



WESTERN RECORDER

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FOR THE RECORD

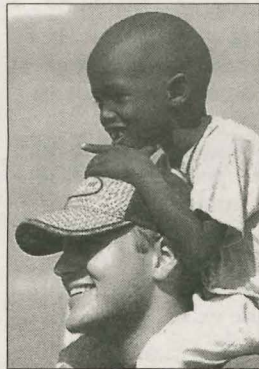
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Study: 60 percent of churches operating in New Orleans area

New Orleans (BP)—Only 60 percent of all churches in the greater New Orleans area are open and functioning one year after Hurricane Katrina, according to a recent study.

Bill Day, associate professor of evangelism and church health at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, found that only 905 of the 1,508 churches that existed before Katrina are functioning one year after the storm.

The research found an equal percentage of Southern Baptist churches functioning in the area.

Day presented the preliminary findings of his study at the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Research Fellowship last month.

The goal of the research, Day said, is to determine which churches will close their doors because of the storm, which churches will survive and which churches actually will see growth.

The research study focuses on the five parishes that represent the New Orleans metro area—Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard and St. Tammany parishes.

His research will not end there. Day said he wants to know why some churches survived and others did not. These findings could help churches in other areas overcome future natural disasters. "What can be learned from the greatest natural disaster that's ever struck the United States that we can apply not just here, but elsewhere?"

Day said his research revealed that the percentage of functioning churches decreases in areas that received the most damage from the storm and subsequent flooding.

□ See 60 percent ... *Page 9*

Welcome centers



FIRST IMPRESSIONS Lori Weyer talks to a worshipper at Valley View Church in Louisville. The information center is a key part of the church's strategy to help visitors feel welcome, according to Associate Minister Mark Vincent.

Every church needs one, minister insists

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

Lexington—Welcome centers aren't just for state lines and shopping malls, according to Mark Vincent.

Vincent insists every church could make visitors more comfortable if they installed a welcome and information center in a high-profile location.

Extending a warm welcome to guests creates the kind of impression that might convince them

to return, said Vincent, associate minister of Valley View Church in Louisville. "Have a welcome center so people don't feel lost in the building," said Vincent, who spoke at a recent Super Saturday training conference in Lexington.

Still, he notes that people, not architecture, are the best way to make people feel welcome.

"The biggest way that visitors feel welcomed is when people go up to them and greet them without being told—the ones who come

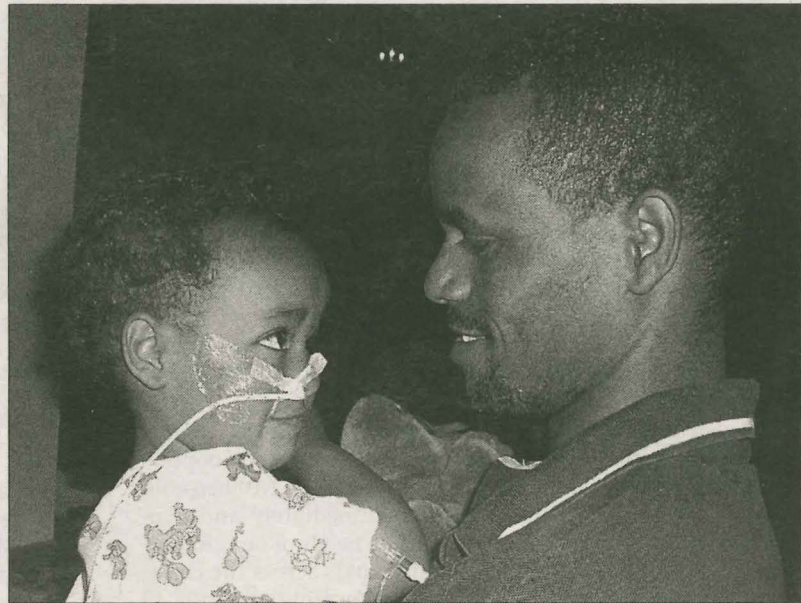
up when (visitors) are sitting in a pew and speak to them."

In the past 10 years, Valley View has grown significantly by emphasizing outreach to the community and hospitality to visitors. Adding a welcome center—staffed before and after worship services—was one ingredient in a strategy to help guests feel more welcome.

But even now, Vincent said, members need reminding to focus on others.

□ See Welcome center ... *Page 7*

Little Covington church offers big ministry to Ethiopian child



SURGERY DAY Three-year-old Kalkidan Tessema looks at her dad, Gashoway, on the day of her surgery. West Covington Baptist Church, with an average attendance of 25 people, helped coordinate Kalkidan's surgery for a rare colon problem.

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

Covington—Serving God in big ways isn't limited to big churches. Just ask the members of West Covington Baptist Church.

A young Ethiopian girl has a new lease on life, thanks to the congregation, which has an average Sunday attendance of 25 people.

The fact that God used a church their size to secure a complex operation for a child from a distant land proves God can use anyone, Pastor Chuck Overton said.

"The biggest thing is to realize that size doesn't matter," Overton said. "You don't have to be a megachurch or have a lot of money in the bank because God's going to provide."

"One of our members said, 'I think God chose us because we're so small. He would get the glory,'" he added. "This was God all the way."

Three-year-old Kalkidan Tessema had the surgery in mid-July at Children's Hospital in Cincinnati, but she and her father didn't return to Africa until early September.

About 30 people attended a send-off party the evening of Sept. 1 for the girl and her father, evangelist Gashoway Asfaw Tessema, 29.

"He is overwhelmed, and he knows God has performed a miracle," said longtime member Grace Wilson, who learned of the girl's crisis through e-mails from Southern Baptist missionaries and continues to correspond with the father.

"Daily people come to his house to see a ... walking miracle and he can witness to them," Wilson added.

Kalkidan suffered from a rare colon problem that forced her father to regularly flush it with water.

□ See Little Covington church ... *Page 3*

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, October 11.

Former Arizona foundation execs face prison terms

Phoenix (ABP)—Two former executives of the Baptist Foundation of Arizona were sentenced to prison and told to pay millions in restitution Sept. 29 in what could be the nation's largest case of faith-based financial fraud.

Maricopa County, Ariz., Superior Court Judge Kenneth Fields sentenced former foundation President William Crofts and Thomas Grabinski, the group's former top lawyer, to prison time and fines. Fields gave Crofts, 61, eight years in prison and Grabinski, 46, six years. Each was ordered to pay \$159 million in restitution to the victims of a fraudulent scheme that came to light seven years ago.

In July, a jury convicted each man on three counts of defrauding investors and one count of knowingly operating an illegal operation. However, the jury also acquitted the two of 23 counts of theft. Jurors reportedly determined that Crofts and Grabinski did not personally gain financially from the scheme.

The sentencing marks the end of a 10-month trial that came nearly seven years after the foundation collapsed and the fraud allegations initially were reported.

The foundation, affiliated with the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention, declared bankruptcy in 1999 after state regulators ordered it to stop selling securities. About 11,000 investors—many of them elderly members of Baptist churches in Arizona and elsewhere—lost more than \$550 million.

NAMB trustees address leadership issues

Alpharetta, Ga.—Trustees of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board approved a 45-page document Oct. 4 outlining executive level policies to provide greater accountability by future NAMB presidents.

The specially appointed Executive Level Policy Committee, chaired by Larry Thomas of Heber Springs, Ark., was created after a March 24 trustee report that detailed concerns about former NAMB President Bob Reccord's leadership. Reccord resigned April 17.

A cover memo from the committee stated, "Throughout these recommendations, you will see certain threads repeated: Full disclosure, accountability, priority of NAMB ministry over personal ministries."

The committee report focuses on four areas of oversight: presidential accountability; issues raised by Capin Crouse, an independent auditing firm; changes to NAMB's by-laws; and a set of miscellaneous recommendations.

"A new day is coming when the president, while having a new level of accountability, will have the freedom to serve and lead this board under God's leadership," Thomas told the Georgia Christian Index. "These guidelines are not meant to restrict him, but to guide him to prevent missteps like those we have observed in the past."

Seeking "healthy balance"

In the area of presidential oversight, trustees approved a requirement that NAMB's president spend at least 60 percent of his time on campus at NAMB. The president can request an adjustment in this percentage from the trustee executive committee.

"Because the president is the administrator of NAMB, it necessitates time in the office," the document states. "He is also our public relations leader and needs to spend sig-

nificant time with our cooperative partners. The 60-40 guideline provides a healthy balance."

The new policies also require that NAMB's president obtain trustee approval before implementing a new strategy or initiative or before making a significant change in an existing initiative.

"These kinds of policies will require a leader who is more of a consensus builder than a Lone Ranger, and that's what we're interested in," committee member Bob Rogers told the Christian Index.

Trustees also reduced NAMB's major ministry objectives from six to three, focusing on evangelism, church planting and missions. Former major objectives such as impacting the culture and equipping leaders will be merged into other program areas.

Areas addressed at the recommendation of Capin Crouse included conflicts of interest related to NAMB staff engaging in outside employment, receiving honoraria, serving interim pastorates and accepting gifts. The approved document also included guidelines for determining the ownership of intellectual property.

"NAMB is not a platform to profit from personal ministries," the committee stated. "Our concern for this perceived abuse is a primary motivation behind our management recommendations in this section."

A detailed "open door" or whistleblower policy also was approved to ensure protections for employees who feel their jobs could be at risk if they speak out against or question leadership practices or policies.

The policy declares that "any person who retaliates in any way against a team member for expressing a concern in a manner consistent with this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination."

Trustees said the policy was nec-

essary to address what they perceived as a "culture of fear" at the Southern Baptist agency.

Another recommendation reduces the amount the NAMB president will be provided for use at his personal discretion. At NAMB's founding, that account totaled nearly \$1 million and eventually was reduced to \$350,000 in Reccord's final year as president.

Calling the amount "exorbitant," trustees voted to cap the account at \$50,000 for the 2007 budget year.

The trustees' financial services committee also has been charged with conducting an audit of executive level financial transactions every two years.

Board members also approved the disclosure of salary ranges "to any trustee, cooperating SBC church or entity that requests this information." The release of that information is the first time since NAMB's founding in 1997 that the salary ranges have been made public.

Under the new policy, the Christian Index learned that the base salary range for the new president is approximately \$170,000 to \$220,000, plus benefits.

Fauls shares search update

In other business, presidential search committee chairman Greg Fauls, pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Owensboro, reported that the group has "narrowed the candidates down to a select list—not a short list but a select list."

"But we're still only at the preliminary stages," he added. "If you hear that we've narrowed it down to one or two men, that's not true."

"We understand that this is a vital decision ... that will affect tens of thousands of lives over the course of time," Fauls said. "We neither want to waste time or rush. We've got to get it right."

Compiled from reporting by Baptist Press and the Georgia Christian Index

SBC reaches \$200 million record in CP receipts

Nashville (BP)—The Southern Baptist Cooperative Program surpassed \$200 million in gifts for national and international causes for the first time in Southern Baptist Convention history, according to Morris Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee.

During the fiscal year that ended Sept. 30, contributions through the SBC Cooperative Program were 2.37 percent above the previous fiscal year.

The final CP total for the SBC's 2005-06 fiscal year stood at \$200,601,536—more than \$4,650,000 above the \$195,948,422 received during the 2004-05 fiscal year.

Designated giving of \$191,428,618 for the fiscal year was 0.9 percent, or almost \$1.7 million, above gifts of \$189,729,833 received last year. Designated contributions include the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions, the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions, the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund and other special gifts.

For the SBC Cooperative Program allocation budget, the fiscal year receipts of more than \$200

million was 105.65 percent of the budget goal to support Southern Baptist ministries globally and across North America.

Chapman described the \$200 million record as "a remarkable reminder that so many are giving faithfully, Sunday after Sunday, through the Cooperative Program."

