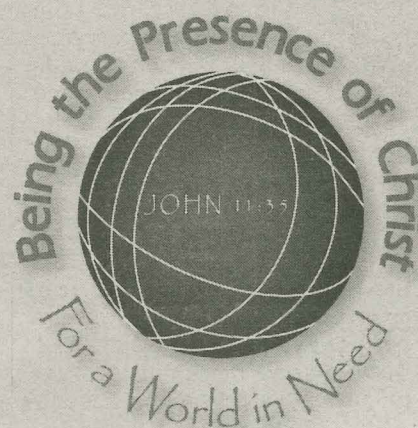


C. Michael Hawn
artist in residence



Alicia Walker
worship planner

There is no charge to attend the General Assembly.
To view updates or to register and reserve your hotel room,
visit www.thefellowship.info.



Schedule of Events

Assembly runs Thursday and Friday with auxiliary events on Wednesday and Saturday.

Wednesday, June 21

9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
1:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
8:00 p.m.

Auxiliary Events

Invitation to Sabbath: A Clergy Day Apart
HIV/AIDS Summit
Theological Education Banquet
Free concert by Salvador

Thursday, June 22

7:00 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.
8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.
8:30 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
9:00 a.m. – 10:10 a.m.
10:30 a.m. – 11:40 a.m.

Auxiliary Events

HIV/AIDS Summit
Resource Fair Open
Workshops
General Session I — Response from CBF moderator Joy Yee
Lunch & Auxiliary Events
Workshops (includes Business Breakouts)
State/Regional Meetings
Dinner & Auxiliary Events
Pre-Worship Gathering
General Session II
Resource Fair Event

Friday, June 23

7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.
8:30 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Auxiliary Events

Resource Fair Open
General Session III — Report from CBF Coordinator Daniel Vestal

11:00 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.
11:45 a.m. – 1:45 p.m.
2:00 p.m. – 3:10 p.m.
3:30 p.m. – 4:40 p.m.
5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
6:45 p.m.
7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
8:30 p.m.

Fellowship Time
Lunch & Auxiliary Events
Workshops
Workshops
Dinner & Auxiliary Events
Pre-Worship Gathering
General Session IV
Resource Fair Event

Saturday, June 24

9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Auxiliary Events

Companions in Christ training

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship 

www.thefellowship.info • (800) 352-8741

Fields Cabin dedicated

Facility honors leader who invested himself in camping

The past week was especially exciting for our ministry at Cedarmore. For the first time in more than three decades, a new building was completed on Cedarmore's main campus.

The Fields Cabin, named after the late Calvin Day Fields, is ready for occupancy and will be the temporary home of thousands of campers in the coming years. I am so grateful to the Fields family for their generous support of this project, and more significantly, I am thankful for the untold hours of work Calvin gave to reach youth while serving at Cedarmore.

The reality of our ministry is that we exist today because people previously have walked before us and laid a firm foundation that gives us strength today. I have been told many stories of how Calvin literally gave his entire summer year after year to minister to boys at Camp RaBro.

Calvin's legacy lives on today in the lives of great multitudes because of his sacrifice years ago. That legacy lives on not only in campers, but in his family as well. I have been blessed to get to know

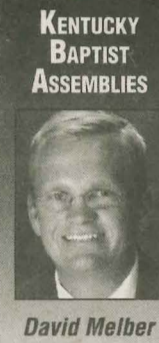
them. Calvin's investment has built a strong and loving family.

As summer draws near, please take time to come and see the changes that have taken place at Cedarmore and Jonathan Creek. We are excited about the improvements, but the real excitement comes from knowing that thousands of kids will hear of Jesus in the coming weeks.

Thank you to the Fields family for your husband, father and grandfather and his vision to see youth changed by camp. I know you are thankful for his legacy of faith.

Continue to remember our ministry in your prayers. In many ways this has been the most exciting year and the most challenging. Our opportunities are great, and the tests we face seem more intense. Pray for our resolve to remain in Him in all that we do.

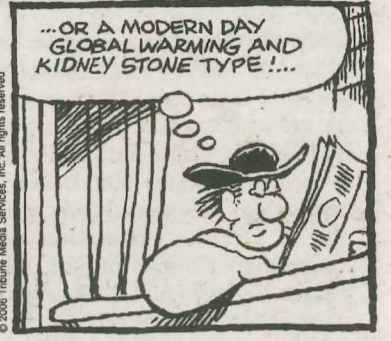
The invitation is always open to come and see what God is doing at the camps.



KENTUCKY BAPTIST ASSEMBLIES
David Melber

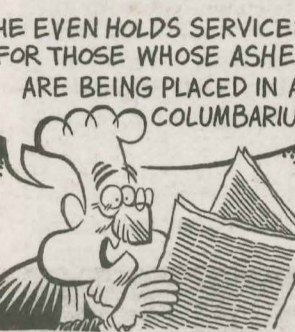
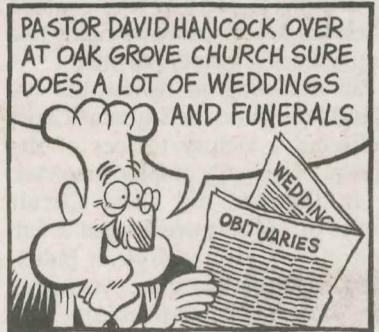
David Melber is president of Kentucky Baptist Assemblies. Contact him at Box 99918, Louisville, KY 42069-0918; phone (502) 491-7000.

