

August 8, 2006
Vol. 180, No. 31

FOR THE RECORD

Baptists
Workers aid Lebanese and Israelis. *Page 2.*

Monticello
Church hopes to rebuild after fire. *Page 3.*

Editorial
Five quick facts about the new SBC president. *Page 5.*

New Orleans
Southern Baptists divide city to accomplish ministry. *Page 7.*

North Korea
Some evangelicals breaking ranks with Bush. *Page 9.*

Nation
FDA rethinks "morning after pill" restrictions. *Page 10.*

People
Cowboy churches aren't just for Texas anymore. *Page 13.*

Officials: Town can't afford any more churches

Stafford, Texas (BP)—City officials in Stafford, Texas, say their town of 19,000 people simply can't afford for any more churches to move in.

Stafford, near Houston, is the largest city in Texas without a property tax, so it depends on sales taxes and business fees for revenue, according to a report by the Los Angeles Times July 31.

But the town has 51 churches and other religious institutions within its 7 square miles, and too many tax-exempt groups are hurting the economy.

"We respect the Constitution but 51 of anything is too much," said Leonard Scarcella, the town's mayor.

Nonprofit organizations are attracted to Stafford by its rapid growth and minimal deed restrictions, the Times said, but it has come to the point where someone has to pay for the local police, fire department and schools.

Stafford has religious facilities for Buddhists, Muslims, Chinese Baptists, Filipino Baptists, Spanish-speaking Baptists, and "every other variety of Christian you can imagine," Scarcella told the Times. In fact, one quarter-mile section of the city is home to 17 churches.

A city council member told the Times that most people who attend the churches don't even live in Stafford but drive from Houston and other places. The city recently passed an ordinance making it difficult for churches to build in the area, hoping that will stem the tide of growth.

House churches



NUMEROUS Barna Research Group estimates 43 million Americans attend a house church every month. (Punchstock photo)

Are they more prevalent than we thought?

By Hannah Elliott
Associated Baptist Press

Dallas (ABP)—For the first time, advocates of the house-church movement in America have solid facts to back up their enthusiasm.

And those stats are shocking: Perhaps one in five American adults attends a house church at least once a month.

While attendees themselves have long said that an increasing number of Americans are moving from First Baptist on Main Street to living-room congregations, the very nature of home churches—decentralized, undocumented and unadvertised—has made them difficult to

study. Until now.

In a June report from the Barna Group, evangelical researcher George Barna said 70 million Americans regularly attend or have "experimented with" a house church. That's an increase of 8 percent since 1996, the report said. Moreover, the movement is taking on evidence of permanence, he said.

"The traditional ways of thinking about and experiencing 'church' are rapidly being revolutionized by a form of 'religious choice,' in which people are taking greater personal responsibility for their spiritual experience and development," Barna said in the report.

"Today, house churches are moving from the appraisal phase into the acceptance phase. We anticipate house-church attendance during any given week to double in the coming decade and a growing proportion of house-church attenders to adopt the house church as their primary faith community."

Furthermore, the study noted, more than 20 million adults attend services in home churches each week. Over the course of a month, that number rose to 43 million. Findings were based on a year of research including phone interviews with more than 5,000 adults.

□ See *Are house churches ... Page 8*

Lexington churches work together to minister to homeless, poor

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

Lexington—Having never met near a bridge, the church's name is a bit of a misnomer.

But sponsors of "Church Under the Bridge" in Lexington say the name still fits because they were inspired by a church by the same name in Waco, Texas, that also reaches out to homeless and low-income people.

Attracting 200 to 400 people for Sunday afternoon services, the group marked its second anniversary earlier this summer.

About 20 Lexington area churches, including six Kentucky Baptist congregations, have helped conduct 3 o'clock worship, followed by a meal.

The group includes Immanuel Baptist and Shiloh Baptist churches, home to two of the project's four founders.

The others: Consolidated Baptist Church, Bracktown First Baptist Church and Imani Baptist Church of Lexington; and Central Baptist Church of Winchester.

"It's really a neat ministry," said Brian Harris, the Central Baptist member who persuaded his congregation to get involved.

"A good percentage are homeless and another percentage are not totally mentally competent, but all blend together well," said Harris, co-owner of a Lexington construction firm.

Southland Christian Church member Allison Johnston, who coordinates the effort, said its vision

is to serve the spiritual, physical and emotional needs of the homeless and marginally-housed.

"We believe that the love of Jesus will be seen through our services," Johnston said. "I would have to say it has been a wonderful education for myself. To be able to come each week and hear from Episcopalians, Baptists, Methodists and others has helped me become a more well-rounded Christian."

The inspiration for Church Under the Bridge originated with Immanuel Baptist's Stella Kidd.

She got the idea after her daughter, Christina, went to Baylor University in Waco, Texas, a few years ago.

Kidd admits she was a bit alarmed after Christina called to say she had found a church home that met un-

der an interstate bridge.

"I thought, 'She's going to church with all the drunks; this can't be safe,'" Kidd recalled.

But after visiting Christina a couple months later and attending the original Church Under the Bridge, Kidd instantly changed her mind.

"It was overwhelming to see the love of Jesus in action," said Kidd, who operates a photo studio with her husband, Mark. "It was wonderful to see people do whatever it takes to take the love of Jesus to people so they can see it."

After returning to Lexington, Kidd showed the pictures she had snapped to her office manager. That sparked discussions about how they could start a similar effort.

□ See *Lexington churches ... Page 3*

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, August 9.

BAPTIST
DIGEST

Betty Criswell, widow of former Southern Baptist Convention President W.A. Criswell, died Aug. 2 in Dallas. She was 93. A graduate of Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, she first met Criswell when he came to her hometown of Mount Washington to lead a prayer service, the Dallas Morning News reported. They were married in 1935 in the chapel of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. Evangelist Billy Graham, a longtime member of First Baptist Church of Dallas where Criswell was pastor for 50 years, issued a written statement: "We join in rejoicing that Betty Criswell has joined her beloved husband in heaven at the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ, whom she has served for so long. Her tremendous ministry will be greatly missed at First Baptist Church of Dallas." The Morning News described Mrs. Criswell as "a local legend herself, staunchly supporting her husband" and teaching a Sunday school class that aired on a local radio station for nearly 30 years.

Robert Sloan, former president of Baylor University, appears poised to assume the presidency of Houston Baptist University, a conservative school affiliated with the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention. The HBU presidential search committee recommended Sloan at a special called meeting of the university's board of trustees Aug. 1. The board will reconvene this week to vote on the recommendation. If elected, Sloan will succeed Doug Hodo, who served as HBU's second president from 1987 until his retirement in July. Sloan served as Baylor's president from 1995 to 2005—a period marked both by significant expansion at the university and division over Sloan's leadership and the school's direction. Sloan currently is Baylor's chancellor.

Baptist workers aid Lebanese and Israelis

By Erich Bridges
SBC International Mission Board

Beirut, Lebanon (BP)—The frightened, protective Muslim mother finally agreed to let Christian medical workers take her sick 2-year-old daughter to the hospital.

"If you send me with one of your people, I am ready to go with her," the Shiite woman told the Christians at Beirut Baptist School, where she has found shelter for her family from the fighting that raged near her home.

Then, from behind the black veil that completely covered her face, she quietly spoke these words: "Please, pray for my daughter."

Amid the darkness and suffering of war, a ray of light is shining in Lebanon.

For weeks, Lebanese Baptists and other Christians have been housing, feeding—and loving—hundreds of mostly Shiite Muslim families driven from their homes in Beirut's southern suburbs and towns farther south by the battles between Hezbollah guerrillas and the Israeli military.

During normal times, the two groups might never encounter one another, much less form friendships, in Lebanon's uneasy mix of religious and ethnic factions.

Food, medicine & blankets

While Lebanese Baptists help refugees in Beirut, Southern Baptists in the region are channeling nearly \$50,000 in aid to Lebanese Christians to provide food, medicine, blankets and other supplies to families fleeing the fighting in the south. Baptists in Israel also are assisting people in need in northern Israel, where Hezbollah rockets continue to fall.

Up to 750,000 Lebanese have been displaced by the war so far. Many of them have flooded into hundreds of schools and other temporary shelters—including the Beirut Baptist School and the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary in Beirut. Some 1,000 refugees are living at the two schools until they can return to their homes.

"We are fully packed right now," said Nabil Costa, director of the Leb-



SHELTER Laundry in the windows bears witness to the role of Beirut Baptist School as a temporary home to hundreds of refugees fleeing the fighting in Lebanon. Baptists and other volunteers cook meals, clean and do what they can to help create a safe refuge for those seeking shelter. (BP photo)

anese Society for Educational and Social Development (also known as the Lebanese Baptist Society). "We cannot take anyone more, and yet we squeeze more in. But we are happy serving all those people.

"It was God's timing. It was not our choice. But we feel we are more ready to serve people from different backgrounds because we saw their suffering, and they are ready to receive how we are helping them."

With aid from Baptists and others worldwide, the Lebanese believers are providing food, medicine and other essentials to refugees at the two schools—and to several hundred other nearby people.

Refugee families crowd the classrooms at the schools, their laundry hanging out the windows, as Baptists and other volunteers cook meals, clean, play with the children and do what they can to create a safe refuge in the midst of a terrible situation.

"They trust us," Costa said. "We are not trying to force anything on them. The first thing they ask us is, 'Do you want to convert us to Christianity?' And we tell them, 'You are here because we love you. We want to show you that we love you and take care of you.' We are earning our Christian credibility.

"Pray that we do not grow weary

and that we will show our genuine love to the people who we usually do not deal with, and in certain cases to the people who we think are the cause of our troubles. This is our real challenge now as Christians, to show them our genuine love—not only by talking, but by living and by giving and sacrificing. This is what true Christianity is."

"The biggest needs right now ... are food, medicine, pallets to sleep on and blankets," a Southern Baptist worker in the region said. "The money so far has been used to buy items like milk powder for babies, bread and medicine for people with diabetes and heart trouble and for children with fevers."

Haven for Israelis in need

In Israel, Baptists and other believers also are helping the hurting. Hundreds of thousands of people have sought safety in bomb shelters as Hezbollah forces in Lebanon continue to fire rockets into northern Israel. Many more cannot work regularly or provide for their families until the bombing stops.

The Baptist Village camp near Tel Aviv has provided a haven to a number of Israeli children from the north, giving them some relief from the daily tension and fear back home.

SBC president challenges missionaries in South Asia

South Asia (BP)—Concern for non-Christians begins with revival, Southern Baptist Convention President Frank Page told a group of Southern Baptist International Mission Board missionaries in southern Asia.

"In order for that revival to come, we have to be the people of God" and follow the instructions God gives Christians in 2 Chronicles 7:14, Page said.

"I believe you can serve the Lord the way you want to serve Him only when you've experienced the tears of regret and the action of repentance," Page said, adding that tears of rejoicing and restoration of service will follow.

Page, pastor of First Baptist Church in Taylors, S.C., was invited three years ago to "come and share God's Word with our missionaries and their families serving Christ in South Asia," said IMB regional

leader David Garrison. The South Carolina Baptist Convention has a three-year ministry partnership with the IMB's South Asia region, which includes India and six surrounding countries.

South Asia has 1,432 people groups, and 345 of those have more than 100,000 people. But they remain unengaged by any evangelical mission organization, Garrison noted.

"Together, they comprise almost half a billion people," he said. "The remaining task is enormous."

Page exhorted the missionaries to experience revival "so that we can become the people that we need to be, so that we can love the lost like we should." Drawing from 2 Chronicles 7:14, Page shared six messages to encourage the Asia workers to humble themselves, pray and turn from all that hinders their intimacy with God.

While a believer's salvation through Christ is secure, Page said, "You can lose your sweet, close fellowship. You can lose the joy of your salvation. And you can lose your influence. When you are not right with Christ, you no longer can influence (non-Christians) the way you need to.

"We daily need forgiveness. We must constantly seek the forgiveness that comes from the shedding of Christ's blood. Let Christ create in you a new heart.

"That's what it's all about. Seek a new heart from God ... so that you'll be able to love the lost.

"The race that's marked out for you, it's winnable, and no one can take the prize from you because the prize is Jesus," Page emphasized. "He is the One who gives us the power to achieve the goal. He is the goal line.

"You keep your eyes on Jesus, or you will fall."

Church's elders
cancel vote on
membership
without baptism

Edmond, Okla. (BP)—Elders of Henderson Hills Baptist Church in Edmond, Okla., decided against proceeding with a church-wide vote July 30 on a proposal to remove baptism as a requirement for church membership.

The proposed change had sparked discussion in Southern Baptist circles across the nation in recent weeks.

Henderson Hills Pastor Dennis Newkirk, in an extended entry on his weblog July 31, stated that the church's 16 elders are "no longer in consensus that we are ready to move forward."

Unanimity is required for Henderson Hills' elders to put a proposal before the congregation, Newkirk wrote. "At least one of us has an issue that has not been resolved."

Another Jordan, executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, voiced support for the decision not to pursue the issue.

The church's pastor and elders "have demonstrated admirable leadership, discernment and wisdom in their decision to suspend the church's vote regarding membership requirements," Jordan said.

Jordan had voiced opposition to the proposed change in the July 13 and 20 issues of the Oklahoma Baptist Messenger, which also included reflections from Newkirk in defense of the church's deliberations.

The Baptist Messenger's July 20 issue also included articles in support of the traditional Baptist view of baptism and church membership by Al Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; William Tolar, retired dean of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's theology school; and other Baptist leaders.

Newkirk, in his weblog July 31, voiced concern that "a few Baptist leaders have taken it upon themselves to violate our church's autonomy and independence by their timing of anti-proposal publications and resolutions.

"We do not believe they are bad men; we believe that they are our brothers in Christ," he wrote. "However, we also strongly think that they have erred and dishonored a cherished Baptist distinctive by doing so."

Newkirk said the proposal was withdrawn because "the concern now exists on the elder council that we have not addressed some of the unique aspects of the issue of baptism and its relationship with church membership in our proposed bylaw change. ... We simply are no longer in consensus as a council."

Monticello church hoping to rebuild

Monticello—An electrical fire could be the cause of a blaze that destroyed the building for Concord Baptist Church in Monticello, according to pastor Delbert Jones.

"We think it's electrical. There's no suspicion other than that," Jones said last week.

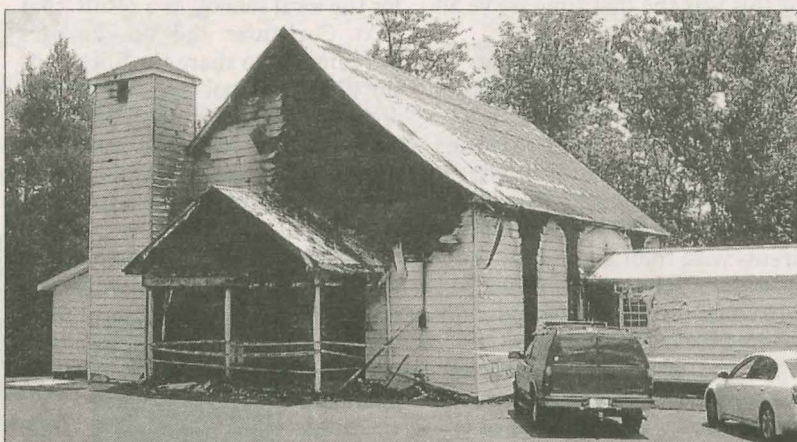
The Monticello Fire Department responded to the fire at about 8 p.m. Saturday, July 29. Firefighter battled the blaze for more than three hours, with the help of Susie Fire Department, West McCree Fire Department and Whitley City Fire Department.