"Yet, so much more needs to be done," Chapman said, "and I pray that Southern Baptists around the nation will press even harder to support our unified efforts through the Cooperative Program to reach the lost, minister to the hurting and provide biblical leadership to our country and the world."

Through their \$200 million in gifts, Southern Baptists are supporting more than 10,000 North American and international missionaries. CP gifts also supplement seminary training and support the work of the SBC Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

In reaching the \$200 million mark, SBC President Frank Page noted, "To say that this (milestone) causes a great deal of excitement is a tremendous understatement."

"It means that Southern Bap-

tists care about ministry, care about educating young men and women, but most of all care about missions," Page said.

"This level of stewardship on the part of God's people calls us to be serious in how this money is spent," he added. "It requires all (SBC) entities to recognize that the hand of God's blessing is great, therefore the responsibility is equally great."

Jim Futral, executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, reported that Cooperative Program giving in the state was more than 10 percent ahead of budget at the end of September, despite the immensity of Hurricane Katrina's impact.

Describing the Cooperative Program as "a channel of hope, strength and opportunity to continue doing Kingdom work," Futral noted, "It is because of the Cooperative Program that we have been able to respond immediately and continually to the needs of our churches and individuals across the coast, and at the same time continue to support Southern Baptist missions around the world with no reductions at all."

Tennessee Baptist leaders file suit against Belmont

Nashville (ABP)—Tennessee Baptist Convention leaders caught officials of Belmont University by surprise Sept. 29 by filing a lawsuit against the institution.

The TBC Executive Board filed the suit in Davidson County Chancery Court against the Nashville school. A specially appointed committee of the convention and Belmont officials had been in negotiations to resolve a dispute over control of the school's board of trustees.

Messengers to the convention's annual meeting have elected Belmont trustees since 1951. That year, the convention took control of a struggling junior college called Ward-Belmont School for Women and expanded it into a Baptist coeducational institution.

"We were astonished to learn that ... the Executive Board of the TBC filed a meritless complaint in Chancery Court against Belmont University," said Marty Dickens, Belmont's trustee chairman. "Based on our ongoing dialogue, we believed that a faithful and familial resolution could be made to meet mutual goals."

The convention is suing to regain the approximately \$58 million in funds it has donated to Belmont since buying the school. The complaint asks for enforcement of a 1951 document—whose existence was discovered on the eve of the convention's annual meeting last year—that appears to require Belmont to reimburse the convention for contributed funds should the school "pass from Baptist control."

The lawsuit "allows the parties to pursue the next option of mediation in hopes of reaching an amicable resolution of the issues," said Clay Austin, chairman of the special convention committee named to negotiate with Belmont over the dispute. "If mediation is unable to result in a mutually acceptable resolution of the issues, then and only then would the litigation process be continued."

The conflict between Belmont and the convention goes back to 2004, when Belmont trustees proposed that they begin electing their own successors.

While the TBC Executive Board's education committee approved the proposal, a divided board rejected it. Officials from the convention and the university jointly crafted a new agreement agreeable to both groups. However, messengers to the TBC annual meeting Nov. 16 tabled a resolution to endorse the agreement.

In May, at a rare special called meeting of the convention, messengers voted 923-791 to reject a \$5 million offer from Belmont to settle the issue.

Whittaker resigns after 18 years as Clear Creek president

By **Trennis Henderson**
Editor

Pineville—Bill Whittaker, president of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College since 1988, has announced his resignation effective at the end of the 2006-07 academic year.

"The time has come for me to turn the leadership task over to another," Whittaker told trustees in a letter announcing his resignation.

Whittaker, 63, noted that "it was my personal desire to remain at Clear Creek until my retirement from full-time ministry. The Lord would not allow that; the time is now. I have submitted myself to His will and will follow His direction."

"Significant loss"

Tim Langford, chairman of Clear Creek's board of directors, said it will be "a significant loss for Clear Creek for Bill Whittaker to leave the helm."

"You cannot drive on Clear Creek's campus now without noticing a marked improvement in the facilities," Langford said. "And it goes much beyond facilities upgrade. He has made significant strides in ensuring the financial soundness of the college. The overall educational experience at Clear Creek has been enhanced."

Whittaker, who served as Kentucky Baptist Convention president

in 1980-81, also was a pastor and international missionary before being elected to head Clear Creek. He is a graduate of Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville and Union College in Barbourville.

He and his wife, Rebecca, served four years in the Philippines with the former Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. He also was pastor of Downtown Baptist Church in Orlando, Fla., as well as Jackson Grove Baptist Church in Bowling Green, First Baptist Church of Sturgis and First Baptist Church of Murray. He also is editor of Kentucky Baptist Heritage, the newsletter of the Kentucky Baptist Archives Board.

Whittaker said he first became acquainted with Clear Creek in 1969, when his neighbor Don Burnett, a Clear Creek graduate and pastor of Andrew Baptist Mission, invited Whittaker to accompany him to deliver free turkeys to the students and staff for their Christmas celebrations.

The Christmas "Turkey Day" giveaways became an annual tradition for Whittaker, who then was pastor of Jackson Grove Church.

Even after Burnett died in 1971, Whittaker continued making the five-hour drive to Clear Creek, of-

ten speaking in chapel during his visits.

That tradition has continued during Whittaker's tenure and now includes a turkey, potatoes and cash gift for each student. He said he hopes to oversee the event even after he departs.

Whittaker said one of the reasons he was elected to lead Clear Creek was because of his involvement with Turkey Day. When trustees were seeking a president, "a few people said, 'Get the turkey man!'" he recalled.

Major goals achieved

During his years at Clear Creek, Whittaker led the Kentucky Baptist school to renovate student housing, construct additional housing, eliminate debt and double the school's endowment.

He also led the school through its recent reaccreditation with both the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and the Association for Biblical Higher Education.

"All the major goals I have had have been achieved," Whittaker said. "I'm very grateful for that."

"There are new initiatives the school needs to face and do," he added. "I think it would be better for someone to have a length of time to implement those."

Bill Mackey, executive director



MORE THAN TURKEYS

Don Colyer (right) of Kingston, Tenn., presents Clear Creek President Bill Whittaker with the first bag of potatoes from a load Colyer delivered on Turkey Day 2005. Since 1969, Whittaker has helped coordinate the annual project to provide a turkey, potatoes and a cash gift to Clear Creek students.

of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, noted that Whittaker "has always had a burden for Clear Creek students and the ministry of Clear Creek since the 1970s. He will be sorely missed in this leadership role among Kentucky Baptists."

Whittaker "has a keen interest in history, especially the history of Kentucky Baptists," Mackey added. "In this case he has been part of marking history in his leadership at Clear Creek Baptist Bible College in training hundreds of leaders for churches and mission work around the world."

With additional reporting by News Director David Winfrey

Little Covington church offers big ministry to Ethiopian child

Continued from page 1

After several operations, doctors in Ethiopia said they couldn't do anything else and advised her father to prepare for her death.

The girl's life-saving operation was arranged through a long series of events, starting with Wilson's prayer request to a dozen friends involved with an animal rescue operation she leads.

The same day, one friend wrote back to say a friend's son in Massachusetts had been healed of the same problem.

Another replied that she had contacts at Children's Hospital and offered to see what she could arrange. "From the very beginning, God gave us encouragement," Wilson said.

The contacts her friend made led to Children's Hospital—the world's only hospital specializing in the treatment of pediatric colo-rectal problems—agreeing to donate its services.

Dr. Marc Levitt, the colo-rectal center's associate director, also agreed to perform the operation for no charge.

But Overton said that was only the beginning of how God worked in the situation.

Free airfare, far-flung donations

When Wilson told the church about the needs last December, the congregation agreed to sponsor the family's visit and act as a channel for donations to cover plane fare, meals, lodging and other expenses.

In the process of e-mailing others about the project, a doctor in Morehead told Wilson to call the CEO of Ethiopian Airlines.

Although a veterinarian friend of Wilson's had purchased tickets costing about \$2,000 for the project, the



RECOVERY ROOM Evangelist Gashway Tessema and Grace Wilson look in on Tessema's daughter, Kalkidan, after surgery. West Covington Baptist Church helped coordinate the surgery and the family's transportation to the United States.

executive agreed to donate his airline's portion of the trip and refunded the money.

"We were getting donations from Washington, North Carolina, and all over Kentucky and Ohio," Overton said, adding that the project has raised more than \$18,500.

Money has continued coming to the church, the latest a \$10 donation in mid-September.

Among the many signs of things falling into place was how God arranged the correspondence between Wilson and the missionaries who knew the Tessemas, Overton said.

In addition, during the fund-raising campaign the pastor learned that Dr. Levitt had moved to Cincinnati from Long Island a year earlier.

"In that way, you could see God's

hand over the process," Overton said. "The right doctor who could do this was here at the right time. Some people may say that's coincidence, but not from my perspective."

Blessings on two continents

The successful operation not only thrilled the community, it surprised the family's compatriots back in Ethiopia.

One e-mail from the missionaries described the amazement when the Tessemas landed.

"They couldn't believe how the little girl came running off the plane," Overton said. "She was so sick before she couldn't run much, but here she was, bright-eyed and happy."

With the remaining funds in the account, Wilson said the church ten-

tatively plans to send Tessema \$125 a month for the next two years.

The money will supplement the evangelist's \$50 a month salary, Wilson said, help purchase nutritious food for his daughter and help provide for other needs until Tessema's wife completes a degree in computer science.

"It only reinforces how awesome, mighty and powerful our God is," Wilson said of the process behind Kalkidan's healing. "I feel blessed God has used me."

Songleader Carl Fryman said the events have emphasized how God is a God of the impossible.

A member for 49 years, Fryman has seen church attendance dwindle at West Covington from the 1960s, when 100 people went to Sunday school.

Although the declining numbers used to frustrate him, Fryman said he now takes a different view.

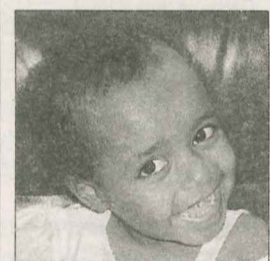
"I would love to see our church grow and people saved, but at the same time when you feel the Spirit of God, you know He's there," Fryman said.

Overton, West Covington's pastor for more than three years, said the church hasn't seen many visitors in recent months.

That surprised him because he expected news media coverage to bring a few curiosity-seekers.

But the bivocational pastor said he heard about a pastor in a neighboring town who told his congregation that if a small church in Covington had done this, they ought to be doing similar good works.

"We don't know what God's going to do in other churches because of this," Overton said. "We don't know what God's going to do in this little girl's life in Ethiopia."



"It only reinforces how awesome, mighty and powerful our God is."

Grace Wilson, a member of West Covington Baptist Church

WESTERN RECORDER

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

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Sovereignty & free will

The Sept. 26 article about Calvinism brought to memory times in the early 1930s when two Westminster Seminary students drove from Philadelphia to my home in Brooklyn to study the Bible with my father until 1 or 2 in the morning.

I was only a listener, but I remember my father, professing no originality, likening the great Bible truths of the sovereignty of God and the free will of man to two rails of a railroad track. In the distance, our eyes make it appear that the rails merge. But they never do.

I have come to believe that trying to reconcile the sovereignty of God and the free will of man is fruitless. We must wait for heaven to reconcile them.

Consider the virgin Mary. The plan of redemption was conceived before creation and depended entirely on the birth of One Who would be as much man as He was God, and as much God as He was man.

But there came a moment when the angel's words to Mary needed a response. She said, "Be it unto me according to thy word." Did she become the virgin mother dictated by the sovereign will of God, or by a free will consent, or both?

I don't doubt God knew before the world existed what she would do, and planned accordingly. But I also don't doubt that Mary's surrender was a wholehearted free choice.