Kudzu



Doug Marlette

For Heaven's Sake



Mike Morgan

Bible Crosswords

Carole Stengel

Across

- 1 "Give me this ____" (John 4:15)
- 5 "____ of false prophets" (Matthew 7:15)
- 10 Jacque's friend
- 11 Noncommissioned officer, abbr.
- 12 Angry
- 14 "Behold the ____ of God" (John 1:29)
- 16 Small child
- 17 "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the ____" (Colossians 3:2)
- 20 "Cleanse your ____" (James 4:8)
- 24 Dessert
- 25 "Ye have not because ye ____ not" (James 4:2)
- 26 "Set thy ____ among the stars" (Obadiah 1:4)
- 27 New England state, abbr.
- 28 Abram's nephew
- 30 The son of Peleth (Numbers 16:1)
- 31 "God gave the ____" (1 Corinthians 3:6)
- 34 Ruth's second husband (Ruth 4:13)
- 35 Masculine pronoun
- 36 "At thy word I will let down the ____" (Luke 5:5)
- 37 "Every ____ shall see him" (Revelation 1:7)
- 39 Summer beverage
- 40 Alternating current, abbr.
- 41 "The ____ of those things is death" (Romans 6:21)
- 44 Spoken
- 46 "____ thy foot against a stone" (Matthew 4:6)

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

- 48 God gave Joshua the victory over ____ (Joshua 8:1)
- 50 "Clothed in pure and white ____" (Revelation 15:6)
- 51 Nicodemus was a ____ of the Jews (John 3:1)
- 53 Alcoholic beverage
- 54 The Creator
- 55 "There is none good but ____" (Mark 10:18)
- 21 Largest state, abbr.
- 22 Dead letter office, abbr.
- 23 Genus, comb. form
- 25 Score an A
- 26 "These were more ____ than those in Thessalonica" (Acts 17:11)
- 28 "If thou ____ this man go" (John 19:12)
- 29 "False ____ among you" (2 Peter 2:1)
- 32 Regarding, abbr.
- 33 The ____ is the word of God (Luke 8:11)
- 38 "Teach the ____ women" (Titus 2:4)
- 39 Louisiana's neighbor, abbr.
- 40 Preposition
- 42 "She put her hand to the ____" (Judges 5:26)
- 43 "Jesus saith unto them, Come and ____" (John 21:12)
- 45 "Paul the ____" (Philemon 9)
- 47 "____ to keep you from falling" (Jude 24)
- 49 Male sibling, for short
- 50 City in California, abbr.
- 52 International peace-keeping organization, abbr.

Down

- 1 "We ____ by faith" (2 Corinthians 5:7)
- 2 Japanese pearl diver
- 3 "Grace to help in ____ of need" (Hebrews 4:16)
- 4 Nurse, abbr.
- 5 "____ young men, and maidens" (Psalms 148:12)
- 6 "None is able to ____ thee" (2 Chronicles 20:6)
- 7 Relating or resembling, suffix
- 8 "Who giveth ____ upon the earth" (Job 5:10)
- 9 And, Lat.
- 13 Elevated trains
- 15 To immerse or dip in water
- 18 Smallest state, abbr.
- 19 "A ____ of babes" (Romans 2:20)

Last week's solution

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

Isn't there something ...

... that can help folks know what to do with those new 20-dollar bills they're getting?

You're holding it.

Every week, the Western Recorder's Financial Forum column provides practical ideas for applying biblical truths about personal and church finance. Whether the topic is tithing, church budgets or personal debt, our panel of experts has the experience and insights to help your members learn and apply sound financial

PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

WESTERNRECORDER

JACKSON

NATIONAL NOTES

Study: Casinos increase crime. Researchers from the University of Georgia and Baylor University released a study that said casinos lead to significant increases in crime in communities where gambling is legalized. The researchers analyzed crime data collected from all 3,165 counties in the United States from 1977 to 1996 and examined local crime rates before and after casinos opened. By the fifth year of a casino's operation, county robberies were up 136 percent. Controlling for other factors, 8.6 percent of property crimes and 12.6 percent of violent crimes were attributed to casinos.

Will boys be named Lleh? Spell heaven backwards and what do you get? The 70th most popular name for American baby girls, Nevaeh, cracked the top 100 names for newborn baby girls for the first time in 2005, with 4,457. In 1999, only eight newborn girls were named Nevaeh. Popularity for the name has surged since Christian rocker Sonny Sandoval of P.O.D. mentioned his new baby daughter Nevaeh on the network in 2000.

Interfaith events growing since 9/11. Differing faith communities are coming together with more frequency than before the Sept. 11 2001, terrorist attacks, a survey reports. The Cooperative Congregational Studies Partnership found that approximately 22 percent of polled congregations reported participating in an interfaith religious service within the last year. About 37 percent of congregations polled said they had conducted community service with congregations of different faiths. It's a sharp rise from the organization's last survey in 2000, when 7 percent of congregations reported interfaith worship and 8 percent reported interfaith community service.

John McCain talks to Liberty grads. Sen. John McCain took a step toward reconciliation with Jerry Falwell and the religious right when he gave the commencement address at Liberty University May 13. During his run for the Republican nomination for president in 2000, McCain referred to Falwell and others as "agents of intolerance." The Arizona senator dodged divisive social issues during his campus speech, opting to focus on the idea of respecting all viewpoints, particularly those related to the war in Iraq. "Americans deserve more than tolerance for one another," he told graduates, "we deserve each other's respect."

Supreme Court declines to take cases on obscenity, gay parenting

Washington (BP)—Pro-family advocates received mixed results from the United States Supreme Court on two cases the justices recently refused to take up.

The high court announced May 15 it would not review a lower-court ruling that upheld a federal anti-obscenity law against a challenge by an Internet, hard-core pornography business.

The justices declined, however, to consider a decision that enabled a lesbian to seek parental rights to a daughter of a former partner.