The walls were still standing, but the church building was considered a total loss and the structure will have to be torn down, officials said.

"They did a terrific job of trying to contain the fire," Jones said. "But the damage was already done."

The church is the second oldest in Wayne County, said Jones, who has been pastor there for five years. The building dates back to 1920s, he added.

Approximately 40 people attend Sunday services at the church, he



TOTAL LOSS Members of Concord Baptist Church in Monticello are meeting in the office of Wayne County Baptist Association after a fire destroyed their building.

said. Members held services at the site of the church the day after the fire, Jones noted.

"We specifically encouraged them that just because the building wasn't there, there was still a church there," he said. "Concord Baptist Church was established in 1825, and it's going to continue."

Church leaders plan to rebuild on the same spot as the previous building, he added.

"I've also had numerous calls from churches willing to do whatever is necessary to get this church rebuilt."

The church will meet at the Wayne County Baptist Association offices until they rebuild, he said.

"We've already gotten donations from other churches and our association," he added. "It's just been enormous, the people who have been willing to help."



ARCTIC EDGE Children present the Arctic Edge vacation Bible school musical during the International Baptist Convention's summer assembly in Interlaken, Switzerland. Kentucky Baptist volunteers led the vacation Bible school, caring for the children while their parents took part in IBC worship and discipleship programs.

KBC volunteers help missionaries on Swiss trip

By Jonathan Johnston
Kentucky Baptist Convention

Louisville—A team of 27 Kentucky Baptists took part in partnership missions with the International Baptist Convention when they cared for 110 children during the IBC's recent Interlaken Summer Assembly



CHILD CARE Mary Marlow of Owenton feeds a baby. Twenty-seven volunteers cared for children ranging from infancy to sixth grade.

in Switzerland.

The volunteers provided extended teaching care as part of a project shared by the Kentucky Baptist Convention and the International Baptist Convention. This was the sixth year that the KBC has been involved in this project.

Wendy Dever, director of the KBC's preschool/children's ministry and Sunday school group, has been the leader of the team of volunteers each of the six years.

She said her favorite memory this year was "standing as we opened each time in our outdoor worship area to greet the families."

"I loved seeing the smiles on the faces of preschoolers, children and their families," she added.

The 27 volunteers were responsible for children ranging in age from infancy through sixth grade. Using vacation Bible school material, the program is designed to teach as well as entertain the children for approximately six hours per day.

The highlight of the week is Thursday morning when the children perform a musical for the adult assembly.

"The kids did an outstanding job,

which made watching the parents as much fun as watching the kids," said Steve Thompson, assistant executive director for the KBC and a team volunteer.

Jimmy Martin, general secretary of the IBC, said the volunteers' ministry allowed parents to enjoy discipleship and worship programs as a couple.

"Many of our people expressed what a blessing it was to have their children not only cared for, but also ministered to," he added.

Volunteer Cheryl Doty admitted the high-energy kids kept volunteers hopping. "But it was worth it," she said. "The parents are so affirmative with the teachers, knowing their little ones are safe while they take time to attend meetings and become spiritually refreshed."

For Thompson, being near Jungfrau, one of the tallest peaks in the Swiss Alps, was an ideal setting.

"If you got tired or encountered a problem, all you had to do was walk over and look out the window at the breathtaking view of the sun glistening on the snow-capped mountain, and any negative thoughts just melted away," he said.

Lexington churches unite to minister to homeless and poor

Continued from page 1

Those conversations gradually led to formation of a four-member steering committee: Kidd, Keith Barbour of Shiloh Baptist Church, Ruth Mark of Christ Church Episcopal and Phyllis Abbott of Southland Christian.

Each of them discussed their vision with members of their home church and gathered support.

In 2004 the first service was held at a YMCA. It since has shifted a couple times and currently meets on the front lawn of the Episcopal diocese downtown.

In cooler weather, services move to a nearby elementary school.

The steering committee also recruited churches to help host services, provide food and serve the meal.

"I have yet to find a minister who's come who says, 'I'm not interested in coming back,'" Kidd said.

Pastor Craig Loscalzo said that members' involvement in Church Under the Bridge ministry is helping Immanuel get in touch with a different socio-economic group.

"I was very impressed with the team Stella put together that works with them and makes that happen," Loscalzo said. "It's a real ministry to those homeless guys who would never step foot into a church building."

The services feature Baptist-style altar calls, but organizers haven't tracked conversions.

Kidd said one of the highlights was a Sunday when 16 people walked forward for prayer. Because of the transient nature of the homeless, leaders have been able to maintain contact with only four of them.

Ministry changing lives

Still, Kidd said she knows Church Under the Bridge has made an impact on many lives, both spiritually and physically.

She points to a woman who has enrolled in night school and a man with a master's degree who since has left the streets and is helping other homeless people.

Another formerly homeless man has turned his life around. "He's serving burgers at McDonald's and you'd think he was president of the United States," Kidd said. "He's so proud he has a job and his own place to live."

About a year ago Church Under the Bridge started collecting offerings after a pastor explained why Christ's followers should tithe.

Kidd said offerings usually range from \$30 to \$80, with funds going to help obtain such supplies as food, diapers and baby strollers. During one recent service, Kidd left to buy shoes for a guest who was barefoot.

More importantly, the offerings remind more affluent people about the meaning of neediness.

Kidd recalled an elderly, arthritic man who struggled to get out of his chair and walk to the offering plate in the front, where he fished in his pocket and pulled out two pennies.

"Situations like that keep you very humble," Kidd said. "It keeps your life in perspective."

Art Beasley, pastor of Central Baptist, agreed.

"It was amazing to see the homeless come forward and give some of their money," said Beasley, who preached his first sermon there this spring.

Probably one of the biggest strides made in helping the parishioners has been extending a welcoming hand to people who have been rejected so often that they are wary of others, Kidd said. "God is using a lot of (volunteers) to help these people feel loved."



CHURCH UNDER THE BRIDGE A group prays during a worship service for Church Under the Bridge in Lexington. The ministry is named after a similar one in Waco, Texas, that literally meets underneath an interstate overpass.

WESTERN RECORDER

Box 43969
Louisville, KY 40253
(USPS 679-380)

TRENNIS HENDERSON
Editor

DAVID WINFREY
News Director

JANET McINTOSH
Marketing & Business
Manager

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

Western Recorder is published weekly by Western Recorder Inc., an agency of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253, except for one week in July and December. For general information, call (502) 489-3535. Periodicals postage paid at Louisville, Ky.

To subscribe: Send \$12.50 for a one-year, individual subscription. Group subscriptions on the church budget plan are \$10 per year. An additional church newsletter service is available for churches of all sizes. All subscriptions are payable in advance, except church accounts, which require a tax exemption number.

POSTMASTER: Send address corrections to: Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253.

To register change of address: Send the mailing label from page 1, along with your new address, to the subscription department at the Western Recorder address.

To give news tips: Call (502) 489-3422, toll-free (866) 489-3422 or write the editor or news director.

To submit a letter: Letters from subscribers on any subject will be considered for publication, provided they do not make a personal attack on anyone. Letters are limited to 300 words and may be edited for length. Submit by mail or by e-mail to: wesrec@earthlink.net

To place an advertisement: Rates are available upon request by calling (502) 489-3428. Institutional columns are paid space. Claims made by advertisers are not necessarily those of the Western Recorder's staff and directors.

Directors:
Chairman **Linda Polley**, Elizabethtown;
Vice Chairman **Floyd Price**, Prestonsburg;
Secretary **Mike Harmon**, Mount Sterling;
Skip Alexander, Campbellsville;
Dan Francis, Erlanger;
David Harmon-Vaught, Louisville;
Ken James, London;
Don Mantooth, Morehead;
Bill Marshall, Louisville;
Bill Thurman, Lexington;
Rodney Travis, Hopkinsville.

'The old give and go' enhances ministry

By Nate Adams

Springfield, Ill. (BP)—If you know much about basketball, you probably know what a "give and go" is.

It's when I pass ("give") the ball to my teammate, and then instead of just standing there I cut ("go") toward the basket—hopefully leaving behind the opponent guarding me—and then I receive a return pass and score.

I remember when our coach first taught my elementary school team "the old give and go." It was as if we had a new secret weapon. Most of the kids our age were still at the stage of "standing around" a lot, simply passing the ball and trying to get open for a long shot. When we added the motion of "give and go" to our game, our effectiveness as a team reached a whole new level.

I have "given" to missions causes most of my life. Perhaps you have too. But have you discovered the spiritual power and richness of adding some "go" to your "giving"?

My family and I went on a "family mission trip" this summer that was a pilot project of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board. We've had great experiences on various adult mission trips and

youth group mission trips before—but this was the first time we've all gone as a family.

About 200 others joined us in Eastern Kentucky, from families of all different kinds. There were families with first-graders, families with teenagers (like ours), single-parent families and grandparents with their grandkids. There was even a "family" of four widows who came to be known as "the golden girls."

Because of careful preparation by NAMB officials and year-round faithful service by a number of our missionaries in Appalachia, there were a variety of worthwhile projects and educational experiences for everyone. In the evenings I had the privilege of speaking during the worship services that helped remind us why we were there.

I know of four people who prayed to receive Christ as their Savior that week. And our service through the food and clothing ministries there and projects such as neighborhood outreach and home repairs will strengthen the ongoing ministry of the missionaries for months or even years to come.

Mission Service Corps missionary Lonnie Riley, who directs the

ministry there, told us about a mission team from Ohio who helped them build an outdoor classroom for the local school. As a result, that next Christmas the missionaries were invited to share the Christmas story in the school—and 44 children and their family members prayed to receive Christ. Riley said one of the first people he called was the leader of the Ohio group that built that classroom.

It's amazing what God will do with a week of your life when you give it to Him for even a short-term mission trip. Did you go on a mission trip this year? Do you have one planned for next year?

Contact your association, state convention or go on the Web at thebridge.namb.net or going.imb.org and let our mission boards match you up with their other priority needs.

It's true that not everyone can go, but today there are more opportunities than ever for Christians to be actively involved in the mission of God.

So if you feel like you've just been "standing around" and taking an occasional "long shot," put some motion in your game. With the Holy Spirit as your coach, try "the old give and go."

Nate Adams is executive director of the Illinois Baptist State Association

FIRST PERSON

Balance in worship

Regarding the article, "Worship's top 10," in the July 25 issue, I was pleasantly surprised to see that LifeWay Christian Resources featured a speaker with such insightful reflections about musical "balance" in worship at Ridgecrest this summer. Finally!

Jim Shaddix's "Ten Commandments" are a good starting place for in-depth discussion of theological issues surrounding music and worship.

One comment: His commandment #4 (a definition of worship) needs to be expanded to include more than music and preaching.

Besides preaching (proclamation), acts of worship also include prayer, offering, Scripture reading, confession, praise and adoration, commitment, etc.

Music is a vehicle for worship, not an act of worship.

Good article!

Naomi King Walker
Frankfort

'Uplifting' opinion

It is uplifting indeed to see a letter like "Keys to true peace" by Paul L. Whiteley Sr. in the Aug. 1 issue.

We are on a path of destruction in this war, creating more enemies every day. Thanks to Whiteley for his insight into what it means to follow Christ.

It has been difficult for me to hear what some of our leaders—both religious and political—are saying and fit it into the gospel message of Jesus Christ.

Joseph H. Scalf Jr.
Danville

Super Saturday training opportunities

Question: Where can you take 50 church leaders, have them each attend a different learning session, provide them lunch and do it all for only \$15 per person?

Answer: Super Saturday! Super Saturday is a comprehensive church leader training day offered by the Kentucky Baptist Convention at six locations in August and September.

Conferences will be offered in 21 areas of local church ministry. There are conferences for Sunday school and discipleship teachers, Baptist men, Baptist women, deacons, church secretaries, ministers' wives, pastors, church staff, directors of mission, age group leaders, Hispanic leaders and more.

Some of the emphases include assimilation, leadership development, prayer ministry, youth work, Woman's Missionary Union, stewardship, worship, music and discipleship. All of the sessions relate to the theme of "Strengthening Every Church."

A discipleship conference topic,

"Personal Evaluation: Spiritual Growth Assessment," caught my attention. It is a new tool to help individuals discover areas where spiritual growth is needed and make plans to address them.

Altogether, there are more than 80 specific conferences. Experienced and creative leaders will lead all sessions.

For pastors, sessions will focus on a customized plan to address needs in the local church and to determine how to most effectively meet those needs.

Pastors also will learn more about a new seven-part Kentucky Baptists Connect Bible study titled "Reaching Kentucky." The great value of this study is that it relates to the big objectives of Kentucky Baptists Connect and the functions of the local church.

The "Reaching Kentucky" Bible study includes reflective questions that can help people see ministry possibilities they have not considered previously.

There also will be a LifeWay store

at each Super Saturday location to provide resources and tools for local church workers.

Enlist your leaders and potential leaders now. You have only one Sunday left to enlist your workers for the first Super Saturday to be held Aug. 19 at Porter Memorial Baptist Church in Lexington.

You also can attend Super Saturday at either First Baptist Church of Bowling Green or First Baptist Church of Prestonsburg on Aug. 26.

Super Saturday also will be offered Sept. 9 at Lone Oak First Baptist Church in Paducah and Beacon Hill Baptist Church in Somerset.

The final Super Saturday will be Sept. 16 at Crestwood Baptist Church in Crestwood.

Enlist your Sunday school director and program leaders today to assist in inviting others to attend.

Receive a discount by registering online at www.kybaptist.org/supersaturday and pay only \$15 per person. Or you can mail in the registration form sent to your church to KBC Super Saturday, Box 43433, Louisville, KY 40253-0433 and receive a rate of \$17 per person. I look forward to seeing you.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

FAMILY

Mission trip to Mexico offers key financial lessons

By Jeremy White

My family and I recently returned from a mission trip to Zacatecas, Mexico. We worked with local churches there to share the good news of Christ and to reach out to area neighborhoods.

My wife and I had an ulterior motive as well—an anti-spoiling trip for our children. Like many parents, we're concerned that our affluent society might dull them to the fact there are less fortunate people in the world. We found out, however, that my wife and I probably missed the comforts of home more than our kids did.

Like many people who have traveled to less developed countries, we resolved to be more content after experiencing a culture without some of our usual creature comforts.

Besides realizing I might be the spoiled one, I was reminded of the following financial lessons:

- Our happiness does not depend on the amount of "stuff" we have.

- Many other people envy the United States' economic opportunity and strength, but they don't envy our stress and fractured families.

- The basic necessities and infrastructure should not be taken for granted. We benefit from clean water; wide, clear roads for transportation; hygiene; accessible health care; and reliable sewage treatment facilities.

- More economic opportunities exist in America than most places. With our freedoms, infrastructure and affluence, there are few excuses for not providing a reasonable income.

- Mission trips provide opportunities to plant spiritual seeds by investing in the lives of others and myself.

- The amount of money we waste on trivial or unnecessary purchases could go a long way on the international mission field.