When our bodies are wholly given to the worshipful service of God, something God knew before creation, do we do less than freely say to God, "Be it unto me according to Thy word?"

A great Christian cartoon of years ago pictured a door. On the outside were the words, "Whosoever will may come." On the inside of the door were the words, "The Lord knows them that are His." I like that.

Donald MacDonald
Louisville

Don't attack Calvinism

In the Sept. 26 issue of the Western Recorder, you ran an editorial written by a former editor, Marv Knox, which questioned the absolute sovereignty of God, asking the question, "Did God cause the crash of Flight 5191?"

The next comment was really upsetting to me. He wrote: "They believe God causes planes to crash and newlyweds, Habitat for Humanity volunteers, college professors and parents of small children to die."

I understand it is popular in the convention these days to whip up on those who love the doctrines of grace as taught by Jesus, Paul, Augustine, Calvin, Spurgeon and others. However, for Knox to use the crash of Flight 5191 to somehow prove that his understanding of God is right is sickening to me.

I worked closely with Jon Hooker, one of the newlyweds who died in the crash, and I don't appreciate Knox taking advantage of a bad situation to somehow put Calvinism in a bad light.

In the same issue of the Western Recorder, you ran an article that states few Southern Baptist Convention pastors call themselves five-point Calvinists. What I want to know is: If so few pastors call themselves Calvinists, what is the point of these attacks?

Your coverage of this issue reminds me of the little boy who cried wolf so many times that when a real wolf showed up, no one came to the rescue because they didn't believe him anymore. There are evils a plenty in the world to attack and Calvinism isn't one of them.

Ken Bolin
Manchester

'Give of your best'

Response to "KBC worship leader: Focus on spirituality, not music skills" from the Sept. 19 issue of the Western Recorder, about a Super Saturday workshop led by Tog Goodson:

Donald MacDonald
Louisville

It is your time to seek the Lord

It is time for Kentucky Baptists and all believers in Kentucky to seek the Lord as never before.

The Bible records numerous pleas for God's people to seek Him:

■ "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord, and He will have mercy on him, and to our God, for He will freely pardon" (Isaiah 55:6-7).

■ "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled" (Matthew 5:6).

■ "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

These admonitions also make wonderful promises of mercy and forgiveness, righteousness and blessings from God. It is time to seek the Lord.

I believe there are several indications that God's Spirit is moving

among His people.

Recently, during the Pray the Interior tour, I experienced God's presence with ministers and laypeople all across this state, as they were transparent before God in confessing sins and seeking the Lord.

I also have witnessed the special presence of God in several associational annual meetings recently. In Blackford Baptist Association for instance, Nick Sandefur, pastor of Edgewood Baptist Church in Hopkinsville, delivered a challenging message to focus on "the main thing." Moderator Jim McDaniel, pastor of Union Baptist Church in Hawesville, then opened the altar and many responded.

Also, Baptist campus ministry students in Kentucky and across North America are seeking the Lord in 21 days of prayer, fasting and witnessing on the campuses. More than 600 students gathered at Crestwood Baptist Church for their annual fall

Whatever happened to the axiom expressed by the hymn text "Give of your best to the Master?"

Is God not pleased when we do our best to sing praises unto Him? Or does He expect mediocrity in our music? Will He simply excuse our mediocre efforts to praise Him as a sign of the times in this complex world of worship?

In the article, why was it necessary to present spirituality and music skills as on opposite ends of a continuum? The impression given was that spirituality could not share space with music skills. I totally disagree with this premise. Why should we compromise either music for spirituality or spirituality for music? Are they not interactive and complementary? In fact, music is not simply an aid to worship; music is an act of worship.

I agree that music ministry should not be devoid of spirituality, but I also think that God expects us to give our best in worship, no matter if in music or in "such spiritual disciplines as prayer, Bible study, meditation, worship, silence and solitude." Music might be the solution to provide a means of worship to those who may not have the spiritual maturity, experience or understanding of the many avenues to effective worship.

Music presented well does serve a valuable purpose of worship and is not contradictory to effective communication with God. Music presented poorly is a distraction to effective worship and should not be tolerated any more than any of the spiritual disciplines done poorly.

We must remember that musical gifts are from God and should not be compromised. We must give of our best to the Master.

J. Robert Gaddis
Dean, School of Music
Campbellsville University

What are you thinking?

The Western Recorder considers letters on any subject for publication, provided they don't make a personal attack. Submit by mail, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253; or e-mail, wesrec@earthlink.net.

meeting recently and the focus was on preparation for the "Haystack Awakening '06" emphasis.

Speakers reminded students that God often has chosen to work through students, as He did through the five students at the now famous haystack prayer meeting in 1806. God used that prayer meeting to launch the Second Great Awakening.

Karen Bullock, church historian and professor of Christian history at Dallas Baptist University, challenged the students to be intentional about life choices because they have eternal consequences.

Rob Turner, teaching pastor at Apex Community Church in Dayton, Ohio, challenged the college students to elevate their view of Christ. "If you have a deficient view of Christ, you will have a deficient view of evangelism," he said.

Could there be a better time to seek the Lord? This is a great moment in history to join our college students in seeking the Lord through prayer, purity, helping the poor and sharing the gospel.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

CHURCH

Basic safeguards reduce churches' financial risks

By Doug Strader

I recently heard about a Baptist church that discovered some of the church's money was mishandled and one of the church members was accused of illegally taking some of the church's money for personal use.

Unfortunately, that is an all-too-familiar story that would have been less likely to happen if the church had sound financial policies and procedures in place.

For the most part, church treasurers and financial secretaries are honest, and they would never take one penny of the church's money for personal use. But most of us know of situations where a church trusted those who handle the church's money, and those they trusted betrayed them.

What can churches do to prevent this kind of problem? There is no flawless way to prevent this from happening, but there are some policies and procedures that can help prevent this situation from occurring:

■ The church treasurer and/or the financial secretary should not count the church's money.

■ The church should have a counting committee with a minimum of three members. All checks should be stamped on the back as soon as possible, "For Deposit Only." Husbands and wives, parents and siblings should not serve on the counting committee at the same time.

■ The counting committee should make out the deposit ticket and take the money to the bank's night deposit.

■ The treasurer or financial secretary should present a written financial statement each month to the church body.

■ The church finance committee should meet monthly to approve the financial statement before it is presented to the church for approval.

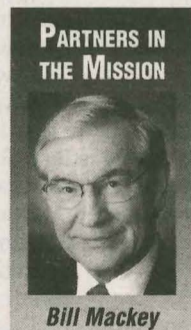
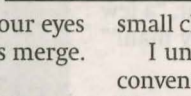
■ The church treasurer or the financial secretary should require receipts before they write reimbursement checks to the staff or church members.

■ The church should require two signatures on all checks written on the church's bank account.

■ The treasurer or financial secretary should not have blank checks signed for later use.

For more information about church financial issues, contact the Kentucky Baptist Convention stewardship office.

Doug Strader, retired director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's stewardship department, is pastor of Farmdale Baptist Church in Louisville



Bill Mackey

Couple's 'weekend getaway' can be quality time at home

Q: I was hoping my wife and I could enjoy a weekend getaway this fall. Life always seems so busy. The problem is we really can't afford to go anywhere. How can we enjoy a special time together without wrecking our budget?

A weekend getaway does not have to be out of town or even out of the house. A getaway usually involves a different scenery and hopefully a different routine. Take the time you have in a weekend and spend it enjoying each other. Here are some weekend vacationing ideas:

- Make some hot chocolate, sit beside each other and chat.
- Take time to play a game: Try Sequence, Carcassonne, puzzles, UNO Attack or Tangrams.
- Make some popcorn, grab some sodas, lean on each other and watch a movie you both enjoy.
- Read to each other from a favorite book.
- Dream together. Share some of your dreams and hopes with each other.
- Go for a walk in a nearby park and hold hands.
- Play Frisbee, tennis or hide and seek with each other.
- Tell funny stories or share fun memories.
- Cook or make a favorite dessert together you can enjoy by candlelight.
- Find a street of shops you can browse in and grab a bite to eat.
- Take turns asking your spouse a question about likes, dislikes, favorites and turnoffs.
- Describe places you want to go or activities you would like to do with your spouse.
- Bless one another with personalized words of support, encouragement, appreciation and affirmation.

Make a choice to arrange your house, your time, and your attitude to be consistent with getting away from the routine and paying special attention to one another. The two of you can create the feeling of getting away together even at home. Psalm 46 reminds us to "be still, and know that I am God." Perhaps in that same spirit, we can be still and take time to know our spouse.—Valerie Vincent

Q: I am a single woman and have been close friends with a married couple my age for the past couple of years. In fact, I'm even closer to the guy. And when the couple has problems, he tells me about it. At the same time, I've tried to have a dating relationship with someone else. My boyfriend just broke up with me, and now I fear I'll lose my other friendships as well. Did I do something wrong?

You haven't given me enough details for me to say that you've "crossed a line" of propriety, but you obviously have gotten yourself into a "triangle." It sounds like the guy in the couple is using you to absorb the tension in their relationship.

When couples have problems, a danger often exists for one or both of them to "escape" through activities or other relationships. Rather than expressing his pain to you, it would be preferable for the couple to express their pain to one another. I would recommend that they do so within the safety of a therapeutic relationship with a good marriage counselor.

Here are some good sources you can suggest to them: www.aapc.org, www.aamft.org and www.prepare-enrich.com. They can type their zip code into any of those Web sites and come up with some counselors in their neighborhood.

In the meantime, beware of relationship triangles. They are never healthy, and they keep the couple from working on their own problems and moving toward healing and growth. You would be wise to refer, step away and keep healthy boundaries with this couple. It will free you as well as the couple to be out of an unhealthy "sticky wicket."—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.

A few stories & lessons to leave you with

When Trennis invited me to write an editorial about my 10 years with the Western Recorder, only one thing came to mind: "Do you really want the guy who's heading out the door to write about anything he wants?"

Part of the reason I got into journalism was because I enjoyed finding and telling good stories. So I think I'll share a few stories, and together let's explore whether they have any broader lessons for us:

I was having lunch with H.K. Kingkade, who then was campus minister at the University of Kentucky, when he recalled a pastor's bewilderment at a student worship service.

As the college students sang, clapped and prayed with enthusiasm, the pastor wondered aloud why these same students weren't coming to his church on Sunday.

Kingkade played the good host and didn't say what he was thinking: "Because compared to this high-energy worship service, these students think your church is boring!"

Several people got offended a while back when I wrote a front-page headline suggesting that younger adults find traditional worship boring. But getting mad at the teens and twentysomethings who said this won't change their opinions.

Around Kentucky and the nation, churches are wondering how to keep youth from leaving the church when they get old enough to make their own decisions.

Fortunately, more and more church leaders are beginning to consider the opinions of Reggie McNeal, Leonard Sweet and other church leadership specialists: If we don't develop worship experiences that fit the culture of young adults, we have no one to blame but ourselves when they don't attend. Missionaries are translating the gospel into the culture of people groups all over the world. With their own music and use of technology, young adults should be recognized as a different culture. Reaching them will require a worship experience tailored to their preferences, not those of their parents and grandparents.

I'll never forget the response that Sweet, professor of evangelism at Drew University in Madison, N.J., gave to grandparents who said they would do anything to get their grandkids to go to church: "Really? Will you play in your worship service the song by Big Tent Revival, 'If Loving God's a Crime, I Want to Be an Outlaw?'"

I was interviewing a Kentucky disaster relief volunteer in New York City shortly after the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. Lamenting some of the Baptist battles of the day, he told me he wished all the Baptist leaders who were fighting would spend a week together fixing food for the rescue and recovery teams working at the World Trade Center. If they did, he said, maybe they'd focus on something other than their differences.