In declining to review the obscenity decision, the Supreme Court delivered a victory to foes of the spread of sexually graphic material.

In October, the Third Circuit Court of Appeals overturned a federal judge's dismissal of an indictment against Extreme Associates Inc., a Los Angeles-based business.

A grand jury had indicted Extreme Associates, which acknowledged its online material is legally obscene, with conspiracy to distribute obscenity and disseminating obscene material through the mail and the Internet.

But western Pennsylvania federal court Judge Gary Lancaster dismissed the indictment, referencing a 2003 U.S. Supreme Court opinion overturning state prohibitions on homosexual sodomy.

The Lawrence v. Texas decision, Lancaster wrote, "can be reasonably interpreted as holding that public morality is not a legitimate state interest sufficient to justify infringing on adult, private, consensual, sexual conduct even if that conduct

is deemed offensive to the general public's sense of morality."

A three-judge panel of the Third Circuit, based in Philadelphia, ruled that Supreme Court precedent supported federal anti-obscenity laws against First Amendment and due process challenges. The federal court judge erred in ruling the anti-obscenity measures violate privacy rights, the Third Circuit panel said.

Homosexual "de facto parent"

Meanwhile, in a case from Washington state, the high court refused to review a decision by that state's Supreme Court granting a victory for homosexual, parental rights.

Sue Ellen Carvin and Page Britain were in a same-sex relationship when they decided to have a child by artificial insemination. Britain gave birth in 1995 to a girl, and the two women reared her until breaking up in 2001.

Britain then became engaged to and ultimately married the child's biological father, John Auseth, who had lived with both women and provided financial support after Britain became pregnant. In 2002, Britain refused to permit Carvin to visit the girl.

In November, the Washington Supreme Court ruled in a 7-2 decision Carvin could seek rights as a "de facto parent" in a lower court.

"Though we wish the Supreme Court would have heard this case, the justices must not have thought it was the appropriate vehicle to examine the legal issues involved," said Chris Stovall, senior legal counsel for the Alliance Defense Fund.

Many Americans think their pets are going to heaven even if they aren't

Washington (RNS)—Some people are more confident about their pets getting to heaven than themselves, according to a recent survey.

A new Washington Post poll found that 43 percent of Americans believe pets can go to heaven, and of those people, nearly all (93 percent) said "people's pets can go to heaven even if their owners do not."

The remainder of the 1,000 Americans surveyed weren't so sure pets would stroll through the pearly gates—28 percent gave a definitive no, 22 percent were not sure and 7 percent do not believe there is a heaven.

The poll did not indicate whether respondents think certain species are more likely to go to heaven than others, or whether undomesticated fauna are eligible in addition to pets.

The margin of error was plus or minus 3 percentage points.

In 2001, ABC News conducted a similar survey with spiritual Web site Beliefnet.com. That survey also found that 43 percent of respondents believe pets can go to heaven.

The ABC poll also compared the responses of pet owners to non-pet owners. The number of pet owners who believe pets can go to heaven was 9 percentage points higher than that of non-pet owners.

Getting ready for the class of 2007

One more Oneida senior shares story of how school changed her perspective

It's hard to believe that, with the class of 2006 gone less than 48 hours, we are getting ready for the class of 2007. In a few weeks some of those students will arrive to begin their "Oneida experience" in summer school. Other new students in the class of 2007 will arrive this fall, but most of the class will be returning juniors who have been with us for some time.

During the past seven weeks, I have shared several stories about students who made up the class of 2006. This graduation was not much different from other commencement services. There were tears, sad faces, farewells and even some smiles as the seniors realized they really had made it. One of the most stirring moments came at the end of the service. I had not shared "Libby's" (not her real name) story with

my readers earlier because she had not excelled in some areas like some of her peers and there were still some rough edges she needed to work on.

I knew I would have a difficult time reading part of her essay because it was so sad. Even though she had written about this particular account and knew I likely would read it, it still was going to be a bittersweet experience for her as she openly cried in front of everyone.

In her essay, Libby recalled her first day at Oneida and what happened as her mother was about to leave. She wrote, "I walked my mother down to the car where she gave me a big hug, but I didn't hug her back. As she got into her car she began to cry. I looked at her with a straight face, turned around and walked back inside. I was almost to the door when I heard her call out and

say, 'I love you' but I walked inside and started to laugh at the fact that she was crying."

You have to know Libby to understand just how cold she can be a times. We have learned to accept her, but we also know she can be very hurtful. But we also have seen her grow and mellow. She is definitely not the same Libby who came to us three years ago. She continued: "Later that evening I met my roommates, went to church and then went back to my room. One of the housepar-

ents came in my room and the offered to help me unpack because I hadn't started to unpack yet. I told her, "There was no need to help me unpack, because I wasn't staying!" You see, I thought my mother was just doing this to scare me. I didn't think that she would actually leave me here! I realized later that my mother was not coming back to get me for a long time. I have to admit, I was heart broken. I felt so alone and I cried all night."

Well, Libby was not the only one who was crying on the stage. As she came on the platform to receive her diploma I began to read her essay. When I came to the portion I just wrote about, my eyes filled with tears. I had to pause several times in order to clear my eyes and throat. Over the years I have seen so many families in turmoil like Libby's. I have watched and listened, as parents and child would exchange some hateful words. But I can tell you it is all worth it when you see the same parent and child later embracing with all the love and emotion possible after broken hearts have been mended. There's just nothing like it!

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



W.F. Underwood

Senior memories

Clear Creek Graduates recall their fondest memories

As graduates walk across the platform to receive their degree, they share some of their memories. This reflects the family nature of our school and graduation. We sometimes receive unexpected humor. Here are some memories shared on May 5.