- Christ followers in the United States have much more ability and room to give without significant sacrifice. A greater spiritual return on our investments likely occurs by investing in missions rather than new choir robes, bigger buildings or plusher pews.

Jeremy White, a certified public accountant, is a partner with Blythe, White and Associates in Paducah



How should parents pray for their kids as school begins?

Q: As the new school year begins, what are some specific, practical ways I can pray for my children?

As school begins, pray for your children's safety, and for the safety of their school. School violence, bullying, bus mishaps, bicycle and pedestrian accidents present the possibility of danger. Don't live in a state of worry, but do pray daily that our schools will be safe places.

PARENTING

School settings occasionally present children with tough choices such as how to respond in an argument, whether to cheat on a test or whether to participate in an activity that might be illegal, destructive or dangerous. Pray that your children will make good decisions. Ask God to guide them through the day, and pray that they will have a strong sense that God is with them as they go through the day. Pray especially that your children will make good choices about the friends they make and spend time with.

In addition to praying for good grades and significant learning, pray that God will add wisdom to the mix. Ask God to couple the book knowledge your children gain with understanding and discernment. Pray that your children will filter what they learn and all they are exposed to at school through a Christian and biblical worldview, constantly asking themselves how things fit with what they know about God.

Consider heading a special prayer with your children before they head out the door on the first day of school, or perhaps the night before. Commit them to God's care, and ask God to help them have a good year.—David Garrard

Q: Should we allow our teen to have a MySpace account?

MySpace is a reality of today's technological world, especially for teens and young adults. With 98 million people connected through the online social network, it is a mixture of good and bad.

TEENS

What are the pros and cons of connecting?

Arguments against MySpace and similar accounts:

- Predators can find you. Teens post personal information for the entire world to see.

- Pornographers can find you. Someone can send inappropriate pictures, but it is against the rules and as soon as someone reports it, the offender's space is taken off the network.

- Employers can find you. Someone you know in a more formal setting might not like your posted lifestyle or political positions. You could be giving Big Brother or the corporate world a helping hand in decreasing your privacy.

Arguments for such sites:

- It promotes creative writing and reading. Teens who say they don't like to read or write and who have a social networking account with a blog might not realize it, but they are practicing reading and writing skills they will use in life.

- It can be a ministry. God can use this tool to spread the word about His love to the world. There are millions of Christians on the site and thousands of Christian music groups easily can be found there. It can be a cutting-edge way of sharing the gospel.

- It can help students keep track of classmates after graduation day. It provides another tool to maintain friendships years after the class has gone in many directions.

Like anything else, discretion and discernment are essential. Discuss as a family whether a social networking account like MySpace might be something your family is willing to do to help increase communication and understanding among you, your teen and your teen's friends. Only you can decide if it's right for your family.—James Stillwell

Family Forum writers are:

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

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

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

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

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



Five quick facts about new SBC president

When Frank Page was elected Southern Baptist Convention president earlier this summer, he likely was the least-known SBC president in recent memory.

Most messengers probably knew Page was a long-shot candidate who was a strong advocate of the Cooperative Program and the defacto candidate of disgruntled bloggers and others concerned about politics as usual in SBC life.

His surprise first-ballot victory over two better-known candidates was considered a major win for many grassroots Baptists. Beyond that, few Baptists outside of the Carolinas seemed to know much about their new president and his views. But that gradually is changing.

In addition to the initial post-election news coverage, Page is writing a series of first-person columns for Baptist Press and has his own Web page (www.sbc.net/PresidentsPage) on the SBC Web site. Since his election in June, BP has posted approximately 20 articles that quote or reference the new president.

What have Southern Baptists learned about Page in recent weeks?

He's no Bobby Welch—and doesn't need to be. Unlike the SBC's immediate past president, Page said he "cannot be a full-time Southern Baptist Convention president." And that's OK. Whereas Welch traveled the nation urging renewed commitment to evangelism, Page has announced a multifaceted focus on petitioning God's Spirit to transform churches, revive cooperative mission efforts, re-energize evangelistic efforts and call Southern Baptists "to seek forgiveness for our self-sufficiency."

Page also is no Calvinist. In his 2000 book, "Trouble with the TULIP: A Closer Examination of the Five Points of Calvinism," Page wrote, "The true nature of God is not shown by Calvinistic theology that presents a God who selects one to be saved and another to be lost. ... That teaching portrays a God with whom I am unfamiliar!"

Armageddon? Not just yet

By Erich Bridges

Richmond, Va. (BP)—The sky is falling—again.

"Is this how Armageddon begins?" one worried pundit asked about the rapid escalation of combat between Israel and Hezbollah forces in Lebanon.

The same question arises with every major flare-up in the Middle East because of the region's volatility and its role in biblical prophecy about the End Times. It was asked in 1948, 1967 and 1973 when Israel fought wars for survival with the wider Arab world, and in 1982 when Israel invaded and occupied southern Lebanon.

The current Israeli-Hezbollah conflict appears more limited, despite its heartbreaking human toll and its potential to draw in other regional powers. Intensive efforts to end the fighting quickly—either by military action, diplomatic means or both—have begun.

Yet a sense is growing among some uneasy observers that events in the wider Middle East and beyond are spinning out of control.

Among the alarms and warnings from various quarters:

- Hezbollah wants to draw Israel into a long, costly ground war in Lebanon, military analysts say. They predict such a war could become an Iraq-style insurgency, sapping Israeli strength and increasing the regional influence of Hezbollah militants.

- The "peace process" between

Israelis and Palestinians, long on life support, appears dead. Negotiations, withdrawals, even democratic elections seem only to have strengthened the hand of Palestinian militants. Democracy doesn't seem to be doing very well elsewhere in the region, either.

- The Iraq conflict, some contend, has become a civil war between Sunni and Shiite Muslims that will continue until one side or the other prevails—or the nation is partitioned.

- The Taliban, apparently alive and kicking in Afghanistan, has embarked on a new offensive and promises to battle Western forces until all foreigners are driven out.

- Iran appears determined to develop nuclear weapons.

"One has to wonder sometimes whether a kind of death wish will eventually prevail in the Middle East over the more rational desire for peace and survival," Southern Baptist ethicist David Gushee of Union University wrote in a commentary for ChristianityToday.com.

"It is often said that 'everyone' really wants peace, and that if diplomacy is skillful enough and statesmen are wise enough, then peace will prevail," Gushee noted. "I think it is more accurate to say that the desire for peace, while God-given, competes in the human heart with the desire for destruction—at least, the destruction of one's enemies."

Destruction seems to be winning at the moment. But there have been

Enlarging the tent doesn't include moderates. Noting that he was "offended" by a recent e-mail from someone "wanting to know if I was a stealth candidate for the CBF (Cooperative Baptist Fellowship)," Page said in a recent interview, "As I've said over and over, I'm not talking about broadening the tent theologically; I'm talking about broadening the tent of involvement among godly conservatives."

During his post-election news conference, Page said his presidential appointments will include people who have a "sweet spirit," are evangelistic, affirm "the integrity of the Word of God" and strongly support the Cooperative Program. While he indicated that could include Calvinists and charismatics, it apparently will not include individuals who support CBF or are considered moderate within SBC political circles.

He's committed to missions and the Cooperative Program. Page's first two trips as SBC president have been to New Orleans to survey ministry efforts and to Southeast Asia to encourage missionaries there—an invitation he accepted three years ago. "If Southern Baptists want to be one with the Lord, they've got to be one with missions," he declared.

On the CP front, he noted, "I believe in strong, sacrificial giving to the Cooperative Program as a moral imperative because of the support we should give to our missionaries and entities. I cannot say I'm a Southern Baptist and give a paltry sum to the Cooperative Program."

Page urges SBC dialogue, debate. Noting that "it was time we had a truly democratic convention where people could choose," Page said in recent years in SBC life, "we've not had elections; we've had coronations."

Rather than "a tightly controlled convention" in future years, the new president voiced hope that SBC proceedings will be more open to "healthy dialogue and debate." That would be a refreshing change from politics as usual.

many such moments in the history of the Middle East.

It might sound too glib to say God is working to bring hope to the hurting—and glory to His name—amid seemingly hopeless situations. But He is, just as He has throughout history.

Many Christians are caught in the current Middle East crossfire—some literally, such as the Lebanese and Israeli believers now dodging bullets and rockets. Some figuratively, who are persecuted or accused of joining (or failing to join) one side or another in the region's cauldron of religious and ethnic conflicts.

Despite their own sufferings, however, Christians are weeping with those who weep, binding the wounds of the hurting, feeding the hungry—and proclaiming the mercy of Christ to those who need it most. Lebanese Baptists and other Christians are doing that right now in and around Beirut as terrified refugees flee the fighting. Iraqi, Iranian and Afghan believers are doing the same day after day under very difficult circumstances.

Armageddon? It will come one day, but Jesus Himself said that something else must happen first: "And this gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come" (Matthew 24:14).

It appears that we have a lot of preaching to do among the nations before that day comes.

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

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

SBC's Page addresses women's roles, alcohol, Calvinism

"We just need to be careful in our trustees that we hold to guidelines that are explicitly biblical and do not go beyond that."

SBC President
Frank Page

By James Smith
Florida Baptist Witness

Taylors, S.C. (BP)—In 1980, Frank Page completed a doctor of philosophy degree in Christian ethics at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary with the acceptance of his dissertation, "Toward a Biblical Ethic of Women in Ministry," which strongly advocated unlimited roles for women in ministry, including serving as church pastors.

In a recent interview with the Florida Baptist Witness, Page said he recanted what he now describes as "radical" and "extreme" views about women's roles shortly after earning his Ph.D.

Page, pastor of First Baptist Church in Taylors, S.C., was elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention in June. Although surprised that his doctoral dissertation did not become a point of debate and controversy in the SBC presidential election, Page said the issue is "fair game ... because it's a legitimate part of who I was."

"Is it embarrassing to me that at one time I held such extreme views? Yes, it is. But it would also be equally hurtful to me to seem like in subsequent discussions ... to think that women are somehow secondary in God's Kingdom. I would hate for

them to think that."

Page compared his change in views on the subject of women in ministry to a similar reversal by Al Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

"Al Mohler and I are in the same boat in this particular issue—both (of us) tried to push what we had been taught into a biblically acceptable format. Both miserably failed. And both have since recanted from that," Page said.

He noted that he has never advocated women as pastors or even deacons in any of his pastorates during more than 30 years in ministry, nor does he support the ordination of women.

Page said he affirms the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message, which states, "While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture."

Page said he believes only men can be pastors because "it's an authority issue. To have women serving as pastor would be to put that woman in spiritual authority over men and I think Scripture clearly prohibits that."

IMB: Maintain biblical guidelines

Addressing other SBC-related issues, Page said he doesn't know the specifics of the current debate among International Mission Board trustees about a new baptism guideline and a policy forbidding the acceptance of missionary candidates who practice a private prayer language.

But he did acknowledge he is concerned "the policies have gone a little farther than we should go," specifically the one on private prayer language.

While affirming it is the responsibility of the trustees to set IMB policies, Page added, "I just think in that

one area there is a possible interpretation of a private prayer language (in Scripture) that we need to be very careful about saying no. If there is some scriptural possibility there, (a policy forbidding it for missionaries) makes me nervous."

While noting he does not personally have a private prayer language, Page cited 1 Corinthians 14 as a passage that can be interpreted to permit the practice.

Concerning the IMB's baptism guideline, Page said he believes re-baptism is necessary in the case of a person who is baptized by immersion after salvation in a church with "incorrect theology," including one that rejected eternal security of the believer—which is the requirement of the IMB baptism guideline.

Page said there is a "perception" that the IMB policies have "gone too far. We just need to be careful in our trustees that we hold to guidelines that are explicitly biblical and do not go beyond that."

As a member of this year's SBC Resolutions Committee that recommended the resolution calling for "total abstinence" from alcohol for Christians, Page said he found the debate about the resolution, during the SBC and since, "deeply disturbing," "eye-opening" and "very troubling."

Page rejected criticism of the resolution as "pharisaical" and disagreed with the suggestion that the committee was manipulated by outsiders to bring the resolution to the floor.

"I would never be judgmental and pharisaical and say you can't be a Christian and drink a glass of wine," he noted. "But I have to say as God wants us to be a strong witness that I believe it is extremely important that we stay away from alcohol."

Page said the current debate among Southern Baptists on the issue of Calvinism "has both healthy

and negative aspects to it."

An example of the healthy aspect, he said, was the discussion between Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary President Paige Patterson—an opponent of Calvinism—and Southern Seminary President Mohler—an advocate of Calvinism—in workshops at the Pastors' Conference prior to this year's SBC annual meeting.

Calvinism debate fuels division

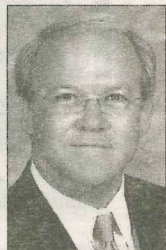
Among the negative aspects of the Calvinism debate, Page said, is that the issue contributes to the growing factionalism in SBC life.

"There are some who are drawing lines in the sand and saying you cannot be a Southern Baptist and be a Calvinist. There are Calvinists who are saying we will not rest until every Southern Baptist seminary is five-point Calvinist and all the graduates are five-point Calvinists. So, you've got extreme division occurring," he said.

Expressing his view that some Southern Baptist seminaries are graduating "hundreds" of students who espouse Calvinism while there are a "relative small number" of Calvinist SBC churches, Page said he believes Southern Baptists are headed for "tumultuous days" as those graduates come to places of service in the churches.

Page published in 2000 a book, "Trouble with Tulip: A Closer Examination of the Five Points of Calvinism," critiquing Calvinism which he rejects as based on "manmade" doctrine of Reformation theologian John Calvin, rather than a Bible-based theology. He warns that affirmation of Calvinism in churches and denominations leads "inevitably" to diminishing commitment to evangelism.

He added, however, that he is willing to work with Calvinists in SBC life and is willing to appoint them to positions of leadership.



Frank Page

Frank Page: 'Balance is key' to effective CP support

Taylors, S.C. (BP)—The Southern Baptist Convention presidential election generated considerable discussion about the importance of the Cooperative Program—and contributed to Frank Page's surprise victory this year.

Page is pastor of First Baptist Church of Taylors, S.C., which gave more than 12 percent of its undesignated receipts through the Cooperative Program last year.

But it might surprise some people to learn that Page's own church has seen a drop in its CP support as a percentage of the church's undesignated receipts since he became pastor in 2001—from 15.62 percent to 12.44 percent last year.

When Page became pastor of First Baptist, "we had no external national or international mission work" being done by the church itself, he explained. Since 2001, "we have indeed begun a huge amount of mission work on our own. ... Balance is the key."

Page said it's possible for a church to demonstrate strong support of Southern Baptist missions through giving to the Cooperative Program while not neglecting its own "personalized" missions.

"I believe you can do both well," he said. "At Taylors First Baptist we have seen an example of strong support of the Cooperative Program at the same time as a tremendously effective, locally initiated mission work on three levels—local, national and international."

"I believe in strong, sacrificial giving to the Cooperative Program as a moral imperative because of the support we should give to our missionaries and entities," he added. "I cannot say I'm a Southern Baptist and give a paltry sum to the Cooperative Program."