Disaster relief has been called Baptists' best-kept secret, but volunteers' response to many

high-profile tragedies might be changing that. If you're involved in disaster relief, thanks. You've made my job easier several weeks.

Disaster relief is so interesting to readers and the media because volunteers come into a terrible situation, offer help and expect nothing in return. It's one of the more tangible examples of grace we show as a convention, and grace always gets people's attention.

What is your church doing to show grace to your neighborhood? I don't know if it's the case, but the FCC used to require TV stations to prove they offered enough public service programming each year to keep their license. How would your church do if it had to prove it was showing grace to the community in order to keep its tax-exempt status?

One of the secrets I've learned by being a "professional Baptist" for nearly 15 years is that pastors have just as many jokes about

their congregations as church members have about their pastors. I remember a pastor who was asked about his church and replied, "We're just a couple of funerals away from revival."

I think just most church conflicts between pastors and members boil down to the tension between what I call "chaplains and challenge." Either word can apply to pastors or church leaders.

For all their talk about the purpose of the church, some members really just want a chaplain who will visit them when they're sick and marry their daughter when she finds the right boy. This will frustrate any pastor trying to get the members involved in ministries outside the four walls of the church. At the same time, some pastors would rather be a chaplain, providing little direction for a church's mission. And as the proverb says: "Where there is no vision, the people perish."

At the other end, some pastors are so busy challenging their members to do something that they've forgotten to show the unconditional love that just might motivate the congregation to action.

Unfortunately, along this continuum of chaplaincy and challenge, too many pastors are getting frustrated and fired. If more pastors and church leaders put this tension on the table and talked about it, maybe LifeWay's LeaderCare ministry to fired pastors wouldn't be so busy.

When people ask where I went to seminary, I used to say, "The Home Mission Board." It's there that this former daily newspaper reporter learned a great deal about church starting, missions and evangelism. But for the past 10 years, I've had the privilege to get to know Kentucky Baptists and report where God is working in their midst.

While my job title is changing, my affiliation is not. I'm proud to be a Kentucky Baptist, and pray that I will continue to be one for a long time.

ONE FOR THE ROAD



David Winfrey

Thank you, Southern Baptists

By Bob Rodgers

Nashville (BP)—Thank you, Southern Baptists! Your 2005-06 Cooperative Program gifts for the cooperative ministries of the Southern Baptist Convention have totaled \$200,601,536.29.

This is the first time in convention history that more than \$200 million has been distributed through the Cooperative Program allocation budget process. The record giving is an increase of \$4,653,113.74 over giving in 2004-05.

The ultimate impact of such generous giving will be measured in the number of lost people led to faith in Christ here in North America and around the world. This record giving illustrates the magnitude of love Southern Baptists have for a lost world while demonstrating the power of cooperative giving. Our churches, large and small, are able to combine the financial resources that God has provided them with other

churches to accomplish that which individual churches can never accomplish alone.

Much of the increase can be credited to a renewed commitment by many state conventions to increase the percentage that each forwards to the SBC. All of the state convention executive directors attending the February 2006 meeting of the Association of State Convention Executive Directors agreed to adopt a budget model that would increase the amount forwarded to the SBC for distribution through the CP allocation budget process. When compared to last year, 35 of 42 states reported an increase in the percentage forwarded and some states achieved remarkable success in promoting CP and forwarding an increased percentage, including:

- Pennsylvania-South Jersey increased its national CP giving an incredible 97.58 percent.

- Iowa was up 37.57 percent.
- New York increased 16.3 percent.
- Wyoming was up 15.63 percent.
- New Mexico increased giving 14.77 percent.

The bottom line is that the cooperative spirit of the state conventions combined with a renewed commitment to the value of the Cooperative Program resulted in the record giving of more than \$200 million.

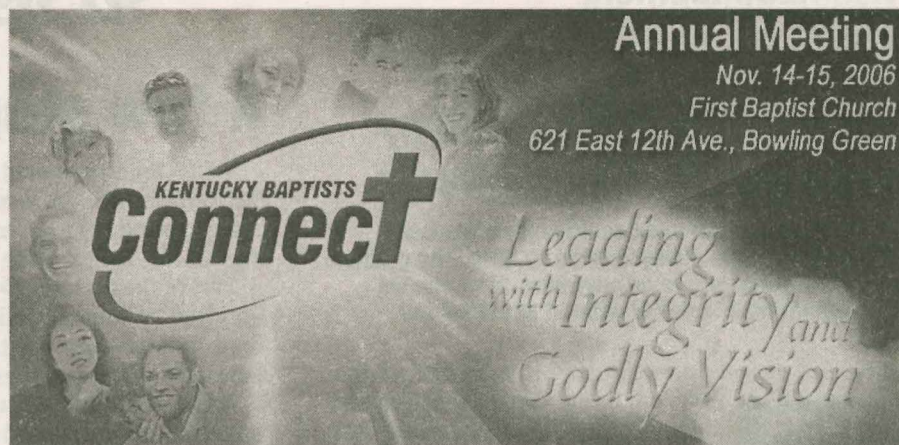
John 13:34-35 states, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

In 2006, Southern Baptists demonstrated to the world the nature and character of God's love. Let our love for the lost grow. Imagine what God can accomplish through us in 2007.

Bob Rodgers is vice president for Cooperative Program and stewardship for the SBC Executive Committee

KBC Mission Board recommendations

The Kentucky Baptist Convention's constitution requires that the KBC Mission Board publish its recommendations in the Western Recorder at least 30 days before they are voted on during the annual meeting. This year's meeting will be held Nov. 14-15 at First Baptist Church of Bowling Green. For more information about these recommendations, call the KBC Mission Board at (502) 489-3577 or toll-free (866) 489-3577.



Recommendation No. 1: Cooperative Program goals

The annual Cooperative Program Goals, as well as the percentages for the division of Cooperative Program funds between Kentucky Baptist Convention causes and Southern Baptist Convention causes, are determined by the Kentucky Baptist Convention in annual session.

Upon recommendation of the Mission Board, the Convention at Frankfort November 14, 2005 set the 2006-2007 goals and percentages as shown below. The Mission Board will recommend to the Convention in Bowling Green November 13, 2006 the 2007-2008 goals and percentages.

	Original 2004-2005 Budget		Original 2005-2006 Budget		Original 2006-2007 Budget		Proposed 2007-2008 Budget	
I. COOPERATIVE PROGRAM GOAL								
A. OPERATIONAL BUDGET	22,504,000	1.45%	23,100,000	2.65%	23,562,000	2.0%	24,000,000	1.86%
1. SBC CAUSES (a)	8,101,440	36.0%	8,316,000	36.0%	8,564,628	36.35%	8,808,000	36.70%
2. KBC CAUSES (b)	14,402,560	64.0%	14,784,000	64.0%	14,997,372	63.65%	15,192,000	63.30%
B. CHALLENGE FUNDS	1,300,000		1,300,000		1,300,000		1,300,000	
1. SBC CAUSES (a)	468,000	36.0%	468,000	36.0%	472,550	36.35%	477,100	36.70%
2. KBC CAUSES (b)	832,000	64.0%	832,000	64.0%	827,450	63.65%	822,900	63.30%
TOTAL COOPERATIVE PROGRAM GOAL	23,804,000		24,400,000		24,862,000		25,300,000	
II. OTHER ESTIMATED INCOME	2,420,912		2,485,824		2,546,908		*	
A. RESTRICTED KY ONLY	500,000		500,000		475,000		*	
B. OTHER	1,920,912		1,985,824		2,071,908		*	
III. TOTAL BUDGET GOAL	26,224,912		26,885,824		27,408,908		*	

(a) The distribution of these items is voted by the Southern Baptist Convention.

(b) The distribution of these items is voted by the Mission Board, Kentucky Baptist Convention.

*To be approved by the Mission Board upon recommendation of the Business and Finance Committee May 7-8, 2007.

Recommendation No. 2: Cooperative Program recommendations

The following recommendations were first adopted by the Executive Directors of the state conventions during their meeting in Banff, Canada, February 16, 2006, then revised and adopted by the SBC meeting in Greensboro, N.C., in June, 2006. These revised recommendations have also been approved by the Mission Board of the KBC and are now being recommended to the Convention for adoption with final approval by the KBC of the definition of CP monies (ref. Rec. # 9).

1. That we commend the Ad Hoc Committee for their excellent work and affirm this report as an outstanding plan for advancing stewardship and the Cooperative Program in the Southern Baptist Convention.
2. That every segment of the SBC life be encouraged to reaffirm our commitment to Biblical stewardship and to our cooperation in the Great Commission/Acts 1:8 mission.
3. That we strongly encourage each believer to tithe of his financial resources to his local church; we commend Southern Baptist churches that are giving sacrificially and proportionally a large percentage of their undesignated receipts through the Cooperative Program; we urge all churches of the Convention to follow their example of giving proportionally in accord with the abundance of God's blessings for the sake of advancing missions, theological education, and religious liberty; and we encourage each church to give an increasing percentage of undesignated receipts through the Cooperative Program for five successive years beginning in 2007.

4. That we encourage the election of state and national convention officers whose churches systematically and enthusiastically lead by example in giving sacrificially and proportionally through the Cooperative Program.
5. That each state convention have a plan for forwarding an increasing percentage of receipts to SBC mission causes through the Cooperative Program with the Cooperative Program Advance Plan being one possible model.
6. That the development of quality stewardship training materials with an emphasis on tithing should be given highest priority and we endorse the transfer of the stewardship ministry from LifeWay Christian Resources to the Executive Committee.
7. That the stewardship and Cooperative Program emphases be recognized as integral parts of the compelling SBC vision known as Empowering Kingdom Growth.
8. That the 2006 SBC and state convention annual meetings be used to launch a SBC wide celebration of and emphasis on the Cooperative Program.
9. That the Executive Committee, in consultation with state convention executive directors, develop a definition of what is meant by Cooperative Program monies which would be adopted by the SBC in annual session.

Welcome center helps guests in unfamiliar building

Continued from page 1

"It's a mindset we need to teach people," Vincent said. "It's not about us, it's about others. When we come in, we need to look at church like unbelievers."

In the Super Saturday workshop, he encouraged participants to consider: "How can I make our building more friendly and usable to visitors?"

The first and last 10 minutes are crucial in making a first impression, he added.

When guests enter a building, they are looking for someone to talk with, he said. And as they are leaving, cordial good-byes are equally important.

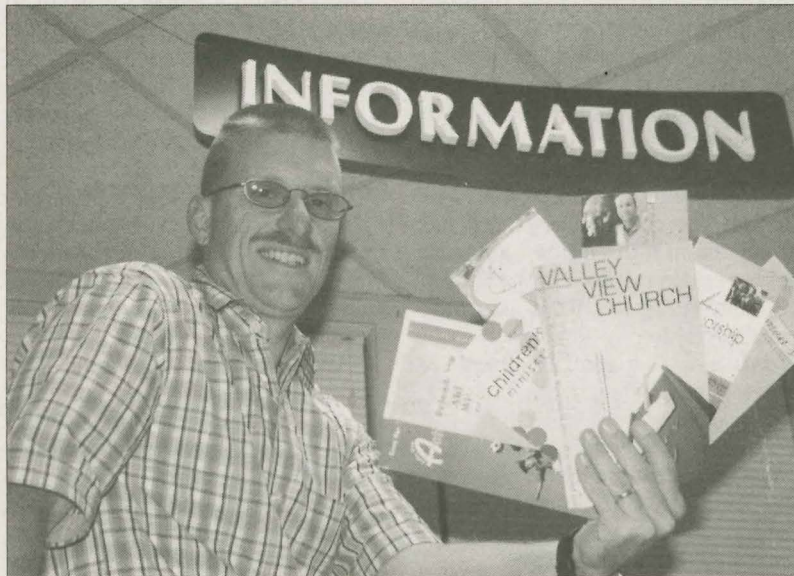
Vincent said churches that want to set up a welcome center should start with the basics: prayer, visiting other churches to see what they do and talk with leaders, and training friendly people to staff it.