"I watched God use me in ways I could never have dreamed, on the mission field in Belarus, Russia, Haiti and Alaska." Kelly Wilder, Middlesboro

"I'll never forget the warm hospitality and the challenge to my thinking that came from Jim and Dorothy Ditty in our 'Experiencing God' class.

All the professors have had a part in shaping and molding my life." Donna Lynn Turner Good, Middlesboro

"I'll remember the time I spent climbing the Kelly Hall fireplace, midnight runs to Middlesboro or scaring a group of students on the Fat Track (walking trail) one Halloween. My fondest memory is skipping classes to fulfill God's perfect will by proposing to my fiancée, Jessica Hibbs." Randy Campbell, Tennessee

"In sharing an apartment with godly girls, I was encouraged when I needed it. All the single girls uni-

fied together in Christ to form relationships and made campus life a pleasant experience." Betty Burns, London

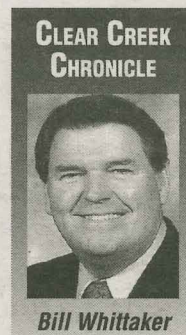
"My Clear Creek experience contained many challenges and joys. My first snow and the Christmas shopping spree are some of my favorite experiences. The greatest was that our son, Kevan,

and our daughter, Kyla, accepted Christ in our home while at Clear Creek. Many thanks for all the prayers and support while being here. I will always cherish the new friends and a special, special thanks to Mr. and Mrs. McGibney (music faculty). I love you. 'To God be the glory, great things He has

done." Vinola Khan, Trinidad

"Late night walks on the Fat Track, taking time to stand together and sing praises in the moonlight. I'm thankful for time spent with the BSU on mission trips and the rehearsals leading up to them. But the fondest memory was when God lifted my spiritual blindness to my true love and now wife, Amanda," also a graduate. Jason King, Mason

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



Bill Whittaker

666 is coming!

Right on schedule, according to movie, book, music marketers

By Piet Levy
Religion News Service

Washington (RNS)—Beware June 6, 2006: The apocalypse, the Antichrist, death metal and Ann Coulter will all be among us.

The numerical translation for this year's June 6 bears an eerie resemblance to 666, an infamous digit known as the mark of the beast or Antichrist in the Book of Revelation.

Marketing campaigns, sensing a chance to boost profits and stir up buzz, have taken notice.

From a horror film remake to books about the apocalypse and "godless liberals," they're all claiming 6/6/06 as their own.

"It's one big marketing ploy," said Robert Thompson, professor of popular culture at Syracuse University. "It is so deliciously clever as to really kind of merit (people) talking about it."

The eye-catching marketing campaign for 20th Century Fox's remake of "The Omen" first grabbed the public's attention about the date. Ominous posters and billboards featuring reading "6.6.06" started showing up this spring.

Film promoters adopted an un-

orthodox Tuesday release in order to make the 6/6/06 date stick.

Tuesdays often are used for book and CD releases, but the June 6 release date this year lends irony to some new products.

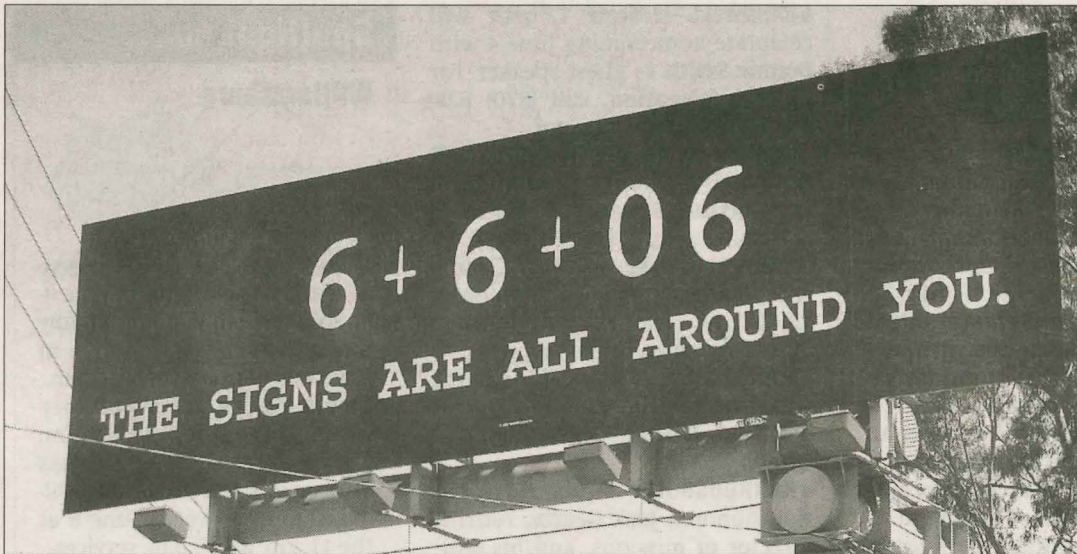
Ann Coulter's book, "Godless: The Church of Liberalism," is being released that day. Coulter said in an interview last month that the release date is her "little tribute to liberals."

On the music side, David Lee Roth releases the cheekily named "Strummin' With the Devil," a bluegrass tribute to Van Halen. Death metal is also having a banner day, with the releases of albums by such groups as As Blood Runs Black and Deicide.

The Sunday Times in London reported in April that mothers-to-be have been gossiping about the potential due date on the Mother and Baby Web site.

"Left Behind" gets in on marketing

One June 6 event claims it's not like the others. The popular "Left Behind" series, a Christian collection of novels about the apocalypse distributed by Tyndale House Publishers, is using the date to release



"The Rapture," the series' 15th installment.