Concerning debate over the SBC Executive Committee's recommendation on the Cooperative Program that removed earlier language encouraging 10 percent of undesignated receipts to CP by churches and the election of officers from such churches, Page said, "We should be very hesitant about putting a percentage as a mark of cooperation and for participation. ... The question for me was: Does your church give sacrificially to the Cooperative Program? Does it give in such a way as to show a missional mindset?"

Although he believes it's "bad theology" to assert that churches can and should tithe, Page added, "I do believe 10 percent indicates a serious commitment" to missions.

Connecting Advent Preaching With Life's Experiences

A Preaching Workshop led by Dr. Ron Higdon

Special sidebar on the pros and cons of an Intentional Interim

Sponsored by the Marshall Center for Ministry of Georgetown College

Subsidized by the Eugene and Culley Enlow Endowment for Excellence in Preaching

September 25, 2006

10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

(9:30 a.m. coffee/tea fellowship)

Broadway Baptist Church

4000 Brownsboro Road, Louisville, Ky.

Cost for the workshop: \$25

(Includes lunch)



Dr. Ron Higdon

Ron Higdon is a retired pastor of Broadway Baptist Church (20 years) and former adjunct professor at Southern Seminary, Boyce Bible School and the Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond. Higdon is a Certified Intentional Interim Specialist and currently is serving in his 3rd intentional interim position as pastor of Highland Park Baptist Church in Austin, Texas.

To register, contact Rebecca Abbott at Georgetown College: (502) 863-8390
Or e-mail: rebecca_abbott@georgetowncollege.edu

Adoptable ministry regions created in New Orleans

By Karen Willoughby
Louisiana Baptist Message

New Orleans (BP)—Local, state and national Baptist groups have partnered to launch an evangelistic plan for the New Orleans metropolitan area.

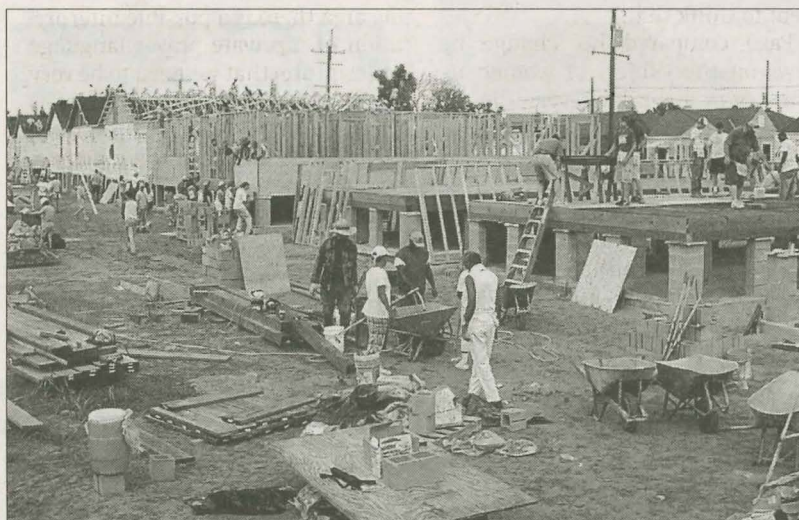
The plan, developed by the Baptist Association of Greater New Orleans, the Louisiana Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, divides the region into 27 zones, each with at least one Southern Baptist church in it.

Churches, associations and state/regional conventions throughout the country will be asked to partner with a zone.

"What happens then is up to the churches and pastors in that zone and the entity—church/association/convention—that takes responsibility for it," said Joe McKeever, director of missions for the Baptist Association of Greater New Orleans. "Whether the task is gutting out and rebuilding homes and churches, or doing ministry and evangelism in the neighborhoods, or a hundred other approaches, will be strictly up to the participating churches."

Mike Canady, missions and ministry strategist for the Louisiana Baptist Convention, introduced the plan to a group of pastors recently in New Orleans.

"We're talking about how to revitalize and rebuild our churches,



MINISTRY CONTINUES Volunteers work on houses at Baptist Crossroads, a joint Southern Baptist/Habitat for Humanity project. "The greatest need in New Orleans is homes," says David Crosby, pastor of First Baptist Church in New Orleans.

and how to put in place strategies to reach people," Canady said. "It's not enough to build a house or rebuild a church. This is about people—the people in your neighborhood."

606 nonfunctioning churches

Freddie Arnold, church starting strategist and disaster relief coordinator for the local association, told pastors that leaders have identified 913 functioning churches of every Christian denomination and 606 others that were not functioning.

Asked how he defines "functioning church," Arnold replied: "If your

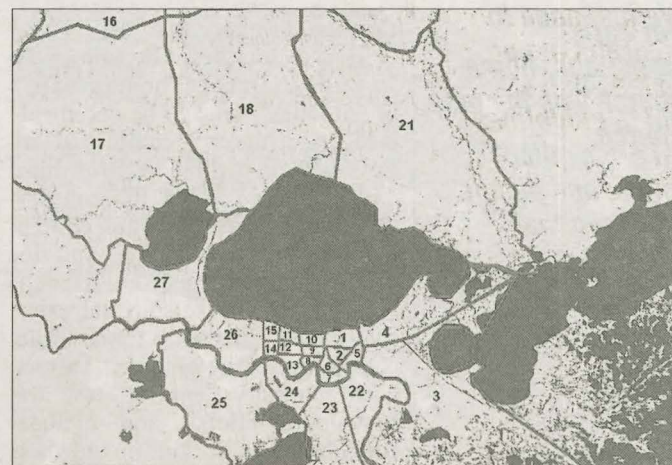
church is meeting anywhere—in a tent, in a home, in a gutted-out fellowship hall or even someone else's church—we consider that a functioning church."

Arnold likened the regional zone concept to an elephant that can be eaten one bite at a time.

Most zones are defined by natural dividers—interstates, highways, canals and the Mississippi River.

Canady called the unveiling of the plan a "grand day" for Southern Baptists

"Simply stated, we're going to work with you to reach people



with the gospel, to rebuild lives and homes and churches, and start or restart churches in strategic locations.

"We're talking about a partnership with the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, the (state/regional) conventions and the SBC," Canady added.

State conventions in Arkansas and Missouri already have adopted areas, pastors were told.

Richard Leach, NAMB's director of evangelism and ministry, said organizers have four aims

"First, to assist the Louisiana Baptist Convention, BAGNO and the churches. Second, to engage volunteers," he said. "Third, to encourage the churches. And fourth, to share with all of Southern Baptists and the world through the media what is happening here."

FOR ADOPTION A grid of 27 zones for outreach in the greater New Orleans area, each with at least one Southern Baptist church, will form the geographic basis of partnerships with Baptists from across the country.

169th KBC Annual Meeting November 14-15, 2006 First Baptist Church • Bowling Green, Kentucky

Reserve your spot now! ▶

Listed hotels are on/near the Scottsville Road corridor (Exit 22 from I-65).

*Due to another convention in Bowling Green, rooms were unavailable at the Holiday Inn University Plaza. Limited rooms are blocked at the Courtyard by Marriott.

Attendees must make and pay for their own reservations. To receive blocked room rates, call preferred hotel and request a room in the Kentucky Baptist Convention block. Most accommodations are non-smoking. The Bowling Green hotel tax is 11.25%.

Baymont Inn & Suites

165 Three Springs Road
800.642.4239 / 270.843.3200

\$79 flat rate (king and/or double beds)
Complimentary continental breakfast
Reservation deadline: October 13

Courtyard by Marriott*

(Smaller block of rooms at this property)
1010 Wilkinson Trace
270.783.8569

\$90 flat rate (doubles and kings)
Breakfast buffet (at cost)
Reservation deadline: October 13

Drury Inn Bowling Green

3250 Scottsville Road
800.325.0720 (reservations) / 270.842.7100
\$85-\$94 (doubles and kings; 1-4 persons)
Complimentary hot breakfast
Reservation deadline: October 13

Fairfield Inn Marriott

1940 Mel Browning Street
270.782.6933
\$79 flat rate (singles and doubles)
Complimentary deluxe continental breakfast
Reservation deadline: October 13

Hampton Inn

233 Three Springs Road
270.842.4100
\$82 flat rate (doubles, kings and queens)
Complimentary breakfast
Reservation deadline: October 13



The Pastors' Conference
and other auxiliary
meetings will take place
on Monday, November 13.



For more information, visit
www.kybaptist.org/annualmeeting

or contact Denise Withers at:

502.489.3578

Toll free in Kentucky 866.489.3578

Denise.Withers@kybaptist.org



Visit www.firstbaptistbg.org
for written directions.

Are house churches more prevalent than imagined?

For early Christians, home church was the only church.

Continued from page 1

House churches—also known as “organic churches,” “home groups” or “mosaics”—tend to be decentralized in structure, committed to forming in-depth relationships and patterned after first-century Christian fellowship—before church institutions, bureaucracies and denominations emerged.

Some emphasize spiritual experience over rational analysis, while others are led by ordained pastors with seminary degrees. Most are nondenominational and include roughly 20 people, kids included.

Although it has come into its own in America during the past decade, the house-church model of faith community is nothing new. During the 1970s, the United Kingdom experienced a rapid proliferation of house churches that later conglomerated into larger, more traditional church bodies. And in communist countries like China, Christians have used an underground home-church model for years. Experts estimate that 80 million Chinese Christians gather in homes each week.

Of course, for early Christians, home church was the only church. The original Christian churches depicted in the New Testament were small gatherings led by followers



GAINING MOMENTUM If Barna's research is correct, 9 percent of Americans attended a house church last week.

of Jesus.

Tony Dale, an Austin, Texas, physician and founder of House2House, a home-church network, said the New Testament teaching of Jesus is the very thing on which house churches depend. Jesus was the “antithesis” of modern church leadership, Dale said, in that He had no social position, no backing and no seminary degree. Jesus simply had “a darn good relationship with His Father,” Dale said.

New Testament Christian leaders were distinguished not by their seminary degrees but by showing kindness, he added.

Dale and his wife, Felicity, came to the United States from the United Kingdom in 1987. They got involved in house churches after their traditional church changed locations and their pastor encouraged them to begin a more organic movement.

House2House, a result of that move, encourages and supports home churches with a magazine, newsletters, books and a Web site. Dale is an unpaid member of the House2House board of directors. Felicity's latest book, “An Army of Ordinary People,” was published in 2005. Together they host conferences and training seminars about home churches.

They also start churches in the Austin area and then “leave as quickly as possible.”

After they started leading home churches, Tony Dale said, he noticed certain intangibles in the smaller, more intimate format had faded away unnoticed as his “legacy” church grew. For him and many others, it's the subtle things—like a spirit of community and the participation of everyone, regardless of station or age—that make the difference.

“Being a Christian has become a series of events,” Dale said. “Christianity has nothing to do with meetings; it's about how we live. Jesus came that we might have life, not meetings.”

Dale's sentiment echoes what other home-church proponents have said: The church model of the New Testament is a far cry from the traditional churches most American Christians attend today.

David Anderson, a former Presbyterian minister, said he had the same inclination when he “began to feel increasingly uneasy about

the format of our services and the leadership structures, when compared to Scriptures.”

The meeting of believers in 1 Corinthians was “participatory,” Anderson said, in that several people spoke and others were encouraged to “judge the message. We were not doing that.”

Anderson runs the House Church Network and its Web site, housechurch.org, which serves as a directory and information board for other house churches. The site, which lists 1,193 house churches nationwide, started in 1992.

The 53-year-old father of six sees “many advantages to a plurality of elders all equal in their responsibilities.”

Anderson said his favorite part of the house-church model is its spontaneity in everything from teaching to the food people often bring to share after services. For the past 15 years, he has belonged to the same house church, which meets at a different house every Sunday.

“The appeal is joy of ministry (and) serving others in Jesus' name,” Anderson said. “The appeal is that the form fits the function—function being the exercise of the (spiritual) gifts, equipping, ministry and priesthood of every saint.”

While methods differ from church to church, most house churches take the “priesthood of every saint” mandate seriously, allowing children to suggest worship songs and read from the Bible. In Anderson's group, children stay with adults during the whole meeting, and all people participate in discussions of the text.

In most house churches, offerings go completely and directly to outreach and charity work, since meeting in homes translates into almost no operating costs. Often, house-church communion involves eating a full meal together, and baptisms happen in bathtubs, rivers and—in Dale's case—a Jacuzzi.

The practice of baptism reveals another important tenet to the house church, one that some critics attack as a shortcoming—the absence of a single position of authority. In Dale's group, for instance, whoever leads a convert to faith performs the baptism for the new believer. Sometimes that freedom means a two-day-old Christian baptizes another new Christian.

And with no pastor, house churches can fall victim to one dominating participant. As Anderson said, “The blessings of intimacy in a small group can actually become a curse if love doesn't prevail at all times.”

An absence of leadership also concerns some who fear small groups of people could gradually depart from biblical truth and sound theology.

But many home-church proponents say God and the Bible are the only sources of authority necessary for church to happen. Movements that remain simple and “lay-led” will be better able to focus on the Bible, the thinking goes.

Home-group leaders also claim that, historically, heresy emerges as leadership becomes more formal, not when it springs from the grassroots.

Perhaps the greatest weakness a home church faces, Dale suggested, is the tendency to “turn in on itself.” House-church leaders must use their influence for “strong evangelistic” growth, he said. They must also watch for potentially manipulative personalities and lack of love in their midst, he said.

“There are lots of negatives” about house churches, Dale said, noting that “flaky” leadership and negativity can also hamper growth. But he added: “To be honest, that's true in traditional churches as well. What we do see is that the Holy Spirit seems to be orchestrating some fascinating checks and balances (in the house-church model).”

Both supporters and critics agree home churches are growing in the United States. According to the Barna report, the people most likely to attend a house church are men, home-school families, residents of the West and minorities. Dale said Barna's report also demonstrates the house-church movement is growing more diverse.

“It's almost inconceivable to me that almost 9 percent of the population last week attended a home church,” Dale said. “This is huge. It's obviously involving every type of background.”

More important perhaps, Barna says the growth is here to stay. When a movement maintains 15 percent market penetration for at least six years, Barna said, it qualifies as a cultural trend. If his estimates for monthly participation are accurate, house churches have reached that plateau. At that point, it becomes a permanent fixture in society, the report said.

No matter the roots or outcome of the trend, many house-church attendees say they bear no animosity toward the traditional churches they left behind. They look to them as a source of history and a foundation that can complement the trend.

“I am honored to be among Christians at any place or any time,” Anderson said. “I wish the home-church movement could be an influence for true unity. The church should return to apostolic hospitality, which means that where Christians are, other Christians are welcome too.”

Louisville house church looks to grow

Louisville—About the time most people are getting out of church on Sunday, members of Ekklesia in Louisville are beginning to come together.

The house church started in May 2003 as a mission from Sojourn, a church that targets the artistic, in-town crowd in Louisville.

The church has grown from seven initial members to approximately 40.

Leader Matthew Husted said the group prefers to call itself a simple or organic church because the term house church usually carries a lot of baggage.

“It is usually seen as a disgruntled group of people who cast off all sense of authority,” he said.

“We're not really about house church as a model. We're about being Christ's church,” he said. “It's just that we have some organizational differences that seem to be an anomaly.”

Those differences include gathering at noon on Sunday for sessions that last three or more hours. Members begin with a meal, followed by singing and worship time. Teaching duties are rotated and usually involve robust conversation more than the teacher preaching a monologue, he said. The sessions also include an extended time of prayer and always include the Lord's Supper.