Greeters should be prepared to make members and guests feel welcome, provide information about the church and Sunday school and answer questions, he said.

Suggestions for smaller churches

In smaller churches, Vincent said, welcome centers should be near the main entrance, with space nearby to store handouts.

But furniture is not required; something as simple as a music stand could hold materials, he said.



HELPING GUESTS Welcome or information centers don't have to be complex, according to Mark Vincent. But he adds that they probably should have some basic information about the church to help guests navigate their new surroundings.

Vincent noted that erecting a "welcome" sign is a good idea, along with directional signs to help guests find Sunday school rooms, the church office and other facilities.

He also suggests the center be staffed before and after worship services, and before and after special events.

Vincent offered a "Greeting 101" checklist to review preparation tips:

- Arrive early.

- Have clean hands and breath.
- Begin with prayer.
- Come prepared to minister.
- Have a warm smile, firm handshake and a kind word.

Greeters should have an accurate list of Sunday school classes, their description and age ranges. Greeters also should offer to accompany guests to classrooms.

"If you're a small church, just have somebody to be there to say 'Hello' and engage somebody who comes in the door," Vincent said.

"Ask, 'Can I help you in any way?' Take time to listen and offer assistance."

Updated building maps are vital for large churches, Vincent said, noting that it took Valley View several years to develop one for its sprawling facilities.

Other printed materials to consider include class descriptions and locations, general church information, descriptions of church ministries and special events, and registration forms.

This kind of material might not be necessary in smaller churches, he said, but it doesn't hurt to have a brochure or flyer if someone expresses interest in knowing more about the church.

"If your church building is an odd shape or size, do something to help people get around," Vincent said. "It could be a brochure or it could be signage. You don't have to start out with everything."

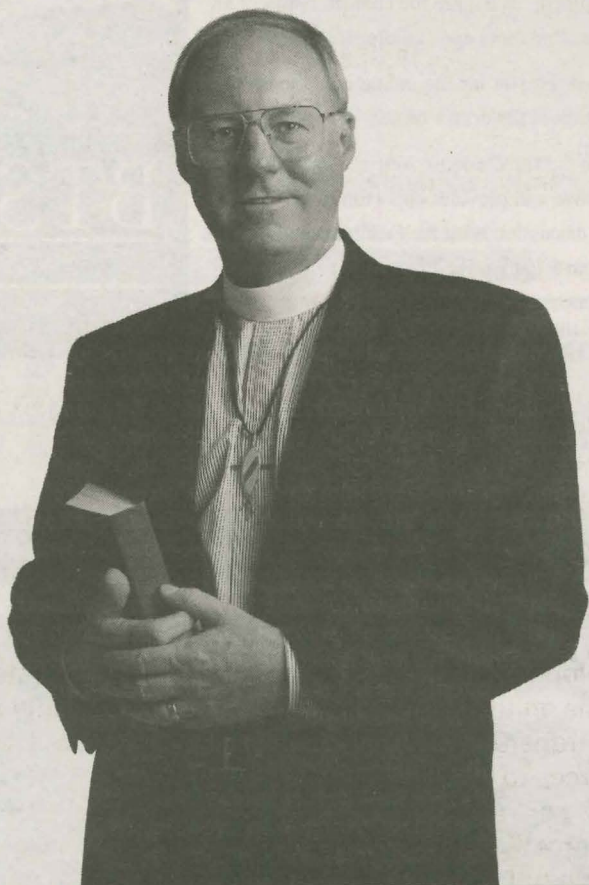
The minister also cautioned greeters to be careful about what they say.

One Sunday a church member at Valley View made a visitor uncomfortable by noting the visitor's sports jacket and mentioning a rivalry with another team.

"Stick to the basics: 'Hello,' 'How are you doing?'" Vincent said. "You don't know how you may offend somebody. We're trying to reach people for Christ."

"When we come in, we need to look at church like unbelievers."

Mark Vincent, associate minister at Valley View Church in Louisville



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"Nobody wants to pick up the phone and call the police."

Delton Beall, pastor of Southside Baptist Church in Princeton

Indictment claims Princeton church secretary stole \$396,000

Princeton—A former church secretary in Princeton has been accused of stealing nearly \$400,000, according to an indictment returned last week by a Caldwell County grand jury.

Marla Jean Adams, 39, a former financial secretary at Southside Baptist Church in Princeton, was indicted for 35 counts of theft by unlawful taking of more than \$300.

The charges accuse Adams of embezzling \$396,457.66 from 2000 through July of this year, while she served as financial secretary of Southside Baptist Church, a position she had held since 1998.

Delton Beall, pastor of the church, said Adams was responsible for handling the church's basic and special offerings.

A review of a report given by Caldwell-Lyon Baptist Association revealed discrepancies when compared with the church's budget prepared for various ministries, he said.

After questions arose regarding the discrepancies, Beall said, Adams

admitted the mishandling of funds on July 11.

Bond was set at \$10,000 cash or \$20,500 property.

Beall said church leaders determined that four types of obligations—spiritual, moral, legal and fiduciary—should guide their response. The church has placed her under "church discipline," allowing her to remain involved in the church but preventing her from assuming any leadership position.

While noting that members are upset and saddened by the incident, Beall said the Holy Spirit has been present in their actions.

"They've responded with grace and humility. Our fellowship is as strong if not stronger than it was on the day of discovery."

At the same time, he added, "We are seeking to demonstrate a real sense of redemption for the Adams family," he said.

Throughout the process, he said, leaders have worked to balance 1 Corinthians 6, which cautions

against taking a fellow Christian to court, with Romans 13, which tells Christians to be subject to governing authorities.

"Nobody wants to pick up the phone and call the police," he said.

Inserting checks & balances

The church, which averages more than 450 people on Sunday morning and has a budget of \$762,000, already has instituted new guidelines for handling money, Beall said.

"We're continuing to build upon our core values and we've inserted stronger checks and balances," said Beall, who has been pastor for approximately one year.

The church has established a voucher system that involves several church leaders in the writing of each check.

"If we had been practicing (that) eight years ago, we wouldn't be where we are today," he added. "Most of that money should have gone to our missions. That's what hurts."

Financial Forum: Basic safeguards reduce churches' financial risks. Page 4.

This marked the second financial scandal at a Kentucky Baptist church in recent weeks.

A financial oversight committee at Little Flock Baptist Church in Shepherdsville recently reported that former pastor Ron Shaver cost the congregation \$162,000 since 2000 by day-trading stocks.

The committee found that the losses have occurred since 2000, according to church attorney Monica Henderson.

The committee reported finding no evidence of theft or fraud, but an official with the Bullitt County Sheriff's Office said his office has been asked by some members of Little Flock to investigate "possible wrongdoings within the church staff."

Compiled from reporting by Jared Nelson for *The (Princeton) Times Leader* (used with permission) and *Western Recorder News Director David Winfrey*

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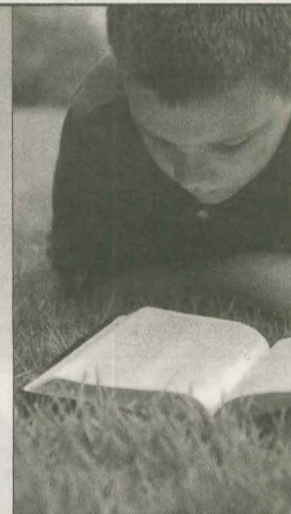
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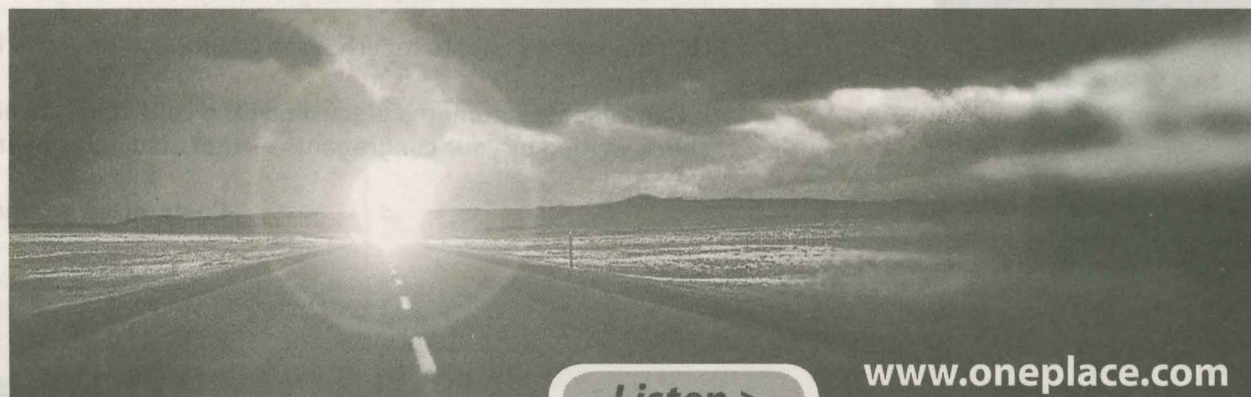
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Some church fights turn high-tech with Web sites

By Hannah Elliott
Associated Baptist Press

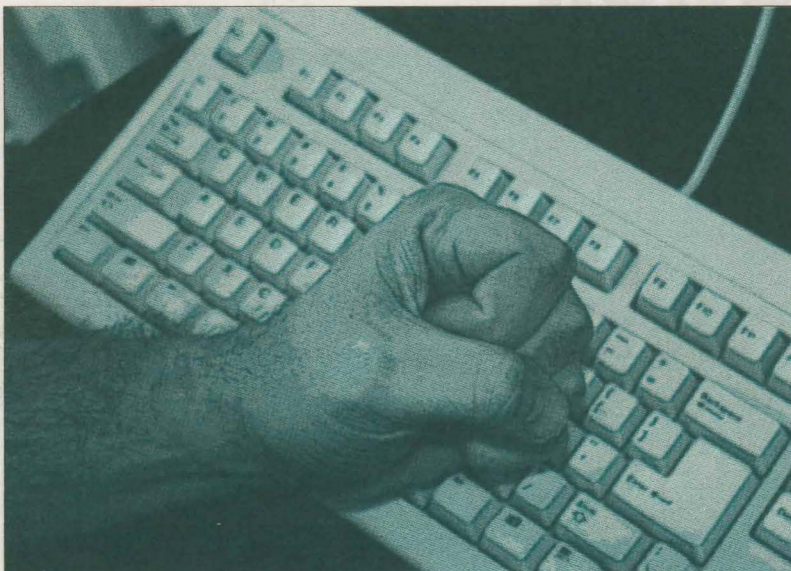
Memphis (ABP)—Bellevue Baptist Church is on the cutting edge of a growing trend—at least when it comes to church fights.

Like members from several other prominent churches nationwide, members of the Memphis-area megachurch are using Web sites and blogs to post details about on-going dissent within the ranks.

But do such high-tech tactics empower church members to address conflict or merely make the conflict worse while airing a church's dirty laundry to the world?

The issue at Bellevue involves Pastor Steve Gaines and a group of longtime church members, who say he's receiving an inappropriately high salary, is pushing the church toward an elder-led system, and has forced out a popular music director.

As part of their protest, some of Bellevue's 30,000 members created www.bellevuetruth.blogspot.com and www.savingbellevue.com, which includes letters from members, a transcript of an interview



with a concerned deacon, and links to sites of churches in comparable straits. As of Sept. 26, the site had received more than 90,000 hits.