"Left Behind" marketing manager Cheryl Kerwin said Tyndale had planned for several years to release an installment on that date, and said the release of "The Rapture" "will bring some light to the number."

"The end times are a dark and scary time and the Antichrist is a bad person," Kerwin said. "But this book actually brings some hope and light to an otherwise dark world."

But Kerwin also acknowledged that Tyndale chose the date "as a way to have some fun ... to create a

hook to draw visitors to the stores and to create an event day."

One Christian bookstore chain is doing just that. Through their catalogs, Parable Group is offering a special June 6 sale of old "Left Behind" paperbacks.

The price? \$6.66 each.

Tim LaHaye, co-author of the "Left Behind" series, doesn't think his readers will have a problem with the satanic sales price.

"Any time you get a solid paperback that's been a best-selling paperback, and you get it for \$6.66," he said, "it's a pretty good bargain."

OMEN-OUS SIGN

A billboard for "The Omen" plays up the film's release on June 6, 2006, or "666," which is the mark of the Antichrist in the Book of Revelation. (RNS photo)

Wouldn't it be great ...

... if churches had a resource to help families with the challenges they're facing?

You're holding it.

Every week, the Western Recorder offers Family Forum, a faith-based column to help with the variety of issues families face today. Specialists



on parenting, seniors, singles, teenagers and relationships can help equip your congregation to live out their Christianity where it matters most. Shouldn't your members be getting Family Forum?

PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING
WESTERNRECORDER

'Christian MySpace' promises safety; others not sure

By Hannah Elliott
Associated Baptist Press

Dallas (ABP)—The Internet can be a scary place, at least for the parents of teenagers flocking to social networking Web sites like MySpace and Facebook.

Teens see them as places to keep up with friends and make new ones online. But many parents imagine faceless predators trolling chat rooms.

Enter Xianz.com, a "social networking platform" that caters to a Christian crowd, offering some of the same tools as MySpace but in what organizers call a "safe environment for teens."

Xianz.com—pronounced "zans," with the "x" representing the Greek initial for "Christ"—began at the end of 2005. Still in its trial run, the Web site has only about 4,500 members. But founders Robbie Davidson and Bob Hutchins see great things ahead.

The Nashville-based Xianz started, in part, in response to bad press directed at MySpace—vulnerability to predators, questionable postings and the like. "A lot of people are wanting a safe alternative," Davidson said.

Thanks to pressure from school and law-enforcement officials, MySpace recently hired Hemanshu Nigam, director of consumer security outreach and child-safe computing at Microsoft, to oversee safety and privacy programs.

Staggering numbers, opportunity

That's quite a task for MySpace, which has more than 66 million users and gains 250,000 new ones each day.

For the founders of Xianz.com, however, such staggering numbers underscore the need for a safe Christian alternative.

In March, MySpace removed 200,000 "objectionable" profiles from its site in an effort to protect against predators and identity theft.

Davidson said Xianz uses safeguards like invite-only login rights and chat rooms segregated by age. Some observers see such safeguards as

only a minor impediment to hackers with less-than-charitable motives.

"Sounds to me like an open invitation for pagan hackers to have some fun," said blogger Alan Hartung, general editor of the Christian Web site theooze.com and former host of the radio show "A Different Perspective."

There's another problem with Christian-alternative sites, say Hartung and others. "Xianz does not appeal to me, nor do I want my children to blog their lives inside an artificially created goldfish bowl that only seems like it will be safe from undesirables," Hartung wrote.

Organizers say Xianz.com is not a "Christians-only" site. All users are welcome, Davidson said, as long as they abide by site rules.

Davidson said the lack of questionable advertisements is reason enough for Christians and non-Christians alike to want to join.

Organizers plan to launch the final version May 25.

MySpace and Xianz aren't just for teens.

Louisville counselor Vicki Hollon first got involved in MySpace as a way to keep tabs on her 17-year-old son's online activities. She thought if she created her own MySpace page, she could see her son's activities. Now, all her grown children in three states have pages as a way to communicate.

Hollon, executive director of the Wayne Oates Institute, said sites like MySpace can provide healthy ways to express creativity and individuality. While she doesn't think there's anything "inherently evil" with either a secular or a "Christian MySpace," she said the Christian affiliation will do nothing in itself to exclude adult predators.

"(The) bottom line is going to depend on who is present," Hollon said. "Do the youth have friends, or are they isolated and searching for friends? Who is facilitating the site? Who is setting and supervising ground rules? (Xianz.com) can be used for good or bad. It depends on who feeds the vacuum."

PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following Kentucky Baptist missionaries and ministries.

Substance abuse ministry of Manchester Baptist Church. The church established a ministry to recovering drug addicts after several years of intense prayer. Joining other churches to address the county's drug problem has brought spiritual renewal to the church, according to Pastor Ken Bolin. Community volunteers are preparing to build "Chad's Hope," a 50-bed drug treatment center. In addition to a concerned parents support group, the church will operate transitional housing to help recovering addicts get back on their feet. Pray that many individuals and families will find freedom and wholeness through this new ministry. Pray that God will provide the necessary resources and volunteers to finish the treatment center and transitional housing.

Mission Service Corps Missionaries Van and Marjorie Yandell of Marion. The Yandells work with a variety of ministries and present workshops to help develop such ministries as feeding the hungry, distributing clothes and furniture, ministry to the homeless, prison ministry, construction and repair projects, member retention and ministry evangelism. Pray for a network of churches and Christians that will be willing to begin ministry to unreached people in their community. Pray that lives will be transformed because of the ministries the Yandells introduce and assist others in developing.