Members also attend one of two weekday small group home Bible studies.

Because the members have no building or salaries to pay, Ekklesia has “the capacity to put our money where our mouth is,” Husted said. Members have been able to respond quickly to mission needs, sending teams or individual volunteers to Newfoundland, Jordan, India, Ethiopia, Indonesia and Turkey.

Decision making is “elder led but consensus driven,” added Husted, one of the three elders for the group.

Leaders hope the church will grow to the point that leaders can be sent out to multiply the house churches.

Husted said he's not surprised to learn that the popularity of house churches is growing.

Though not speaking about Ekklesia, Husted said he's read some house church proponents who view the movement as a reaction against large churches.

“It's a model that is seeking to remedy things perceived lacking from a mega church model,” he said.

“In some ways it draws attention from people because it has some externals that look different: ‘Where's your building?’” he added. “But it's not abnormal, historically, at all.”

Evangelicals break ranks with Bush on North Korea

By David Anderson
Religion News Service

Washington (RNS)—When evangelical pastor and best-selling author Rick Warren announced he would undertake a preaching mission to North Korea next year, it raised a number of eyebrows in the conservative religious community.

North Korea, after all, is a keystone in President Bush's "axis of evil" and, according to the State Department and human rights organizations, a gross violator of human rights and religious freedom.

Warren, author of the hugely popular "Purpose Driven Life" books, was forced to cancel a preliminary July 17 trip to Pyongyang in the wake of heightened tensions between the reclusive regime and the West over North Korea's July 5 test of seven missiles.

But while Warren's trip was canceled, he insisted his preaching visit would go on next year despite criticism from other evangelicals and the Bush administration's efforts to totally isolate the country. "Regardless of politics, I will go anywhere I am invited to preach the gospel," Warren said.

Warren's stance is just one of a number of indications that, at least on foreign policy issues, the president can no longer automatically count on the support—or at least quiet acquiescence—of conservative and moderate evangelicals as he did in the run-up to the war in Iraq.

Whether the differences on North Korea will translate into differences on other issues remains to be seen. Evangelicals have been notably silent—neither critics nor cheerleaders—on the continuing crisis in the Middle East and the Bush administration's support of Israel's offensive in Lebanon and Gaza.

On North Korea, evangelist Franklin Graham, head of the relief agency Samaritan's Purse, has laid out evangelical differences with the administration most forcefully.

Graham, who has visited North Korea, recently told the PBS program "Religion & Ethics Newsweekly" that he wanted to encourage the administration and Congress to change the U.S. approach to the communist nation.

Congress OKs federal control of public cross

Washington (RNS)—The Senate passed legislation Aug. 1 to transfer ownership of Mount Soledad Veterans Memorial in San Diego to the federal government, the latest twist in an escalating battle over the legality of a publicly displayed cross.

The House previously passed the bill; the measure now awaits a signature from President Bush.

"The people of San Diego have clearly expressed their desire to keep the Mt. Soledad Veterans Memorial in its present form. Judicial activism should not stand in the way of the people," said a statement from the White House.

The 29-foot cross currently sits on city property as part of a veterans memorial. The bill passed by Congress would transfer control of the

"We need to talk to the North Koreans face to face, period," Graham told the program. "Eyeball to eyeball. And there is a lot that can be accomplished if we simply do that."

"I think probably North Korea is the most dangerous place on the face of the Earth right now," Graham said. "You've got a country that I feel is kind of backed up against a wall."

North Korea has indicated it will not engage in talks with the United States until Washington ends its financial sanctions against the country. Graham took a dim view of the value of the sanctions.

"Whatever sanctions, what little we may be able to bring to bear on North Korea, it's just going to end up hurting the people worse," he said. "It's not going to hurt the army, and I don't think it's going to hurt (North Korean leader) Kim Jong Il."

Graham said he was "not breaking ranks with the president" but was "encouraging the president to change his strategy, just a little bit."

SBC leader part of new approach

Separately, two other leading conservative evangelicals—Richard Land of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission and Richard Cizik of the National Association of Evangelicals—signed on to an effort pressing a joint humanitarian and human rights approach to North Korea rather than the administration's focus on arms control.

The coalition includes such liberal groups as Americans for Democratic Action, the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism and the American Humanist Association.

"At the earliest practicable date, the United States should propose an unconditional humanitarian aid initiative to improve the health and lives of the people of North Korea, doing so in such form as will ensure that the benefits of the initiative will be provided on a needs basis," according to the 18-point plan announced July 20.

The coalition cannot be accused of taking a "soft" stand on the erratic North Korean regime, but it also represents a break from the administration's approach.

property to the federal government.

The battle over the cross has lasted more than 15 years after an atheist Vietnam War veteran filed a lawsuit saying the cross's placement violated the separation of church and state.

Last month, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a stay in the case, which suspended a lower court decision that would have forced the city to remove the cross from public land or risk a \$5,000-per-day fine.

The American Center for Law and Justice hopes future legislation would protect the 29-foot cross from being torn down. "The Senate action clears the way for a legislative solution to keep the Mt. Soledad cross in place," said Jay Sekulow, chief counsel of the ACLJ.

Plan to Participate
At A Stop Near You!

PRAY

THE Interior

KENTUCKY BAPTISTS Connect September 18-22, 2006

Prayer is crucial to help us stay focused on God's will as we seek to achieve the Kentucky Baptists Connect goals to reach more people for Christ, disciple Christians and develop leaders. To emphasize our reliance on God and the importance of prayer, Dr. Bill Mackey, executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, and other Convention leaders will lead a prayer tour that will take them through the interior of the state of Kentucky.

At each stop, committed Kentucky Baptists will gather to pray for:

- ▶ Believers to experience Renewal
- ▶ Churches to experience Revival
- ▶ God to use our churches to share the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ with every person in their community

Monday, September 18	Louisville 9:00-9:45 a.m. Kentucky Baptist Building Bardstown 11:00-11:45 a.m. Parkway Baptist Church Elizabethtown 12:30-2:00 p.m. Northside Baptist Church Leitchfield 1:30-2:15 p.m. Leitchfield First Baptist Church Morgantown 3:00-3:45 p.m. Morgantown First Baptist Church Beaver Dam 4:30-6:00 p.m. Beaver Dam Baptist Church Greenville 7:00 p.m. Woodson Baptist Church, Powderly
Tuesday, September 19	Madisonville 8:00-9:15 a.m. Madisonville First Baptist Church Princeton 10:30-12 noon Highland Baptist Church Bowling Green 2:00-2:45 p.m. Warren Association Office Glasgow 4:00-4:45 p.m. Calvary Baptist Church Munfordville 7:00 p.m. Munfordville Baptist Church
Wednesday, September 20	Greensburg 7:30-8:45 a.m. Greensburg Baptist Church Campbellsville 10:30-11:15 a.m. Campbellsville Baptist Church Jamestown 11:30-1:00 p.m. Jamestown Baptist Church Somerset 3:00-3:30 p.m. Buena Vista Baptist Church London 4:30-5:00 p.m. Corinth Baptist Church Oneida 7:00 p.m. Oneida Baptist Church
Thursday, September 21	Stanton 7:30-8:45 a.m. Stanton Baptist Church Winchester 10:00-10:30 a.m. Central Baptist Church Lexington 11:15-noon Parkway Baptist Church Berea 1:00-2:00 p.m. Silver Creek Baptist Church Mt. Vernon 2:45-3:15 p.m. Northside Baptist Church Stanford 4:15-4:45 p.m. Lincoln Baptist Association Office Harrodsburg 7:30 p.m. Pioneer Baptist Church
Friday, September 22	Frankfort 7:30-8:45 a.m. Crestwood Baptist Church Owenton 10:00-10:45 a.m. First Baptist Church Williamstown 11:30-12:50 p.m. Williamstown Baptist Church Eminence 2:00-2:30 p.m. Eminence Baptist Church Shelbyville 3:30-4:00 p.m. Highland Baptist Church

* All times are local times.

For more details about each stop, visit
www.kybaptist.org/prayertour

Or call the **Kentucky Baptist Mission Board** at
866-489-3578 or
502-489-3578

Report: Some faith-based groups blur church-state separation lines

Washington (RNS)—An examination of the White House's faith-based initiative has found that some organizations are not separating religious activities from federally funded services.

At the request of two members of Congress, the U.S. General Accountability Office spent more than a year conducting a review of federal and state agencies related to the White House Office of Faith-based and Community Initiatives. The GAO also investigated religious groups that have received government grants.

The report, released July 18, said officials at 26 faith-based organizations that were visited by investigators said they understood that government funds could not pay for religious activities.

But reviewers found four of the 13 faith-based organizations that offered voluntary religious activities did not appear to understand the requirement to separate activities such as prayer and worship in time or location from their program services funded with federal funds.

One faith-based worker told investigators she discusses religious matters while providing a service funded by the government if a participant asks and others don't object. In a few cases, staffers at faith-based groups said they prayed with program beneficiaries if requested.

Alyssa McClenning, a spokeswoman for the White House faith-based office, said efforts are made to prevent such situations.

But the congressmen who sought the review said the results show management of the fund is in question.

George Washington University Law School professor Ira Lupu said the report showed no widespread abuse of federal funds but pointed out the need for more monitoring.

"People don't understand that you couldn't do a prayer service in a government-funded program," he said. "People somehow think in those groups so long as it's voluntary, it's OK. ... That's not the constitutional law."

FDA rethinks 'morning-after pill' restrictions

By Robert Cohen
Religion News Service

Washington (RNS)—After a three-year fight, the Bush administration signaled last week that it might be ready to reverse course and approve over-the-counter sales of an emergency contraceptive pill despite vocal opposition from the religious right.

The Food and Drug Administration notified Barr Pharmaceuticals that it wants a meeting within seven days to discuss the "rigorous" steps the company would have to take to sell its "morning-after pill" without a prescription.

Barr has been seeking to sell its Plan B contraceptive to customers age 16 and older but has faced opposition from anti-abortion groups and conservative lawmakers and repeated roadblocks from the FDA.

Now the agency says a final decision could be reached "in a matter of weeks" if Barr meets conditions necessary to ensure the pill does not fall into the hands of "young girls who can't safely use it" without the supervision of a doctor. The FDA insists on a minimum age of 18.

Plan B, which has been sold by prescription in the United States since 1999, contains higher doses of the hormones used in regular birth control pills. The emergency contraceptive is considered effective in preventing pregnancy up to 72 hours after sex, but is most effective

if taken in the first 24 hours.

Family planning, abortion rights and physician groups say easier access to the pill could greatly reduce unintended pregnancies.

The administration has promoted abstinence, with its conservative allies adamantly opposed to creating easier access to the emergency contraception.

Political maneuvers

The July 31 announcement came the day before Andrew von Eschenbach, President Bush's nominee to lead the FDA, appeared at his Senate confirmation hearing. On Aug. 1, Senate Democrats grilled von Eschenbach, the acting FDA commissioner since last September, on why the approval of over-the-counter sales of Plan B has been thwarted despite positive recommendations by the agency's scientific advisers and professional staff.

Two Democrats, Sens. Hillary Clinton of New York and Patty Murray of Washington, vowed to continue to hold on to von Eschenbach's confirmation until a final decision is made on Plan B.

Von Eschenbach, in turn, said he would make decisions based "not on a political ideology, but on a medical ideology."

Wendy Long, head of Concerned Women for America, a conservative Christian advocacy group, expressed dismay over the FDA announce-

ment. She warned that over-the-counter sales could lead to greater promiscuity, an increase in sexually transmitted diseases, and the likelihood that adolescent girls will gain access to the pill.

"You could have a 19-year-old man buy it and hand it to a 13-year-old girl," Long said. "Any restriction on who can buy it without a prescription will be meaningless."



Position Available

The Kentucky Baptist Convention Communications Department in Louisville is seeking an experienced professional to serve as marketing and media relations associate. Position begins in January.



Must be a member in good standing of a Baptist church affiliated with the KBC and/or the Southern Baptist Convention. Direct job description requests and resumes to shari.rogers@kybaptist.org.

HEARTS ON FIRE

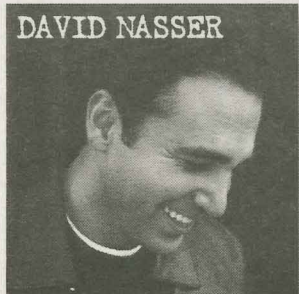


November 17-18, 2006
Gatlinburg, Tennessee
Gatlinburg Convention Center
Doors open at 6:00 p.m.

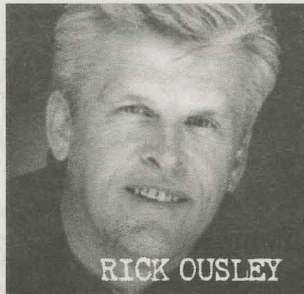
REGISTRATION DEADLINE:
Friday, November 6, 2006

www.heartsonfireministries.com

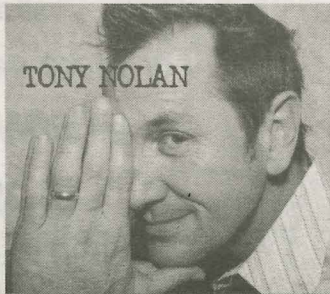
First Baptist Church • 317 Parkway, Sevierville, TN 37862
(865) 453-9001



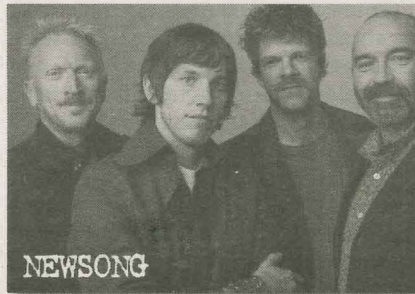
DAVID NASSER



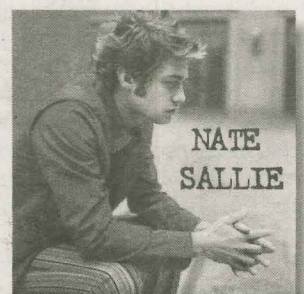
RICK OUSLEY



TONY NOLAN



NEWSONG



NATE SALLIE

The reality of cutting

Youths' self abuse not just somebody else's problem

Our Crossings camps here in Kentucky are officially over for the summer of 2006. Our partner camps in Moldova continue for a couple more weeks, and this year has been the largest ever in every area of measurement. In spite of all the great events this summer, it has been one of the most difficult because camp gives us insight into the challenges students face.

While I am preparing to turn 39 in a week, I still consider myself kind of young. I can remember school days and many specifics of my growing years. Also, I have four kids who should keep me somewhat connected to the minds of youth.

Despite all this, words cannot express my shocked and troubled heart as I hear of what some of our students are doing to themselves. The term "cutting" was hardly ever heard of in our world two years ago, but has become common, as we have seen this summer. Cutting is the act of a person inflicting pain by cutting himself or herself with a sharp object.

As I understand, this is their

way of experiencing feeling. Students describe the self-imposed reality of shutting their hearts to all people and building such a wall that they do not have any real emotion. The cutting allows them to know that their heart and mind still can experience a real emotion.