Across town at Germantown Baptist Church, and hundreds of miles away at Montrose Baptist Church in Rockville, Md., church members have faced similar divisions and used similar methods to disseminate

information and garner support. At First Baptist Church in Colleyville, Texas, bloggers brought scrutiny to financial dealings that led to the pastor's resignation.

In Germantown, member Clark Finch helped organize www.savegbc.com to rally members against instituting elder rule at the 9,000-member church.

In Rockville, confusion about financial conflicts of interest caused the apparent need for an alternative information source—a Web site called "Friends of Montrose Baptist."

Leveling playing field?

Blog and Web site proponents claim they need the online vehicle to level the playing field. The technology lets them publish information—like church financial statements or proposed bylaws—that otherwise would be hidden by dictatorial pastors and elders. Supporters also say blogs are necessary to distribute information actively blocked by other, more conventional channels.

Bob Perry, congregational-health team leader of the Baptist General

Convention of Missouri, disagrees with using blogs at the local church level. "I just can't imagine that there's any real value to this."

Christians should use biblical models for resolving conflict, like the 18th chapter of Matthew, he added. If dissenters need a forum, Perry said, use the church directory to mail correspondence to relevant people, or have large church meetings. Just don't advertise the problem on the Internet.

"I think a part of what's implied in (Matthew) is that one of the principles you use is don't let the resolution process spread the conflict to a broader audience than it had to begin with," he said.

Perry also noted a passage in 1 Corinthians where Paul exhorts followers to avoid settling disputes in secular courts. He said the principle there applies to blogging about church conflict, which places an internal church dispute on the Internet so "it is laid out before a whole unbelieving world."

"God only knows the damage it does to the cause of Christ," Perry said.

On the other hand, Joe Deupree believes knowledge is power, especially when it comes to church conflicts. Deupree was instrumental in generating, among other outlets, online media coverage during alleged improprieties at First Baptist Church of Colleyville, Texas.

Bloggers picked up the links, and Pastor Frank Harber resigned Aug. 18 after months of online and print queries about questionable real estate transactions involving the church.

"My thought on religion is that it should be completely open—hopefully we have left our secret societies and medieval hidden messages" behind, he said. "It's better to be completely transparent than let people wonder what you're trying to hide."

"God only knows the damage it does to the cause of Christ."

Bob Perry, congregational-health team leader of the Baptist General Convention of Missouri

"It's better to be completely transparent than let people wonder what you're trying to hide."

Joe Deupree, member of First Baptist Church of Colleyville, Texas

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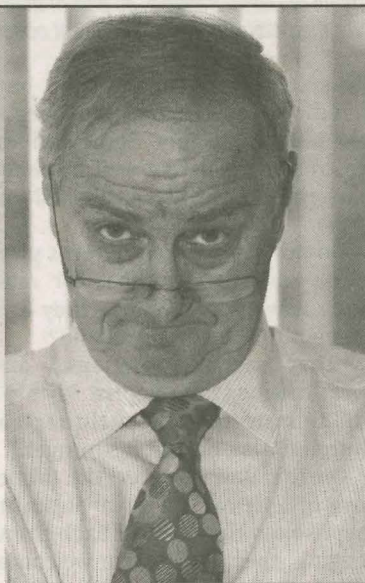
Do you ever ask yourself, "What do I have to offer to the ministry of my church?" or "How does my specific ministry fit into the big picture of my church's mission?" Would you like to study and interact with others who are asking the same questions?

If so, register for a 4-week online study of the Biblical Basis for Ministry.

Each session is highly interactive and provides opportunities for online discussion with the facilitator and other study participants. The facilitator, Ted Lewis, is the pastor of Mt. Nebo Church, in Portsmouth, VA.

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60 percent of New Orleans area churches functioning, study finds

Continued from page 1

In Orleans Parish and coastal Plaquemines Parish, only 40 percent of churches are functioning. In St. Bernard Parish, especially hard-hit by storm surge, only 20 percent of the churches are functioning.

Day cited another study by the RAND Corp. that projects a population increase for the areas of Orleans Parish that received no flooding.

"What's going on with the churches pretty well tells you what's going on with the community," Day said. "If 60 percent of the churches are not functioning then that tells you something about how many people might be coming back."

Day said the study could take up to five years. He added that he hopes to identify variables, such as storm intensity, area repopulation and denominational support, that affect long-term viability.

But he adds that quantitative research will not tell the whole story. "I've become aware that besides doing statistical research, I need to do what is called qualitative research," Day said. "I will find special situations that just have to be described for you to understand why this church came back."

Day said he believes some churches will survive and thrive against all odds.

"Part of my research is going to involve telling other people's stories that I hope will be an inspiration but also will be a guide to helping us understand how other churches can come back from something like this too."

Love & lotion

Missionaries and volunteers minister to Dakar street kids

By Erich Bridges
SBC International Mission Board

Dakar, Senegal (BP)—It's a tough life for a kid.

You wake in the darkness before dawn and roll off a wooden pallet—one of the "beds" you share with 30 other boys on the dirt floor of a grimy, three-room dwelling.

You rub your eyes, eat something—if there's anything to eat—and begin chanting verses from the Quran, Islam's holy book. You have no idea what the Arabic words mean, but you chant them over and over.

You remember the day your mother brought you to this place and handed you over to your Muslim teacher.

"I don't want to see him again until he knows the Quran," she told the teacher, following custom. With tears in her eyes, she pried your trembling fingers loose from her hand and hurried away.

You were 5 years old. You won't see her again for a decade or more—if ever.

The chanting done, you set out into the sandy streets of Yoff, a sprawling section of Dakar, capital of the West African nation of Senegal. Carrying an empty tomato can, you spend much of the day begging under the white-hot sun. People drop sugar cubes, food or perhaps a coin or two into your can, fulfilling their duty as Muslims to give alms to the poor. If you return without a full can, you risk a caning across your back.

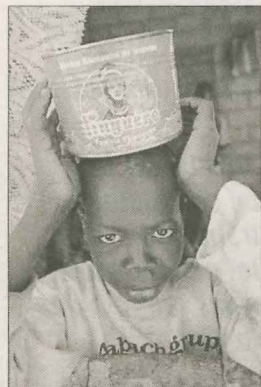
Tomorrow will be the same, and the day after that.

Thousands of kids on the streets

You are a "talibe" (TAL-ee-bay), which means "student." The word comes from the same Arabic root word as "Taliban," the radical Islamic "students" who ruled Afghanistan before being overthrown in 2001. In theory, you are a student of the Quran, learning to be a servant of Islam through poverty and humility.

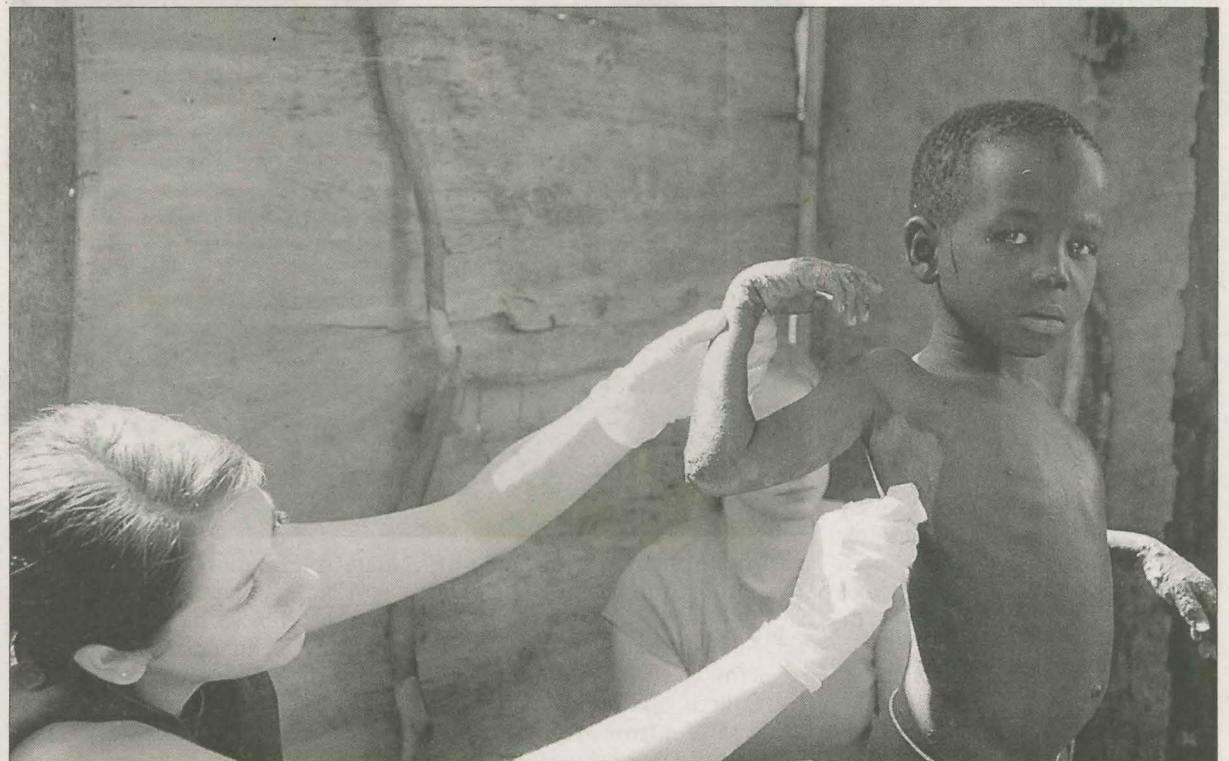
In reality, you are a beggar.

Thousands of ragged talibes wander the streets of Senegal. Community leaders push to end the ta-

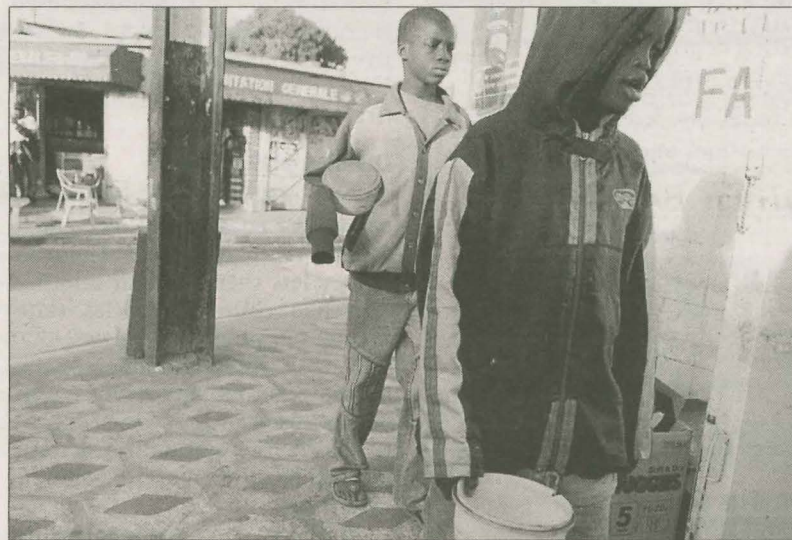


"The people here know we care about them."

Southern Baptist missionary Cal McIntire



MEDICAL ATTENTION Southwest Baptist University volunteers Bethany Worrel (left) and Kaila Hedger apply medicated soap to a "talibe" street boy in Dakar, Senegal. Many of the boys suffer from scabies, a contagious skin disease that flourishes on seldom-washed skin and clothing. (IMB photos by Roy Burroughs)



A DAY ON THE STREETS "Talibe" boys head out for another day of begging on the streets of Dakar, Senegal, as part of their training as "students" of Islam. Parents hand over their children for training, but observers say the real motivation is poverty.

libe system from time to time, but it remains entrenched in Senegalese Muslim society. Some talibes are treated relatively well by their teachers; others are neglected or worse.