If you would like Kentucky Baptists to join in praying for a ministry of your church or association, please send the information to Eric Allen at Eric.Allen@kybaptist.org or call (866) 489-3530.

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **BARDWELL**—Moscow Church will celebrate homecoming June 4 with **Donnie Smith** as guest speaker. For more information, call (270) 628-3519. **Joe Bagwell** is pastor.

■ **BOSTON**—Rolling Fork Church will hold revival services June 4-7 with **Dan Garland** as evangelist. For more information, call (502) 549-9400.

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Saloma Church will host a singspiration service May 28, 6 p.m., featuring a bluegrass gospel group and other singers.

■ **FOREST HILLS**—Forest Hills Church will hold revival services June 4-8 with **Bob Finch** as evangelist. **Carl Hess** is pastor.

■ **HARRODSBURG**—Mercer Association honored **Jack Geurin**, retiring director of missions, and his wife, Mary, with a reception May 7 hosted by the association's Woman's Missionary Union leadership team. The event also celebrated Geurin's 50 years in ministry. Ordained in 1956, he served churches in Kentucky, Indiana, Missouri and Tennessee before becoming Mercer Association DOM in 2001. Geurin will be available for pulpit supply and other events.

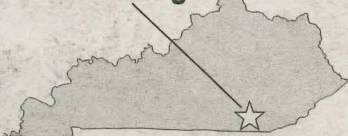
■ **LEBANON JUNCTION**—Mount Carmel Church will host an old-fashioned homecoming June 3, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. **Sam Hinkson** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Carlisle Avenue Church will celebrate 95 years of ministry June 11, 10:30 a.m. with gospel singer **Lois Jane** in concert.

Ruby Morgan, retired media services specialist for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, died May 16. She was 64. Morgan, who served 13 years in the KBC communications office, retired in 2001. She was a member of Solid Rock Church of

Spotlight on ...

Williamsburg



Main Street Church will observe a centennial celebration June 4-6. Speakers will include **Danny Davis**, pastor of First Church in Clermont, Fla., June 4, 7 p.m.; **Donnie Patrick**, pastor of Paintsville First Church, June 5, 7 p.m. Former pastors **Claude Thomas** of Texas and **Jerry Lowrie** of Williamsburg will speak June 6 at the 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. services.

God. She is survived by two sons, two daughters and seven grandchildren. Memorial gifts may be made to the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

James and Carol Albright, members of South Jefferson Church, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary May 13. **T.J. Francis** is pastor.

■ **MIDWAY**—Midway Church recently called **Tom Allen** as senior pastor. He previously was pastor of First Church of Corbin.

■ **SHELBYVILLE**—Shelby Association recently called **Tony Hough** as part-time director of missions.

What's going on?

Mail your happenings to Mountains to the Mississippi at Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253. E-mail: wesrec@earthlink.net.

KBC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June

- 3 Church Weekday Education Seminar, Bethlehem Baptist Church, Louisville.
- 10-17 Kentucky Changers, Russellville.
- 12-16 Mission Adventure Camp for Girls, Cedar Crest.
- 16-17 Mother/Daughter Overnight, Cedar Crest.
- 18-25 All-State Youth Choir/Orchestra Tour, University of the Cumberlands, Williamsburg.
- 19-23 Mission Adventure Camp for Girls, Cedar Crest.
- 23-24 Acteens Splash, Jonathan Creek.
- 23-24 Girls in Action Overnight, Jonathan Creek.
- 23-24 Mother/Daughter Overnight, Cedar Crest.
- 23-24 Mother/Daughter Overnight, Jonathan Creek.
- 24 Baptist Nursing Fellowship Summer Luncheon, Elizabethtown.

24-July 1 Kentucky Changers, Lawrenceburg.

July

- 1-4 Wrangler Trail Ride, Land Between the Lakes.
- 5-7 Express Mission Adventure Camp for Girls and Boys, Cedar Crest.
- 7-8 Mother/Daughter Overnight, Cedar Crest.
- 8-15 Kentucky Changers, Louisville.
- 10-14 Mission Adventure Camp for Girls, Cedar Crest.
- 21-22 Quarterly Prayer Meeting for Spiritual Awakening, Severns Valley Baptist Association Office, Elizabethtown.
- 21-22 World Missions Unlimited, Westport Road Baptist Church, Louisville.
- 31-August 2 Mountain Missions Conference, Oneida Baptist Institute.

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

Hail appointed NAMB missionary

Rockford, Ill.—Jewell Hail Jr., a native of Kentucky, recently was appointed by the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board as an associational missionary in Rockford, Ill. He previously was senior pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Seymour, Ind.



Jewell Hail

Hail is a graduate of Somerset Community College; University

of the Cumberlands in Williamsburg; Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas; and Luther Rice Seminary in Lithonia, Ga.

His wife, Bonnie Jean, is a graduate of Midway College, and is a registered nurse at Schneck Medical Center in Seymour, Ind. The Hails have one son, Matthew.

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE: Cemetery lot (Resthaven, Louisville). Beautiful bronze section 8, lot 859, site 6. \$1,400. (859) 266-6830.

FOR SALE: "Liquid" brand ice cream/soda fountain. Manufactured around 1949; all stainless steel; all original parts. Needs new compressor, possibly other repairs. Sold "as is." Buyer responsible for all shipping costs and logistics. \$2,500 or best offer. Please call (502) 897-4397.