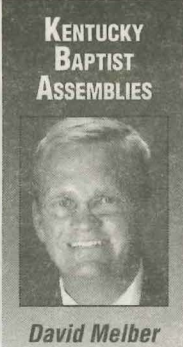
Each week of camp, staff encountered youth who had taken part in cutting. Reading this, you probably are thinking this cannot be real, but it is at epidemic levels. I believe each of our churches should become informed about this sad practice so we as adults can identify and minister to these

troubled teens.

You can contact Focus on the Family and The Center for Parent and Youth Understanding for resources on how to deal with this reality that is capturing our students.

Thank you for your prayers this summer and continue to pray for our young people. Their task to grow in today's culture is unlike any other before.

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



David Melber

Kudzu

Doug Marlette



For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



Bible Crosswords

Evelyn M. Boyington

Across

- 1 "A stormy wind shall ____ it" (Ezekiel 13:11)
- 5 "Jonah was gone down ____ the sides of the ship" (Jonah 1:5)
- 9 Ration
- 12 "My cup runneth ____" (Psalms 23:5)
- 13 "Every one had ____ faces" (Ezekiel 1:6)
- 14 "A vineyard of ____ wine" (Isaiah 27:2)
- 15 Prevent
- 17 To be announced, abbr.
- 18 "Nathan the prophet and Shimei, and ____" (1 Kings 1:8)
- 19 "Prince of the power of the ____" (Ephesians 2:2)
- 21 "Neither will I ____ an offering at your hand" (Malachi 1:10)
- 23 "Those virgins arose, and their lamps" (Matthew 25:7)
- 27 "The ____ was come to the place of the arrow" (1 Samuel 20:37)
- 28 Charged particles
- 29 The disciple who denied Christ
- 31 Interrogatory syllable
- 33 "... and no ____ regarded" (Proverbs 1:24)
- 34 "Number all the firstborn of the ____" (Numbers 3:40)
- 35 Fruit drink
- 36 "The children of Gad called the altar ____" (Joshua 22:34)
- 37 "But ye are a chosen generation, a ____ priesthood" (1 Peter 2:9)
- 38 Colored layer of the eye
- 39 "A third part shall be at the gate of ____" (2 Kings 11:6)
- 40 December 31
- 42 "They shall take up a lamentation for thee, and ____ over thee" (Ezekiel 27:32)
- 45 Cup
- 46 "____, even the ancient high places are our's" (Ezekiel 36:2)
- 47 Anger
- 49 "____, Mahalaleel, Jered" (1 Chronicles 1:2)

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	
12					13					14			
15				16		17				18			
				19		20		21		22			
23	24	25				26		27					
28					29		30				31	32	
33					34						35		
36					37					38			
			39			40		41					
42	43				44		45						
46					47		48		49		50	51	52
53					54			55		56			
57					58					59			

- 53 "Bring unto thee pure ____ olive" (Leviticus 24:2)
- 54 "I went down into the garden of ____" (Song of Sol. 6:11)
- 56 "He went into a city called ____" (Luke 7:11)
- 57 Sun, Sp.
- 58 Equipment
- 59 "And came to the strong hold of ____" (2 Samuel 24:7)
- 24 "Whither have ye made a ____ to day" (1 Samuel 27:10)
- 25 "There was no room for them in the ____" (Luke 2:7)
- 26 "Thou shalt no ____ to offer the first of thy ripe fruits" (Exodus 22:29)
- 30 "Ziph, and ____, and Bealoth" (Joshua 15:24)
- 31 First garden
- 32 "Hairs of your ____ are all numbered" (Luke 12:7)
- 34 "Thou shalt seek me in the ____" (Job 7:21)
- 35 Latin expression of greeting
- 37 "Ye tithe the mint and ____ and all manner of herbs" (Luke 11:42)
- 38 "The king's commandment was ____" (Daniel 3:22)
- 39 "I am ____ and despised" (Psalms 119:141)
- 41 Diving bird
- 42 East Asian country
- 43 "Uzzah and ____, the sons of Abinadab" (2 Samuel 6:3)
- 44 "That was the ____ Light" (John 1:9)
- 48 Approximate time of arrival, abbr.
- 50 "I tell you ____; but rather division" (Luke 12:51)
- 51 "Meet the Lord in the ____" (1 Thessalonians 4:17)
- 52 Compass point
- 55 Twelfth-grader, abbr.

Last week's solution

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	-----

LifeWay CHURCH BUSES
Buses provided for LifeWay by
Carpenter Bus Sales
1-800-370-6180 • carpenterbus.com

TURNING HEARTS TOUR

The Turning Hearts Tour is coming to Frankfort Ky., September 16th!

Based on Malachi 4:6, this event seeks to bring your family to a new level of intimacy and trust in each other as well as the Lord. Featuring Richard Ross, Joel Engle, and Tyra Lokey, your family will be challenged with great teaching and incredible worship! Register at www.turningheartstour.com!

Visit us on the Web!

- ✓ Read stories
- ✓ Submit a classified ad
- ✓ Send a Mountains to the Mississippi notice
- ✓ Send a story idea
- ✓ Learn about our newsletter serv
- ✓ Buy a gift subscription

WWW.WESTERNRECORDER.org

NATIONAL NOTES

Update: Katrina fund exec resigns after pastors' criticism. The executive director of the Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund resigned her post July 14 after prominent members of the fund's religious advisory committee quit and harshly criticized the manner in which the fund made grants to houses of worship. Officials announced that Mary Ann Wyrsh would be replaced by Constance Newman, an executive with a Washington lobbying group. Committee co-chairs, T.D. Jakes of Dallas and William Gray III of Philadelphia protested that grant checks were distributed before their committee could verify that applicants truly had a need.

"Blessed day" could get you disciplined. Fed up with the religious aphorisms employees have been attaching to their e-mail, the Ohio Department of Taxation has threatened to discipline workers whose postscripts wish the recipient a blessed day. Samples of postscripts to e-mail intercepted by officials include statements such as: "May God continue to bless you and keep you from all hurt, harm and danger," and "Deuteronomy 30:15-19 Choose Life." A department spokesman said the threat of discipline was issued because employees ignored an earlier warning.

Salvation Army employee pleads guilty to embezzling. For an employee at the Salvation Army, a charity that prides itself on "Doing the Most Good," Leroy Brown was, well, quite bad. For seven years, Brown, a financial manager at the organization's Newark office, secretly stole money that was supposed to be used to subsidize rent for AIDS patients and the poor. At a hearing July 26, Brown admitted to cutting 585 checks worth more than \$385,000, then passing them to a friend who cashed them and split the proceeds. He faces between 30 and 37 months in prison.

Alabama church rebuilding after arson. Pleasant Sabine Baptist Church has been quickly rising from the ashes since arsonists set fire to five area churches in February. Pleasant Sabine Baptist was the first of those churches to begin construction on its new building. The sanctuary is about halfway done and could be completed by mid-September, Pastor Robert Murphy said. The church had \$100,000 worth of insurance and the cost to rebuild will be about \$375,000. But donations have come from throughout the country.

Heat wave convinces Pat Robertson global warming exists

Virginia Beach, Va. (RNS)—The overwhelming heat that blanketed much of the East Coast in August has convinced religious broadcaster Pat Robertson that global warming is a reality.

"It is the most convincing evidence of global warming I've run into in a long time," Robertson said Aug. 3 during his "The 700 Club" television show. He previously had

been critical of claims about the dangers of climate change.

Robertson's reaction is the latest pronouncement in a year featuring different sets of evangelical leaders issuing statements and counter-statements about whether global warming is a serious threat.

"I have not been one who believed in this global warming, but I tell you, they're making a convert out of

me with these blistering summers," Robertson said on his show the day before his Aug. 3 statement.

"And it is getting hotter, and the ice caps are melting, and there is a buildup of carbon dioxide in the air. And I think we really need to address the burning of fossil fuels. If we are contributing to the destruction of this planet, we need to do something about it."

2006 SUPER SATURDAY

NEW THIS YEAR!
Student/Youth Track
in Bowling Green, Paducah and Lexington

STRENGTHENING EVERY CHURCH

August 19
Porter Memorial Baptist Church, Lexington

August 26
First Baptist Church, Prestonsburg
First Baptist Church, Bowling Green

September 9
Lone Oak First Baptist Church, Paducah
Beacon Hill Baptist Church, Somerset

September 16
Crestwood Baptist Church, Crestwood

Only \$15* to register online!

\$17 by mail/phone • \$20 at event
Rates are per person.

COOPERATIVE PROGRAM

KBC
KENTUCKY BAPTIST CONVENTION

For more information contact
502.489.3571 / 866.489.3571 (toll free in KY)
***www.kybaptist.org/supersaturday**

I want to remember it the way it was, part 2

Abandoned Magoffin Institute makes us grateful for Oneida's faithful friends

The school building for the former Magoffin Baptist Institute was located near the road and in front of the other buildings. Since the area had not been mowed in over two years, weeds already had overtaken a lot of the campus.

The purpose of our trip to Magoffin in 1962 was to see if any remaining items could be used by Oneida Baptist Institute after the closing of our sister school. Magoffin trustees had voted to give the land, buildings and other items to Oneida. I am not sure what Oneida expected to receive besides the land and buildings, but except for a library full of books that were even older than our books, there was not much left. I don't know if creditors had taken most of the items or if people simply had helped themselves. The school was in a remote, secluded area, and there was no security. Many people who visit Oneida's campus believe we are in the middle of nowhere, but compared to the Magoffin campus, we are nearly in suburbia.

The buildings were basically empty. There were a few beds and dressers in the girls' dorm, but like the books, they were old and not worth hauling back. Across the road, a newer and modest block building had been built in the early 1950s. The building provided schoolboys with a small room and a few faculty with some needed living space. Down the road was the farm, which was still in use and even had some milk cows, but they were soon sold. The farm buildings were old and had not been well maintained. Even as a schoolboy I could tell the farm had been neglected. Looking back, I feel certain the recent

construction of the new school building and the block building had taken a serious financial toll on Magoffin's financial resources.

I came away that day with a few books from the library, which I still have today. We found a few other items worth bringing back to campus, but to my knowledge, little else was ever gotten. I have made several trips back to the Magoffin campus over the years. I was saddened on one trip to discover that the school building had been set on fire. The other buildings had been vandalized, and various groups had taken advantage of the empty and unguarded buildings. The school building has since been set on fire two additional times. The third fire, which took place recently, consumed everything combustible.

I was back on the Magoffin campus a few weeks ago. One of my daughters had heard a lot about Magoffin but never had been there, so we took her for a visit. It was late on a Saturday afternoon when my two daughters, my grandchildren, my wife and I made our way deep into Breathitt County up Frozen Creek. It was a sad sight! Years ago, about six acres, where most of the buildings had been located, had reverted back to some of the heirs of the original donors of the land. Just weeks earlier the owner of the six acres had the two stone buildings pushed to the ground. Seeing the tall weeds, two demolished buildings and the burned school building, I have to confess, it was an emotional moment. I thank God daily for the faithful friends who have made it possible for the Oneida ministry to continue. I trust her ministry will never meet the same fate!

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



W.F. Underwood

Encouraging ministry assistants

Kentucky Baptist secretaries' group meets at Clear Creek

The 20th annual meeting of the Kentucky Baptist Secretaries Association met on campus July 27-29. "Clear Creek is a great place for our conference," President Bonnie Brown of Burlington Baptist Church said.

Attendance was down this year, but those present were blessed with the opportunity for fellowship and growth.

Roy Lucas, Clear Creek's H.C. Chiles professor of New Testament, taught a two-hour Bible study on the Beatitudes. It was my privilege to speak at the three general sessions. One evening my wife and I hosted the group for a fellowship in our home.

Secretaries had computer training sessions on desktop publishing. Jan Mills, of Second Baptist in Russellville, taught sessions on "Your Office Image." Sue Tabor, of Georgetown Baptist, led a session on "Recovering from the Losses of Life." The group feasted at a Friday night banquet at Pine Mountain Lodge. Two general sessions featured Janice Holcomb of Nashville; the ladies enjoyed her humor and appreciated suggestions on "Office Survival." Most

annual conferences include opportunities to complete one or more modules to gain ministry assistant certification from LifeWay.

KBSA sponsors the Clara McCarty Scholarship Fund, named for the longtime secretary to Duke McCall during his years as president of Southern Seminary; she was instrumental in founding KBSA. The scholarship is made to a child or grandchild of a Kentucky Baptist secretary attending Campbellsville University, Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, University of the Cumberland or Georgetown College.

Many other secretaries serving Kentucky Baptists could benefit from membership and attendance at KBSA. Grace Bristow, of Buena Vista Baptist in Owensboro, notes, "We do not have many pastors who support the organization. Family commitments keep some from participation." Sharon Travis, of First Baptist of Russellville, observed, "It is encouraging to know people with some of the same problems I face at work."

Pastors, include some funds in your next budget for your secretary to be involved.

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



Bill Whittaker

Cowboy churches

Growing in appeal, they're not just for Texans anymore

By David Briggs
Religion News Service

Newbury Township, Ohio (RNS)—Mamas who let their babies grow up to be cowboys have one less thing to worry about.

Cowboy churches are galloping across the nation, providing a spiritual home in stables, riding arenas and other open spaces where some country folk like to congregate.

And not just in Texas and Oklahoma.

Inside Twin Pines Stables near Cleveland, Ohio, on a recent Tuesday, horses whinnied in the side pews, sparrows swooped in and out of the rafters, and the opening hymn instructed believers to "Saddle up your horses. We've got a trail to blaze. Through ... God's amazing grace."

Why a cowboy church? Why not, say the founders of Life Brand Cowboy Church.

"There are 60,000 horses in Northeast Ohio," Pastor Royce Gregory said. "There are a lot of horse people up here."

And with more religious groups meeting people in familiar cultural settings, some church leaders are asking, what better place for a Christian ministry than a horse barn?

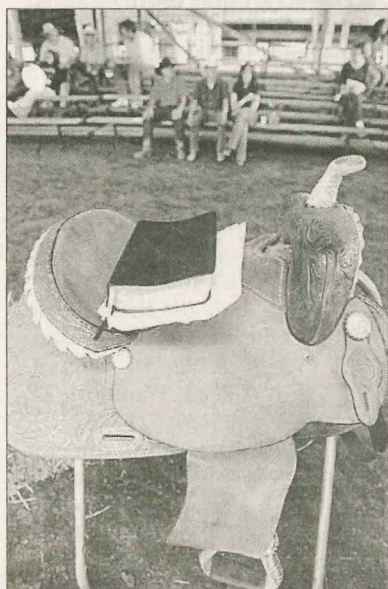
"Jesus never built a church," said music leader David O'Toole. "As a matter of fact, I believe He was born in a stable, if I'm not mistaken."

Horse people have lots of reasons to pray, cowboy missionaries say.