Do poverty-stricken parents give young sons to be talibes for religious reasons or because they are too poor to feed another child?

"They say it's religious," answers a Senegalese Baptist layman who ministers to talibes through a church in Dakar. "But it's hunger."

On this day, however, the talibe boys of Yoff are in for a pleasant surprise. As they trickle back from begging, they get a warm welcome from regular visitors: Southern Baptist missionaries Cal McIntire and David and Cheryl Johnson. With the missionaries are a group of student volunteers from Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Mo.

The Southwest volunteers, assisted by some laughing talibe boys and other neighborhood kids, set about hauling buckets of gravel and broken rock into the dormitory to sprinkle across the dirt floor. Then they spread sand and wet concrete over the top. When it dries, the boys

have a clean surface on which to lay the new foam sleeping pallets their visitors have brought.

Later, the boys drop their filthy clothes into buckets of boiling water. Standing naked behind sheets, they bashfully submit to medicated treatment—repeated over three days—of the scabies that ravages their skin. The contagious skin disease, spread by mites, flourishes on seldom-washed skin and clothing, causing agonizing itching and pain.

Tears & TLC

The volunteers fight back tears as they gently apply the soap and medication to the boys' disfigured skin. When they're done, they hand out new clothes and bags with toothbrushes and other basics.

"These kids are in pretty bad shape, health-wise," David Johnson says. "In addition to malnutrition, they have all kinds of skin problems, mostly from sleeping in the sand."

They also crave attention and love. They come running whenever McIntire, an easygoing guy with a ready smile, visits.

"The little ones almost never have anyone just hold them," ex-

plains McIntire, rubbing the back of a talibe boy clinging to his neck. "David and I do that as much as we can—just hold 'em and hug 'em."

While they work to improve living conditions for the talibes, the Southwest students also participate in the "ministry of touch."

"I did a lot of picking little kids up, putting them on my shoulders, lifting them high in the air and stuff," says volunteer Jarrod Easterwood, age 22. "I loved it, just spending time with the kids. That's what they love. They don't get a whole lot of it."

As good as such ministry feels, it's not just feel-good ministry.

McIntire is missionary strategy coordinator for the 150,000 Lebou (LAY-boo) people of West Africa, who live mostly in Senegal. Islamic and traditionally fishermen, the Lebou settled the coastal peninsula, where bustling Dakar now sits, centuries ago. More than 18,000 of them live in Yoff.

Through working with the talibes—who have special significance to the greater community—and other children's ministries, McIntire and his co-workers have won many Lebou friends in Yoff. On this day, at least 10 neighborhood residents passing by pronounce blessings on the missionaries and volunteers for helping the talibes.

"We 'love on' the kids in order to share Jesus with the parents," McIntire explains. "We're able to come in and do more of what we want to do after we do something like this. The people here know we care about them."

There are only a handful of Christian believers among the Lebou so far, but the first Lebou home fellowship began earlier this year—in Yoff. McIntire hopes to see four or five more meetings by the end of this year.

One day, the talibes might be liberated from their service. Meanwhile, the Lebou are hearing about the liberating love of Christ.



SPARSE CONDITIONS "Talibe" street boys sleep in their "dormitory," a grimy three-room dwelling in Dakar, Senegal, that holds 30 or more kids. The talibe (Arabic for "student") boys chant verses from the Quran, Islam's holy book, then go out each day to beg for alms on the streets.

An eye-opening conversation

Six graders remind us we have a world to confront

Recently, I attended a conference outside of Louisville. Our typical process at such events is to set up our display booth and then grab something quick for supper before the event starts. The three of us went to a nearby Sonic Drive-In to get something. While ordering, three local sixth graders came up and began talking.

Any time we get to speak with youth, it is a blessing because we get to learn from them. Our programs are adjusted, to some extent, based on these discussions.

Our 20- to 30-minute talk with the boys was sad and eye opening. The boys were talkative and I am sure they would have carried on for a long time had our schedule allowed. We asked, "What is good about school, and what do you do after school?" The following paraphrase will give you an unpleasant view into the life of a typical student today:

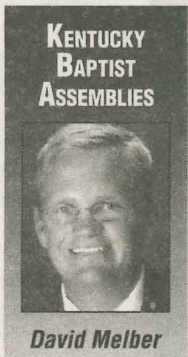
"We don't like school because you can't talk to your friends any. It is all about being told what to do. When I get home I like to play certain video games that have no

rules. I can rob, steal, kill and have my way with women and nobody can stop me. I can create my own empire and there are no rules. I know some of what happens in the game is really not all that good, but it is only a game. You see that car dealer across the street, in the game I could go in and kill the owner and have all those new cars. You can just have all you want in the game."

While this is a condensed version of his comments, it is shocking when a sixth grader says you can have your way with women. I thought to myself: How are games such as this one conditioning our young men to treat women in the future?

While you might find his comments hard to believe, they are true, and I would contend true for most of our youth today.

Our task as believers is great. Don't miss an opportunity with a student.



David Melber

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

Kudzu



Doug Marlette

For Heaven's Sake



Mike Morgan

Bible Crosswords

Janet Adkins

Across

- 1 Fellow
- 5 Halfway, prefix
- 8 Charles, for short
- 12 Aircraft, prefix
- 13 Summer, Fr.
- 14 Alley Oop's girlfriend
- 15 "And he beat down the tower of Penuel, and _____ the men of the city" (Judges 8:17)
- 16 Resident, abbr.
- 17 "Shall _____ words have an end?" (Job 16:3)
- 18 "We are troubled on every _____ we are _____" (2 Corinthians 4:8) (2 words)
- 21 To make free of
- 22 Boy's name
- 23 "The _____ and flags shall wither" (Isaiah 19:6)
- 26 Belonging to the author of much of the New Testament (2 words)
- 30 Referring to the nose, prefix
- 31 "Let me _____ the death of the righteous" (Numbers 23:10)
- 32 Belonging to the National Security Agency, abbr.
- 33 Stutter
- 35 Sticks with a knife
- 36 Adjective suffix
- 37 Weep
- 38 "That the _____ might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God" (2 Corinthians 4:15)
- 45 Elbow-shaped pasta, for short
- 46 "But let your communication be, _____" (Matthew 5:37)
- 47 "_____ that great city" (Revelation 18:16)
- 48 _____ Domini
- 49 "Of _____, the family of the Erites" (Numbers 26:16)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
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45				46			47			
48				49			50			
51				52			53			

- 50 "But this woman ... hath not ceased to _____ my feet" (Luke 7:45)
- 51 Chinese food
- 52 Noise
- 53 Feminine name ending
- 20 What you lose when you stand
- 23 Doctors' assistants
- 24 "Therefore, the children of Israel _____ not of the sinew which shrank" (Genesis 32:32)
- 25 That, Sp.
- 26 "And he answered ... I go, _____; and went not" (Matthew 21:30)
- 27 Abbreviation for America
- 28 Where scientists work
- 29 Selective Service System, abbr.
- 31 "I made haste, and _____ not to keep thy commandments" (Psalms 119:60)
- 34 "I said of laughter, it is _____" (Ecclesiastes 2:2)
- 35 Soak
- 37 "I will _____ all my raiment" (Isaiah 63:3)
- 38 "The king of Moab hath brought me from _____" (Numbers 23:7)
- 39 "Thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek _____" (Psalms 3:7)
- 40 "Babukiah and _____" (Nehemiah 12:9)
- 41 "Salathiel, which was the son of _____" (Luke 3:27)
- 42 Got down from
- 43 "Have ye not _____ out the priests of the Lord" (2 Chronicles 13:9)
- 44 To be, Lat.

Down

- 1 One of the Mamas and the Papas
- 2 Sun, prefix
- 3 "They bring thee _____ heifer without spot" (Numbers 19:2) (2 words)
- 4 "Far above all principality, and _____, and might, and _____" (Ephesians 1:21) (2 words)
- 5 "The sons of Ezra were, Jether, and _____" (1 Chronicles 4:17)
- 6 Roman road
- 7 "Hath done _____ unto the Spirit of grace" (Hebrews 10:29)
- 8 "My _____ they _____, although I was a husband unto them" (Jeremiah 31:32)
- 9 Deception
- 10 "That they should believe _____" (2 Thessalonians 2:11)
- 11 "Though the number of the children of Israel be as the _____ of the sea" (Romans 9:27)
- 19 Greek letters for the ratio of a circle's circumference to its diameter

Last week's solution

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

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LifeWay producing electronic update to 'Baptist Hymnal'



Almost 70 percent of Baptist churches describe their worship services as having a blend of contemporary and traditional hymns.

By Russ Rankin
SBC LifeWay Christian Resources

Nashville (BP)—The landscape of church music has changed drastically since the release of the latest edition of "The Baptist Hymnal" in 1991.

While beloved standards still resound in many churches, their words often are splashed across giant screens instead of held hard-bound in pews, and often are bracketed by electronic-fueled modern choruses.

In response, LifeWay Worship Music Group of LifeWay Christian Resources is embarking on a venture to produce an updated Baptist Hymnal with modern technology.

Dubbed "The Worship Project," the endeavor consists of two components:

- A downloadable audio hymn and worship song track repository from which an updated, hard-bound Baptist Hymnal will be drawn.

- A worship planner, available through an online portal at LifeWayWorship.com. That Web site will go live when the project launches sometime in 2008.

The printed hymnal is set to be released in the second half of 2008, with the debut of the digital portal following shortly thereafter.

"Every 15 years or so we have produced a hymnal," said Mike Harland, director of the LifeWay Worship Music Group. "When I arrived at LifeWay, I knew one of the first questions we would need to begin asking is 'What's the next Baptist Hymnal going to look like?'"

Almost 70 percent of Baptist churches describe their worship



NEEDING NEW RESOURCES The developing use of display screens and new music in worship will affect the way LifeWay Christian Resources designs its next hymnal. Dubbed the "Worship Project," LifeWay intends to produce an electronic repository of more than 1,000 hymns, as well as the soundtracks for the music and an online worship planner. Officials say the project should be launched in 2008. (BP file photo)

services as having a blend of contemporary and traditional hymns, Harland said. Hymns are used in 90 percent of the churches, and 45 percent of churches claim a lack of musicians is the biggest challenge to their music ministry.

"As we looked at what vehicle we needed to deliver this music resource, it was obvious that it needed to be electronic," Harland said. "Looking at what the '91 hymnal cost, we realized we could record this project for not much more. After all, everything we do in print today is done digitally. No hymnal has ever been recorded, so this

represents a revolutionary step for church worship music."

Access to 1,000 titles

The group expects to produce an online hymnal in 2008 with a collection of 1,000 recorded titles. At least 100 songs will be added to the collection each year, Harland said, making it "ultimately, the last hymnal anyone will need."

The second component, the worship planner available at LifeWayWorship.com, is essential, he said.

Lean staffs at small churches often require that pastors arrange the

music for a worship service, Harland noted. "Pastors will love this because it gives them a tool in their hands to plan worship and find resources.

"They'll be able to search for songs by theme, Scripture or topic. They'll have everything they need to build a complete worship experience."

The Worship Project Web site will help small churches without musicians and larger churches needing complex arrangements, he said. Overseas missionaries without access to music and instrumentation also will benefit, he added.

Because The Worship Project is not stylistically driven or geared to one size of ministry or location, "we will preserve the best of our past hymnody, and we will use technology to build a bridge to the gifted and anointed writers in the church today," Harland said.

In Nashville, arrangers and composers already are preparing for the project. "Think about it," Harland said. "In the next 10 months we will be recording 1,000 songs. This is going to be one of the biggest—if not the biggest—recording projects ever done."

Harland described The Worship Project as the "ultimate worship resource that is as stylistically diverse as church music is today."