SEEKING: Full-time associate pastor of youth and ministry development. Education and experience: college required, seminary preferred. Financial package: commensurate with education and experience. Georgetown Baptist Church, Georgetown, Ky., is affiliated with both SBC and CBF. To review candidate qualifications and ministry responsibilities, please visit our Web site at www.georgetownbaptist.org and select the associate pastor of youth and ministry development menu link. The church is hoping to complete interviews and select a candidate by Sept. 1, 2006. Those interested in this position should submit a resumé by June 15, 2006. Resumés may be sent to: Rev. Ken Holden, associate pastor of youth and ministry development, 207 South Hamilton St., Georgetown, KY 40324.

SEEKING: Part-time youth minister for Union City Baptist. Send resumé: 2502 Doyleville Road, Richmond, KY 40475, Attn: Search Committee.

SEEKING: Part-time youth minister. Send resumé to Eastern Gate Baptist Church, PO Box 6686, Shepherdsville, KY 40165.

SEEKING: Part-time youth minister (20 hours per week). First Baptist Church (predominant affiliation: CBF). Mail resumé to church: 254 South Buckman St., Shepherdsville, KY 40165, Attn: David Wells; or call the church office, (502) 955-7372, for more information.

SEEKING: Blood River Baptist Association will be receiving resumés for the position, director of missions, beginning May 8, 2006, and will continue receiving all postmarked on or before June 30, 2006. All interested applicants may send a resumé to: Blood River Baptist Association, PO Box 18, Hardin, KY 42048, Attn: DOM Search Committee.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor. Conservative, traditional Southern Baptist church. Resumés: Hedgeville Baptist, PO Box 626, Danville, KY 40423.

SEEKING: Part-time worship leader. Send resumé to: Highland Park First Baptist Church, 7321 Billtown Road, Louisville, KY 40299. Phone: (502) 231-3917.

SEEKING: Part-time director of missions for Mercer Association of Baptists. If interested, mail resumé to: Mercer Association of Baptists, 315 N Main St., Harrodsburg, KY 40330, Attn: Personnel Committee.

SEEKING: Full-time organist/pianist with strong accompanying skills. Mail resumé to: Melbourne Heights Baptist Church, 3728 Taylorsville Road, Louisville, KY 40220. For more information, call the church: (502) 454-4681.

SEEKING: Full-time staff minister to work with children and recreation ministries for Second Baptist Church of Greenville. This position will require skills in recruiting, training and organizing volunteers. Send letter of interest and resumé to: Search Committee, Second Baptist Church, PO Box 390, Greenville, KY 42345.

SEEKING: Severns Valley Association of Baptists is seeking God's man to serve as full-time director of missions for our 49 churches. We have two Korean churches and are involved with three other associations in starting a Hispanic ministry in this area. Please submit resumés and a cover letter by May 31 to: Director of Missions Search Committee, Severns Valley Association of Baptists, PO Box 541, Elizabethtown, KY 42702.

SEEKING: Youth minister (grades 6-12) for Corinth Baptist Church, London. Degree in religion or counseling. Submit resumé to: Search Committee, Corinth Baptist Church, 1671 Old Whitley Road, London, KY 40744.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of youth and recreation. Applicant must be spiritually mature, enthusiastic and creative. Send resumés to: Fern Creek Baptist Church, PO Box 91146, Louisville, KY 40291, Attn: Personnel Committee; or e-mail to linda@ferncreekbaptist.org. Resumés will be received through June 5. Questions: call (502) 239-0316. Linda Barnes Popham, pastor.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music in Stanford, Ky., area. For job description or more information, call (606) 365-2116.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of music and education for Fern Creek Baptist Church. Applicant must be an excellent and experienced musician, worship leader and educator and must exemplify strong spiritual maturity. Send resumés to: Fern Creek Baptist Church, PO Box 91146, Louisville, KY 40291, Attn: Personnel Committee; or e-mail to linda@ferncreekbaptist.org. Resumés will be received through June 5. Questions: call (502) 239-0316. Linda Barnes Popham, pastor.

House Bill lets military chaplains pray according to 'own conscience'

Washington (RNS)—The House approved language on May 11 that allows military chaplains to pray "according to the dictates of the chaplain's own conscience."

The vote, which was part of a defense spending bill, comes as religious groups, church-state separationists and military officials have debated the appropriateness of sectarian prayers in settings outside worship services.

"Each chaplain shall have the prerogative to pray according to the dictates of the chaplain's own conscience, except as must be limited by military necessity, with any such limitation being imposed in the least restrictive manner feasible," reads a short section within the massive legislation.

Jay Sekulow, chief counsel for the American Center for Law and Justice, a conservative advocacy group, said he was "very encouraged" and expects "major movement" on the bill later this summer.

A Navy policy issued in February urges chaplains to use inclusive prayers outside worship settings. Beyond chapel services, "religious elements for a command function, absent extraordinary circumstances, should be nonsectarian in nature," the naval rules read.

Guidelines from the U.S. Air Force, released that same month, said chaplains "will not be required to participate in religious activities, including public prayer, inconsistent with their faiths." But the guidelines also state that "nondenominational, inclusive prayer or a moment of silence may be appropriate for military ceremonies ... when its primary purpose is not the advancement of religious beliefs."

Critics have said the policies prevent chaplains from praying "in Jesus' name" wherever they wish, while supporters say nonsectarian prayers are appropriate in a pluralistic setting.

Mikey Weinstein, president of the newly founded Military Religious Freedom Foundation, harshly criticized the House action.

"There is an inescapable irony here, that this bill, which purports to be a 'defense authorization,' not only flagrantly disregards military rules, but also strikes a serious blow to the constitutional oath that every soldier, airman, sailor and Marine has sworn to uphold with their lives," said Weinstein, an Air Force veteran based in Albuquerque, N.M.

A just war?