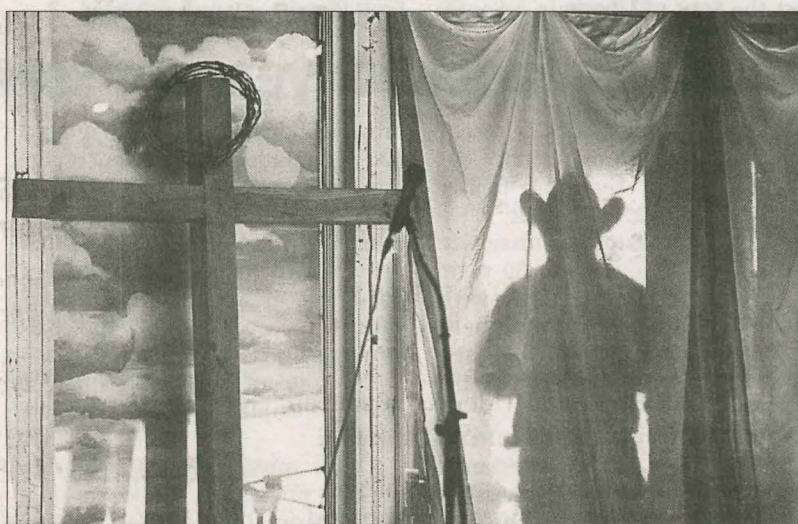
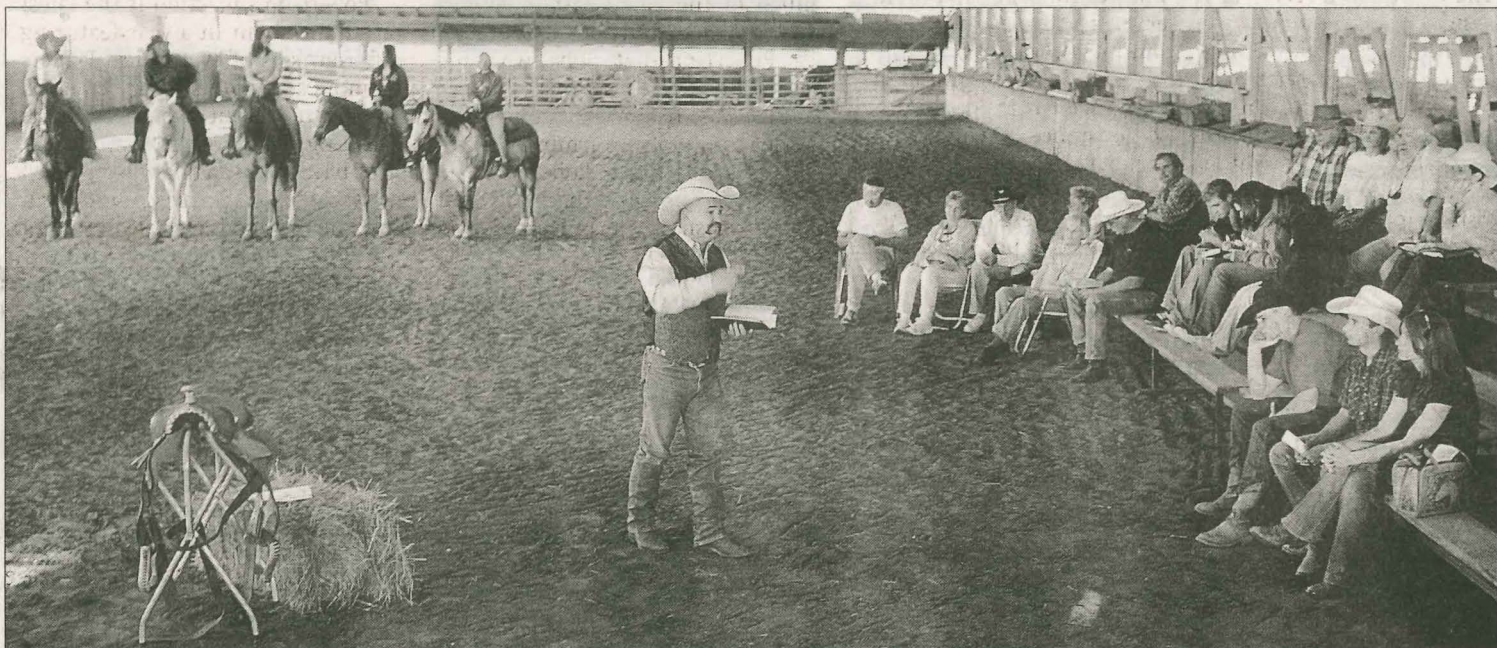
And not just bull riders who risk broken bones or paralysis each time they enter the chute. Working in open spaces with animals who are part of God's creation is an atmosphere that lends itself to prayer and contemplating the divine.

What they have lacked were places and time to worship.

Rodeos, horse shows and ranch work fill many weekends for cowboys and others in the world of riding and caring for horses. Gregory said most cowboys carry a Bible in their rigging, but going to church on Sunday is difficult.



UNIQUE PULPIT Pastor Royce Gregory uses a saddle for a pulpit



SILHOUETTE The shadow of Pastor Royce Gregory is seen through the curtains on the stage of Life Brand Cowboy Church.

Three years ago, Jeff Smith of Midland, N.C., rented a bull-riding arena and invited his rodeo friends to an evening worship service during the week.

"You do it, we will come," they told him.

From Florida to Canada

Smith, the executive director of the Cowboy Church Network, now has helped start 26 cowboy churches from Florida to Canada, including Life Brand.

Gregory's epiphany came about seven years ago, while he was judging a bull-riding competition in Kinsman, Ohio. Gregory said he felt the Holy Spirit speak to him.

"Look around you, Royce. There's lost people. They need the love of Christ," was the message Gregory said he received. "My first thought was, 'Huh, me?'"

He began sharing Scripture with cowboys during area rodeos. Last year, he decided to take his ministry a step further and begin a church, with the help of Smith; Gregory's home church, Lake Ridge in Mentor, Ohio; and the Southern Baptist Convention.

The denomination helps fund and provides volunteers for the church as part of an initiative to plant churches in Northeast Ohio.

Life Brand held its first service in May and draws an average of 60 people, both horse people and people who enjoy the country lifestyle,

each week at the Geauga County, Ohio, stables, Gregory said.

Smith doesn't know how many cowboy churches exist in the United States, but he said the phenomenon has taken off as organizations such as his Cowboy Church Network offer training for clergy and lay leaders.

"I believe it's kind of a God thing," Smith said of the success of cowboy churches.

Gregory, a native of Corpus Christi, has a Texas-size grin on his face as he begins the service with some humor.

"The preacher tells the story of Jesus feeding the 5,000 with two fish, and the congregation wants to know whether they were bass or catfish and what bait did He use."

Dressed in a Palm Leaf cowboy hat ("Most cowboys don't wear Stetsons anymore," he says), starched shirt and pants with a large silver belt buckle and boots, the 48-year-old Gregory fits in with the congregation's sea of flannel, jeans and boots.

Six riders attend the entire 75-minute service on horseback.

On this night, everyone claps to the hymn "Are You Washed in the Blood?" A soloist puts her soul into the country tune, "If Nobody Believed in You."

A video screen shows the words of the hymns, as well as the announcement "Restrooms, AKA outhouses, are located in the rear parking area."

At one end of the riding arena is a stainless-steel horse trough, the baptismal pool where soon at least nine people will be immersed.

The dress, the contemporary music, the setting—everything—is designed to be relaxed and familiar to people who are in or attracted to cowboy culture.

And that's the way the congregation likes it.

Debbie McCann, 49, wearing cowboy boots and hat, says her family enjoys the service so much, they attend church twice a week, once on Sunday at their home church and again on Tuesday nights at Life Brand.

"I love it. I think it's awesome," she said. "It's just different. It's a lot more relaxed."

Three teenagers sitting in the first row of the wooden-plank grandstand say this is one place that gets church right for them.

Dusty Whidden, 17, likes being able to come from work to the service without having to change. "I don't like going to normal church," he said.

Old-fashioned message

A well-worn black leather Bible rests on top of a saddle that serves as a pulpit.

Gregory grabs the Bible and proceeds to give it a workout, gesturing with it, reading from it and at times pounding it to emphasize a point as he paces back and forth in the dirt in front of the grandstand.

If the setting is unusual, Gregory's message is old-fashioned.

"There's only one way to heaven, and that's through faith in Jesus Christ," Gregory tells his congregation.

"Some people call it hellfire-and-damnation preaching," he says, slapping his palm on the Bible. "But you know what, that's what it says. There's no getting around it."

The message—not how people dress or the style of music or the setting—is what is important, church leaders say.

The gospel "is ageless, it's timeless and it's classless," O'Toole said.

"Wherever people are assembled, it's a church. Whether in a stable or a cathedral, I really don't think it matters."

DIRT STAGE Pastor Royce Gregory started Life Brand Cowboy Church in Newbury Township, Ohio, for people who attend rodeos on Sundays or don't like conventional church settings. (RNS/Cleveland Plain Dealer photo by John Kuntz)

PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following Kentucky Baptist missionaries and ministries:

"Celebrate Recovery" ministry coordinated by Cumberland Baptist Church. Pastor Dennis Williams is leading a multi-church effort to help recovering drug addicts find freedom. Twelve churches are involved in the weekly ministry, which provides a large-group challenge including testimonies by former addicts and small-group discussion that provides counseling and accountability. There are 75 to 120 individuals seeking freedom from addiction through involvement in the ministry. Pray that program participants accept the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ, trusting Him for the strength to overcome their addictions. Pray that former addicts will faithfully live out their newfound freedom in Christ as a witness to the community.

Mission Service Corps Missionary Tim Mills of Barbourville. Mills serves as a sports chaplain for Union College. He ministers to student athletes, coaches and their families through prayer, Bible studies and motivational talks. He seeks to introduce non-believers to faith in Christ and encourages those who are Christian. Pray that God will open additional doors of ministry opportunity on the campus. Pray also that Christian athletes will stand firm in their faith and be effective Christian witnesses to their teammates.

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

- **ALEXANDRIA**—Pleasant Ridge Church recently called **Brad Napier** as youth minister. **Paul Coleman** is pastor.
- **BARLOW**—First Church ordained minister of youth **Scott Fickes** to the gospel ministry July 30. **Tom Camp** is pastor.
- **BEREA**—White Lick Church licensed **Josh Chasteen** to the gospel ministry July 6. **Ed Hubbard** is pastor.
- **CLAY CITY**—Clay City Church will hold revival services Aug. 12-16 with **Dale Rose** as evangelist. For more information, call (606) 663-2091.
- **CORBIN**—First Church recently called **Mark Nethery** as youth minister. He previously was minister to youth at Buechel Park Church in Louisville.
- **DIXON**—**Chris Odle** recently resigned as pastor of Lakeview Church.
- **LONDON**—Corinth Church will host "Calling America Back to God" Crusades for Christ Bible conference

Spotlight on ...

Symsonia



Elva Church will celebrate homecoming Aug. 20 with **Jimmy Seaford** as speaker and **The Liberty Boys** in concert in the afternoon. For more information, call (270) 851-3235.

Aug. 9-11. Featured speakers include **Boyd Bingham III, Lincoln Bingham, Laverne Butler, Emir Caner, Norman Hunt, Danny Lovett, Don Mathis, John Sullivan** and **Hershael York**. For more information, call (606) 864-5440. **James Blaylock** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Cloverleaf Church will host the **Sons of Liberty** in a South-

KBC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August

- 19 Super Saturday, Porter Memorial Baptist Church, Lexington.
- 26 Super Saturday, First Baptist Church, Bowling Green, and First Baptist Church, Prestonsburg.

September

- 9 Super Saturday, Beacon Hill Baptist Church, Somerset, and Lone Oak First Baptist Church, Paducah.
- 15-16 Women on Mission/Baptist Nursing Fellowship Fall Retreat, Jonathan Creek.

16 Super Saturday, Crestwood Baptist Church, Crestwood.

18-21 FAITH Clinic, Parkland Baptist Church, Louisville.

18-19 Kentucky Baptist Ministers Golf Tournament, Cherry Blossom Golf Course, Georgetown.

23 Children in Action Day Camp, Cedar Crest.

25 Discipleship/Assimilation, Living Hope Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

29-30 FOCUS 2006, Crestwood Baptist Church, Crestwood.

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

ern gospel music concert Aug. 12, 7 p.m. For more information, call (502) 367-0218.

Haitian Tabernacle recently called **Frantz Philippe** as pastor.

Hillview Church recently called **Scott Blessitt** as youth minister.

Hopewell Church will celebrate homecoming Aug. 13 with **Thom Rainer**, president of LifeWay Christian Resources, preaching at the 11 a.m. service. **Don James** is pastor.

■ **PRESTONBURG**—First Church recently called **Jerry Workman** as pastor.

IMB honors retiring missionaries for years of service & sacrifice

By Don Graham
Baptist Press

Rockville, Va. (BP)—Jim West didn't like what he saw in Hong Kong's darkening sky. Rising winds carried the rumble of thunder to his ears; raindrops wet his face. A massive typhoon was approaching East Asia's mainland.

This wasn't the day for a storm. West was preparing to baptize an elderly woman who recently had given her life to Jesus. But as the frail woman was helped into a small plastic swimming pool, West said something miraculous happened.

The rain stopped, the wind died and the clouds parted—as if the storm itself had paused to bear witness to the woman's public profession of faith. Instead of darkness, she found herself bathed in a circle of bright sunlight as West gently dipped her below the surface of the water, baptizing her in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

"We knew God had visited us that day," West recalled.

This was just one of dozens of memories shared at the Inter-

national Mission Board's recent emeritus recognition service at the Missionary Learning Center in Rockville, Va. Fifty-four retiring Southern Baptist missionaries—many of whom spent 30 years or more on the mission field—were honored for their commitment to spreading the gospel. Together, their combined experience totals 1,476 years of service.

"This is a very elite group," IMB President Jerry Rankin declared. "Yes, you've experienced hardship and adversity. You've gone through those times of fruitless ministry and doubt about your calling and God's faithfulness. But you kept laying on the altar a sacrifice of praise to God, thanking Him for the privilege of being there, serving Him and touching a lost world."

Many of the missionaries spoke about those hardships—including persecution. Ron and Sue Ballard witnessed hatred for the gospel firsthand during their 17 years of service. As church planters in Mexico, they recalled encountering a gruesome sight after a day of

prayerwalking. A crucified iguana had been nailed to their gate on an upside-down cross.

"The next morning, we were blinded by an enormous yellow upside-down cross, the numbers 666 and a message painted on the gate: 'I am God—Satan,'" Mrs. Ballard explained.

"In spite of Satan's schemes, a church was planted," her husband added.

Other missionaries told stories of God's protection. While working in East Africa, Charles and Cheri Orange remember a terrifying experience at a beach near their home.

Orange had taken their son on a walk while his wife read a book on the sand. She remembers suddenly hearing a voice: "Look behind you." Ignoring the voice at first, Cheri heard it again: "Look behind you, NOW!" To her horror, she turned to see a man sneaking up behind her carrying a raised butcher knife. The man ran away as she began screaming.

"Satan didn't want us in East Africa, and I believe he would have

taken us out if the Lord's hand hadn't protected us," Orange said.

There also were many memories of God's victories.

Early during their 32-year ministry in the Dominican Republic, Paul and Peggy Siebenmann met a young man named Manolo. He was a dropout and drug addict but wanted help with a free Bible correspondence course.

"By his fifth lesson, he had accepted Jesus," Siebenmann told the crowd. "Wow—what a change. Soon he enrolled 30 of his friends."

The missionary said Manolo went back to school and began preparing for a life devoted to ministry, eventually graduating from seminary. Today, the church where he serves as pastor has founded 26 missions and has trained more than 100 people for missionary service.

"Our greatest joy has been training others to do much more for the Lord's work than we ever could," Siebenmann said.