Three years later, religious groups still divided over conflict in Iraq

By Kim Lawton
Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly

Fairfield, Conn. (RNS)—At Sacred Heart University, students in professor Brian Stiltner's class on faith and justice recently found themselves arguing again about whether the war was morally justified.

"I think we are there for a good purpose," argued one student. "Something is getting done, even though it's taking a long time."

Another student disagreed. "We went in with the wrong intentions, and us being there now—it's just making the situation worse."

Stiltner admitted his own ambivalence. "I personally took an ethical position in favor of the war at the beginning," Stiltner told the class, "but have since had serious misgivings and think it was ethically not justified."

"I've been wrestling with those issues," he added. "I think part of ethics is wrestling."

As U.S. and Iraqi casualties continue to mount and some fear the conflict may slip into civil war, ethicists and theologians continue to assess the military action, debating whether a pre-emptive war can be a just war and what ethical principles should guide the decision of when to leave Iraq.

Three years after the conflict began, ethicists remain just as divided over whether the Iraqi conflict constitutes a "just war" as when the U.S. invaded Iraq.

"I think it's really important with this complex war and long engagement to keep looking back at what we knew then, what we know now, and asking whether we'd have made the same decision," Stiltner told the PBS program "Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly."

The widely accepted moral framework for the discussions is the just war tradition, a set of teachings that began with St. Augustine in the fourth century and were further developed by St. Thomas Aquinas in the 13th century.

What is just war?

In order for a war to be considered just, it must meet the following criteria:

- There must be a just cause.
- It must be declared by the proper government authority.
- There must be a right intention and a probability of success.
- War must be a last resort.
- The means used should be proportional to the desired ends.

Three years ago, Richard Land, head of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, supported an attack against Iraq, saying it met the criteria for a just war. Three years later, he stands by that judgment.



"You have to have a just cause," he said. "Our cause was not to conquer Iraq but to liberate it. It was to defend ourselves and our allies from the possibilities of future attacks from a man who has shown a willingness to cooperate with and to train tens of thousands of terrorists, and to give them safe harbor."

Land said the benefits being achieved in Iraq morally outweigh the destruction being caused. "I think it's one of the nobler and finer things we've done as a nation, and I think that it's going to, in the end, produce a government in Iraq and a society in Iraq that is far more conscious of human rights, and far more conscious of human freedom," he said.

Ethicist Shaun Casey of Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C., disagreed with Land then, and continues to disagree with him now.

"I think the facts on the ground have confirmed those of us who felt like the war in fact would not be just," Casey said.

"They [proponents of war] said our cause was just, and they argued under a global war on terrorism that there were weapons of mass destruction, that there were links to terrorism, which we now know are not true," Casey said.

William Galston, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution in Washington, also argued against the war three years ago. He now says the failure of events to bear out the Bush administration's case for going to war has created "a loss of moral credibility, and therefore of moral authority, and therefore of operational capacity in future foreign policy."

Professor Jean Bethke Elshtain of the University of Chicago Divinity School says for her, the fact that weapons of mass destruction have not been found "is not a trump card that obliterates all the other moral and ethical considerations that I think we need to keep in the mix."

She supported the war three years ago and still believes it was morally justified.

She said at the time of the invasion, not enough emphasis was given to "what we loosely call 'humanitarian intervention.'"

"In the classic just war teaching, it's protecting the innocent from certain harm," she said. "The data on what was going on in Iraq (under Saddam Hussein) was horrid and overwhelming."

Elshtain acknowledged the casualties of the war are "a terrible cost" but insists proportional good has been won. She said she would reassess her position if the situation doesn't stabilize.

"Just occupation?"

Less certain in the just war tradition is how to end the conflict and what to do afterward. Elshtain said the tradition should be expanded to include what she calls a "just occupation."

"I think that our obligation as an occupying power is to do our very best to see if we can leave Iraq with something like that (a peaceful, ordered society) ... knowing that it finally, to sustain it, is not going to be our job over the long run. That has to be their job," she said.

There is vigorous debate about the ethics of exiting Iraq. Some analysts believe the U.S. presence in Iraq is the only thing keeping the country from civil war, while others argue that it's actually fueling the violence.

Galston said he did not know which of the two claims was the case, but said "our policy-makers have an urgent duty to assess the credibility of those claims and to shape their actions in accordance with them."

According to Land, the Iraqis play the key role in the decision. "If they told us to leave, we'd leave. They don't want us to leave," he said, adding that the U.S. has a "moral obligation" to continue standing with the Iraqi people.

Casey said the just war ethic requires an occupying power "to minimize your footprint there. You want to get out as soon as you can, whenever you intervene."

SCHOOL VISIT 1st Sgt. Ryan Laugna of Bethlehem, Pa., shows pupils at Al Manahil Primary School in Baghdad pictures he took of them while other soldiers with the 10th Mountain Division hand out candy and toys at the school. Religious leaders and ethicists continue to debate the Iraq conflict. (RNS/Newhouse photo by Li-Hua Lan)

Spring Break Missions '06 GEORGETOWN

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Coordinated through Georgetown College's Campus Ministry, over 80 students, faculty and staff dedicated their 2006 spring break to serving those less fortunate. Mission trips serve as springboards for a cross section of students to develop their Christian leadership skills and integrate service into their lives. We are proud of these outreach efforts and the positive outcomes they produce.

Garca, Brazil Alpha and Omega Children's Home

OUTREACH: Leading devotions, running a kite festival and field day, painting, and developing relationships with 130 children living in the home

"People around the world really aren't that different. They just want to be loved and accepted. Alpha and Omega is a place where that happens." - Leah Ryan, Freshman, Louisville, KY

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"... an opportunity to do something greater than ourselves and something more than the results we can see... the potential to affect hundreds and thousands of future students' lives."
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