"Just one Manolo is worth a lifetime of missionary service," his wife added.

CLASSIFIED ADS

FREE: Interested in revival? Five free booklets available (in quantity) to leaders of ministries, Sunday school and home groups. Visit www.keytorevival.org or write: Alliance for Christian Fellowship, Int., PO Box 747, Burnet, TX 78611.

FOR SALE: 1971 Moller organ with all pipes, bench, Harrisburg Maryland, opus 10769. Beautiful. Contact Richard Landers, (859) 623-4028, ext. 205, or (859) 200-7200.

NEEDED: Used 15-passenger van for small Eastern Kentucky church. Contact Bill Walton, (606) 593-7144.

NEEDED: Saddle Creek Worship Center in Mayfield, Ky., is seeking the donation of a church van or bus for its new outreach and missions ministries. Please contact Bro. Terry at (270) 247-4118; or saddlecreekworshipcenter@hotmail.com.

SEEKING: Experienced, full-time minister of music/senior services/

outreach for Hebron Baptist Church, Hebron, Ky. Successful candidates will have attended seminary and have a master's degree in music. Salary commensurate with experience and education. Send resumé to Marilyn Sutton, HBC, 3435 Limaburg Road, Hebron, KY 41048; or e-mail: masutton@aol.com.

SEEKING: A pastor and a worship leader. Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church, PO Box 368, Worthington, KY 41183.

SEEKING: Part-time youth director (grades 6-12) for Highlands Baptist in Lexington. Mail resumé to Mary Dixon, Highlands Baptist Church, 2032 Parallel Road, Lexington, KY 40511.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of music for contemporary, purpose-driven church. Please forward resumé and DVD to: Worship Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 106 East Walnut St., Leitchfield, KY 42754.

SEEKING: Part-time music minister. Send resumé to: Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church, 11212 Lees Road, Alexandria, KY 41001.

SEEKING: The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, an innovator in theological education, is seeking a director of accounting services and an accountant II. For consideration, apply on-line: <http://autohire.careershop.com/HRAdvantage>. Click on "Job Opportunities" on the menu bar; click on "Director of Accounting," job number 901316; or "Account II," job number 901315. Review posting, then click on "Apply for this job"; follow instructions for registering and applying.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for FBC Olive Hill. Church averages 110 in SS, 155-170 in worship. Send resumé and a cassette/video/CD of sermon delivery to: FBC, Olive Hill, KY 41164, Attn: Pastor Search Committee.

SEEKING: Part-time youth minister, Friendship Baptist of Campbellsville. Send resumé to: 5411 Bengal Road, Campbellsville, KY 42718.

SEEKING: Part-time music minister. Send resumé to: Friendship Baptist, 5411 Bengal Road, Campbellsville, KY 42718.

SEEKING: Part-time, permanent children's and youth minister. Seeking energetic individual with calling to lead young souls to Christ. Please submit resumé to: Personnel Committee, Evergreen Baptist Church, 2698 Evergreen Road, Frankfort, KY 40601; and/or call (859) 621-5582.

SEEKING: Part-time youth director for First Baptist Church, Hazard, Ky. Visit our Web site at hazardfbc.org for salary information and job description. Applicants should send resumé to: Dr. Ricky Ray, First Baptist Church, 560 Main St., Hazard, KY 41701.

Hot issue



CHRISTIAN EXODUS Nakla Qaber prepares a grill outside his Bethlehem-area restaurant. Qaber, who is Greek Orthodox, laments the exodus of Christians from the Holy Land. (RNS/Newark (N.J.) Star Ledger photos by Andrew Mills)

Christians struggle in the land of Jesus

By Steve Chambers
Religion News Service

Bethlehem, West Bank (RNS)—Nakla Qaber, whose Greek Orthodox roots stretch back generations in a Christian enclave on the West Bank, runs a successful restaurant at a time when most Palestinians are struggling.

But when it came time for his son and three daughters to make their own way in the world, they went off to college in the United States and Canada and never came back.

"Every time I go to services, I look around and see the number of worshippers declining, Sunday after Sunday," said Qaber, 63, who lives in Beit Jala, alongside the major Christian city of Bethlehem. "No one wants to leave his country, so this is a miserable thing, but if my sons and daughters stay overseas, someday I will follow them."

The exodus of Christians from the Holy Land troubles the faithful worldwide. With tensions rising in the past five years and economic conditions worsening, some people have begun to whisper about a day when the native Christian population disappears entirely.

Now, with yet another war raging between Muslims and Jews, Christians once again find themselves caught in the crossfire. The vast majority are Palestinian Arabs living in the West Bank, who suffer the same frustrations and dangers as their Muslim neighbors.

Christian population down sharply

Experts say the Christian population in Israel and the Palestinian territories has fallen steeply in recent years and may number only about 50,000. Since 1948, when Christians were estimated at 20 percent of all Palestinians in the region, their numbers have dropped to roughly 2



TOUGH FINANCIAL TIMES Nisreen Kunkar, a West Bank Christian, says a decline in Western aid has increased economic hardships there.

percent, according to the Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation, a group based in Bethesda, Md.

Local Christian leaders argue it would be disastrous if the native Christian population disappeared—not just for a people so rooted in the land that they are often referred to as "the living stones," but also for regional stability.

Wealthier, better educated and more closely tied to the West than most Palestinian Arabs, these Christians have long been a moderating force in the West Bank.

Still, members of the 15 denominations of Palestinian Christians often complain they feel invisible, even if they are part of much larger churches in the United States and Europe. Conservative Christians in America tend to support Israel, and many pilgrims visit holy sites in Jerusalem without realizing a native

Christian population remains.

Even as they struggle, many Christians in the West Bank strive for influence within the Palestinian Authority. A Christian holds one Cabinet post in the Hamas-led government, seven are members of Parliament and others lead cities like Bethlehem and neighboring Beit Jala, which together comprise a historic Christian enclave.

George Sa'adeh, deputy mayor of Bethlehem, said that despite occasional tensions between Christians and Muslims, the groups are generally united in calling for more freedom of movement for Palestinians and a reduction in tensions with the Israelis.

"All the people want peace, even Hamas," he said. "The people are frustrated. We must stop the killing, and I believe the United States has the power to make peace if it wants to make peace."

Calling for peace and justice

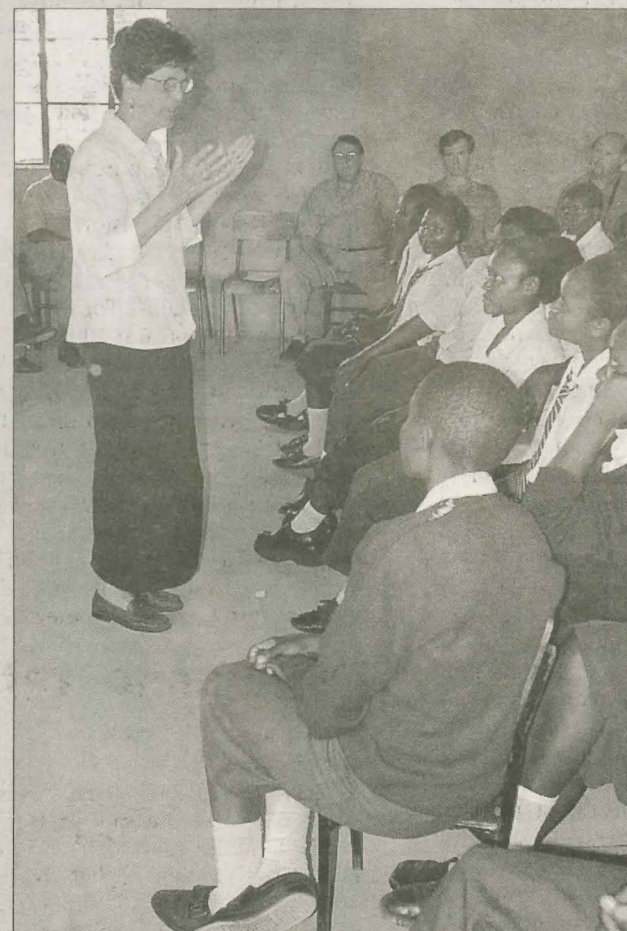
Peace and war are not abstract concepts for Sa'adeh, a Greek Orthodox Christian. One day in March 2003, when he was out shopping with his wife and two daughters, Israeli soldiers mistook his car for one carrying two fugitive terrorists.

They riddled it with machine-gun fire, wounding him and his 15-year-old daughter and killing his 12-year-old daughter, Christine.

Sitting in his office overlooking the Basilica of the Nativity, Sa'adeh took out a wallet photograph of a smiling Christine and recalled how an Israeli group of bereaved families reached out to comfort him.

"Talking about peace and ending the war takes a lot of faith and courage," he said. "As Jesus taught us, we must forgive. But when I call for peace, I also call for justice and an end to the (Israeli) occupation."

True Love Waits in Africa



LIFE LESSON Missionary Sharon Pumpelly makes a True Love Waits presentation at Maweli Secondary School in Kenya. LifeWay Christian Resources hopes to expand the abstinence campaign's message throughout Africa. (BP photo by Michael Yarber)

LifeWay seeking to expand abstinence campaign in Africa

Kampala, Uganda (BP)—While True Love Waits was holding its first national event in July 1994, a second smaller but perhaps more powerful observance was taking place half a world away.

On the same day that more than 210,000 covenant cards were being displayed on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., Southern Baptist missionaries Larry and Sharon Pumpelly organized a parade in downtown Kampala, Uganda, to introduce the True Love Waits abstinence-until-marriage message to a continent that was being devastated by AIDS.

Twelve years later, True Love Waits has been credited by government leaders in Uganda for a remarkable decrease in the HIV/AIDS infection rate from 30 percent of the population to about 6 percent.

LifeWay is seeking to expand the True Love Waits message throughout Africa through the agency's "A Defining Moment" capital campaign.

Several African countries have sent representatives to Uganda to learn how the True Love Waits campaign has radically decreased that country's HIV/AIDS rate.

"The impact of True Love Waits in Uganda is seen not only in statistics," Mrs. Pumpelly said, "but in the fact that all Christian-based abstinence groups use TLW commitment cards as part of what they do."

"The fingers of AIDS reach far and TLW is only a part of the whole issue, but a part which certainly affects the future of AIDS," Pumpelly added.

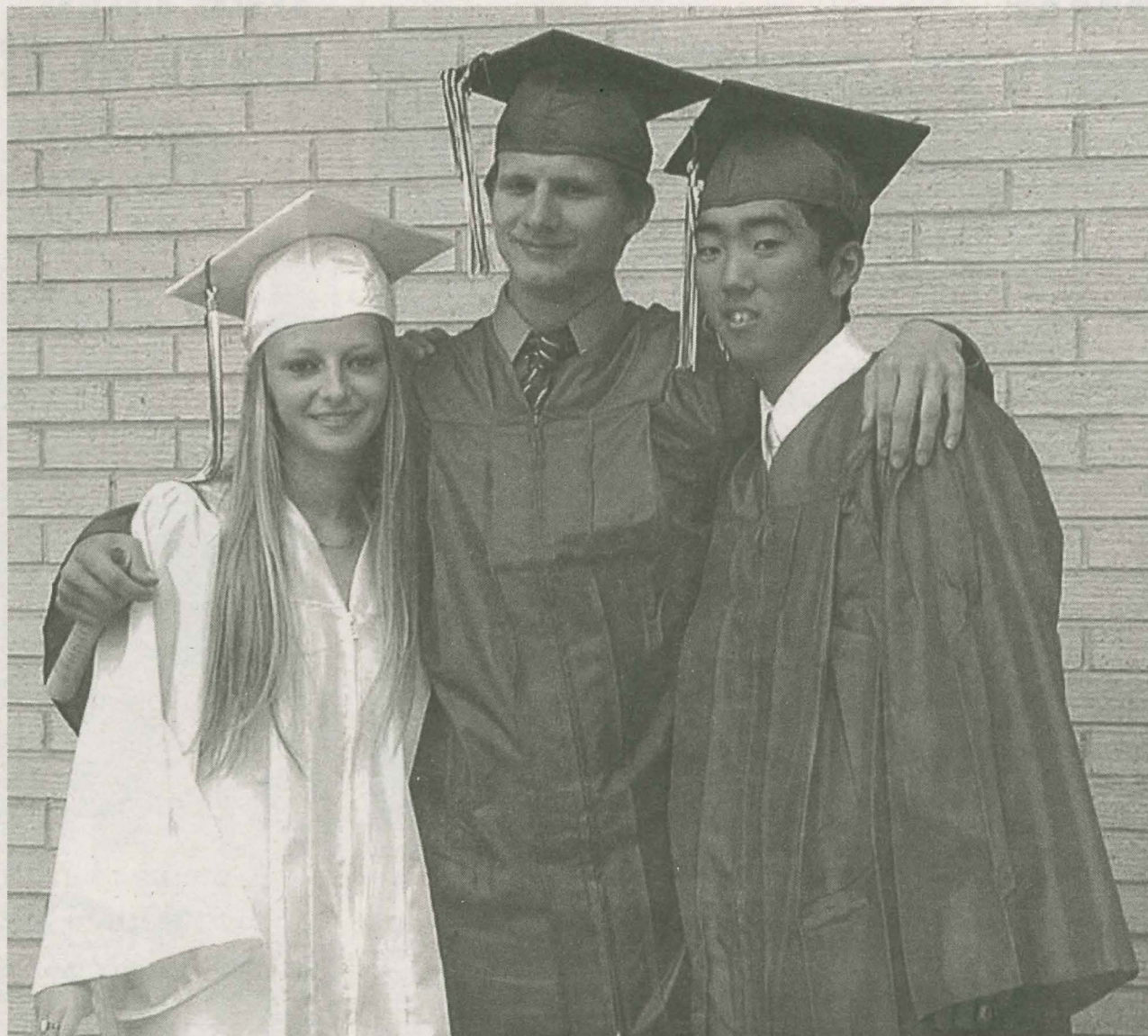
Jimmy Hester, co-founder of True Love Waits, and James Draper, president emeritus of LifeWay Christian Resources, traveled to Africa recently to visit the Pumpellys and see firsthand how TLW is making a difference.

"What is happening in Uganda and Kenya can be duplicated all over Africa," Draper said.

Hester said the group's experiences in Africa underscored "the need for this work to be enhanced and continued, even in countries with a history of using True Love Waits."

"The future existence of a generation, as well as the quality of life, depends on decisions made by young people today," Hester said.

Graduation begins today



Sometimes the hardest part of reaching a goal is simply beginning. Many teenagers find their starting point at Oneida Baptist Institute.

Often young people have fallen behind in their public schools and need a place to improve both their grades and their self-confidence. Perhaps they have been caught in the middle of family conflicts and are looking for a setting where they can find structure and acceptance. Maybe they have made mistakes and need a chance to start over. OBI can meet these teens where they are and give them an opportunity to succeed at last.

Do you know of a student in grade 6-12 who needs to be at Oneida? Or would you like to join our faculty and staff as a salaried or volunteer servant? You can make a difference in a teenager's life today.



Education for Time and Eternity

Would you like to learn more about us?

We'd love to hear from you!

Oneida Baptist Institute

PO Box 67, Oneida, Kentucky 40972

Phone: 606-847-4111 Fax: 606-847-4496

Web site: www.oneidaschool.org