"There's nothing like it," he added. "People have thought of different aspects of it, and have produced various components, but no one has had the wherewithal to undertake this type of commitment to worship. Not only is LifeWay capable, but we are willing and excited about this."

Spiritual emphasis week

Students start Oneida's school year with emphasis on gospel, following Jesus

By Michael Spencer
Oneida Baptist Institute Assistant to the President

Every school year at Oneida Baptist Institute begins and ends with Spiritual Emphasis Week.

These weeks resemble revivals to many of our supporters in Baptist churches. Our goal is to present the gospel of Jesus Christ in a clear and creative way that will help our students make a personal decision about following Jesus for the rest of their lives.

Dr. Underwood generously allows us to bring in speakers and worship leaders who have the skill sets we need for the unusual challenges of Oneida's student body. Our students aren't your typical church audience, and the presence of many internationals makes them a special group to communicate with.

In addition, Spiritual Emphasis Week services are completely voluntary. Our students do not have to come to the evening sessions. Making spiritual life non-compulsory honors the work of the Holy Spirit and shows respect for our students, but we still want to have a crowd. Sometimes I've been anxious, but this year's student body came every night in large numbers.

On Sunday evening, we began with a praise concert and worship time led by Almost Home, a wonderfully talented musical group from here in Clay County. Craig and Scarlet Lanier and the band gave one of the finest musical worship experiences we've ever had at Oneida.

Our speaker was Noel Heikkinen and our worship leader was Dan Price. Both are ministers of

the fast-growing Riverview Church in Lansing, Mich. In just a few years, Riverview has grown to more than 2,000 attenders, reaching hundreds of Michigan State University students. This made these two men a good choice for the week.

Every service featured Christ-centered, worshipful music, outstanding preaching and a true sense of genuine urgency for Christ.

Dozens of students stayed each evening for prayer and conversation about following Jesus.

Several accepted Christ and plan to be baptized.

Our students appreciated the skillful use of media and humor, but it was wonderful to experience how every service brought us to the cross of Christ, and the last service was a complete invitation to follow Christ now.

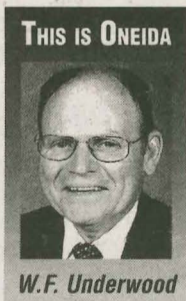
Our teachers tell me that several international students were interested in the messages.

I observed many students with particularly painful situations and backgrounds coming for prayer. Even some of our most mature Christian students responded to the call to make Jesus the Lord of the rest of their lives.

Oneida has chapel daily and two worship gatherings on Sundays. The gospel is preached year-round, but Spiritual Emphasis Weeks refresh us all.

Thanks to Kentucky Baptists for making it possible for us to have great weeks like this. Keep praying that God will be glorified in the gospel of His Son, our Mediator and great High Priest, Jesus.

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



W.F. Underwood

Finding God's plan

Scottsville nurse serves as Clear Creek volunteer

Annetta Shelton lost her husband of 33 years to lung cancer in 2003; his death came just five weeks after the diagnosis. "We thought God had a plan for us," she said. "But when I lost him, I found out God had a plan for me. I told Gary before he died I would find out that plan."

Annetta grew up in Logan County and was saved at about age 10. "When they used felt boards to illustrate Bible stories in VBS," she remembers. "My parents took me to church, especially my Mama." After high school, she completed a nursing degree at Western Kentucky University in 1970. She married her high school sweetheart the last semester of nursing school; they became parents of three children and have three grandchildren. For 22 years Annetta was a school nurse and health services coordinator for Allen County schools. She retired from that position in October 2004.

In 1989, they became interested in "Children of the Americas," serving as foster parents for children from Guatemala brought to the U.S. for medical care and then returned to their families. They

cared for six children through the years, with one of those eventually becoming their son. They also adopted a second child, a cleft lip and palate baby girl, from Korea. Those children, now 17 and 13, live on the Clear Creek campus with their mom.

In June 2003 Annetta read an article about a couple working as

Mission Service Corps volunteers in Eastern Kentucky and thought about the possibility. "Several weeks later, I contacted Eric Allen at KBC and he sent me a list of needs," she said. "On the second page was a request for a school nurse/health services coordinator at Clear Creek."

During the past school year, Annetta had 932 appointments in the campus clinic, plus 14 at the child development center and 22 after-hours house calls. The clinic organized two blood drives and coordinated the campus visits of three doctors and two dentists.

"I've met some wonderful people," Annetta said. "I am blessed to be involved in what the Lord is doing. I think I am serving where God wants me."

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



Bill Whittaker

Author Dowd says Applebee's has lessons for all churches

By Jeffrey MacDonald
Religion News Service

Washington (RNS)—As chief strategist for President Bush's 2004 re-election campaign, Matthew Dowd helped eke out a victory despite surveys that depicted an electorate uneasy over Iraq, the economy and where the nation was headed.

Now Dowd says churches can apply the same techniques that worked for Bush. "Whether your product is a candidate, a hamburger or the Word of God, the challenge is the same."

Dowd, a Roman Catholic, is a co-author of the new "Applebee's America: How Successful Political, Business and Religious Leaders Connect with the New American Community."

What is it about Applebee's that intrigues you?

Applebee's is not trying to sell food. They are trying to give people a sense of connection and community and a feeling of belonging. Customers go there because they get a sense of community when they walk in an Applebee's, and each Applebee's reflects the local community.

What does that have to do with churches?

Successful growing churches have learned that what is very important is giving people a sense of belonging and community and connecting them with other folks at their churches. This is exactly what Applebee's and other successful businesses like Starbucks are doing around the country.

So what do successful religious institutions have in common with Applebee's?

Successful religious institutions are not built in hierarchical ways. Interestingly, it's like politics: The most successful ones are built from the bottom up. It's built by how people respond to small communities. People might have some common interests. They might be motorcycle riders or they might be card players. ... It's more important to have 1,000 groups of 10 people than it is to have 10,000 people.

Are religious institutions inherently different from political or business organizations?

Well, there are some differences. ... In politics, it's a choice between one person or another. In business, it's whether you buy this car or that car. In religion, the successful ones aren't calling people to say, "Don't go there, go here."

It's all about, "Come here and get something that your soul needs or your heart needs." I don't think most successful religions are asking people to make that choice.

You write about dividing potential worshippers into 50 lifestyle segments and crafting messages that appeal to them. What do you mean by lifestyle segments?

If there's a group of people who have a common thing—they like to go hiking together or be outdoors together or that sort of thing—then a church can say, "OK, these people have that (in common). Maybe there are ways that we can ... give them a religious experience with that in mind."

Some in religious circles bristle at marketing because they feel it reduces faith to a mere commodity. Does that sort of thinking doom certain religious people or institutions to extinction?

If a religious institution says, "That's marketing. I'm not going to do that," they're going to cut their nose to spite their face because then they're not able to talk to people.

They're not going to be successful in their endeavor of what they really want to do, which is talk to as many people as possible and ultimately save souls.

You focus on megachurches, but there might be some who say, "My church is much smaller." Do lessons from megachurches apply to churches of all shapes and sizes?

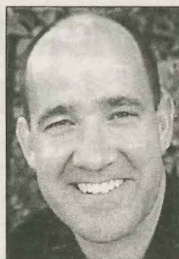
I think the lessons to be successful in what you're doing—whether it's a church of 100 people or a church of 10,000 people—are the same. Lessons you learn and what you need to know, which is how to connect with people, are the same.

You connect with people in their hearts. You give them a sense of community. You're authentic. You have a set of principles and beliefs. They're the same things that work in a campaign for president or a campaign for city council somewhere.

I'll ask for a prediction here. If you could look 10 years down the line, how will the landscape of American religion be different?

One of the things we know for sure is that institutions set up in a hierarchical fashion are going to be very unsuccessful in keeping people in the pews and keeping parishioners as part of those ministries.

That, I think, is why the Catholic Church has had difficulty growing and has had parishes that have shut down. ... So my prediction is the ones that maintain that (top-down decision making) are going to continue to lose parishioners, and the ones that build a sense of church at the grassroots and at the community level ... are the ones that are going to succeed.



Matthew Dowd



Some evangelicals writing about political uneasiness

By Kimberly Winston
Religion News Service

Washington (RNS)—A new crop of books features a small but vocal group of evangelicals with a warning for members of their faith: Unless they sever political alliances and forgo blind adherence on hot-button issues, they run the risk of displeasing God and undermining their Christian convictions.

The authors, who range from pastors to professors, theologians to laymen, have two things in common—all are evangelicals, and they all say close ties to any political party undermine their God-ordained mission to live out a gospel of brotherly love and compassion.

While unease with Christianity's coziness with politics is not new, what's unusual is the public nature of the criticism. No longer are grievances aired privately between evangelical church and ministry leaders. The fact that so many prominent evangelicals are speaking out, observers say, signals a budding backlash against politics within the movement.

"It's a symptom of what I like to call the evangelical identity crisis," said Lynn Garrett, senior editor in religion for Publishers Weekly.

"As our political leaders (who) identify themselves as evangelical have become more hard-right, that has turned off evangelicals who do not share those viewpoints. They are speaking up and saying, 'This is not us. Don't tar us with the same brush.'"

A May poll taken by the Pew Research Center suggests these authors might be finding a receptive audience.

Jeffrey Sheler, a long-time religion journalist who surveys American evangelicals in his new book, "Believers," agreed.

"A growing number of evangelicals are tired of the way they have been portrayed (in the news media) and the way they see their faith, in their opinion, being hijacked by a small number of highly visible political activists," Sheler said.

"We are getting close to another election and they do not want to once again see a few voices stand up and succeed in representing themselves as the spokesmen for 60 million evangelical Americans."

While President Bush still has the support of a majority of white evangelicals, a smaller number—55 percent—now say they approve of his performance. Two years ago, that number was 72 percent.

The authors, however, are realistic about the battle they wage.

"Yes, we are seeing more books critical of the marriage of conservative politics and religion," said Richard Kyle, an evangelical Mennonite and a professor at Tabor College in Hillsboro, Kan. He wrote "Evangelicalism: An Americanized Christianity."

"But the popularizers, the TV preachers, are carrying the day. Their books are selling in the millions. I even get e-mails that say that because I disagree with Falwell, I must be wrong."

A sampling

New books hitting the shelves this year are giving evangelicals a platform to voice concerns about how their faith is being expressed in politics. Here's a sampling of titles:

Thy Kingdom Come: An Evangelical's Lament: How the Religious Right Distorts the Faith and Threatens America. Randall Balmer. Perseus Books. \$24.95. 242 pages.

A professor of American religious history skewers his contemporaries who, in his view, misrepresent the values of his faith.

Excerpt: "The evangelical faith that nurtured me as a child and sustains me as an adult has been hijacked by right-wing zealots who have distorted the gospel of Jesus Christ, defaulted on the noble legacy of 19th century evangelical activism, and failed to appreciate the genius of the First Amendment."

The Myth of a Christian Nation: How the Quest for Political Power Is Destroying the Church. Gregory Boyd. Zondervan. \$19.99. 208 pages.

A Minnesota pastor pleads with fellow evangelicals to consider the high cost of accumulating worldly power in a hapless bid to make American society reflect a biblical ideal.

Excerpt: "Rather than focusing our understanding of God's kingdom on the person of Jesus—Who, incidentally, never allowed Himself to get pulled into the political disputes of His day—I believe many of us American evangelicals have allowed our understanding of the kingdom of God to be polluted with political ideals, agendas and issues."

Christian, Evangelical & ... Democrat? George Hunter III. Abingdon Press. \$12. 120 pages.

A Methodist professor of church growth and evangelism says American evangelicals should learn from fellow evangelicals overseas and bring their sensibilities to bear in all areas of society, including the Democratic Party.

Excerpt: "Many of our most public 'evangelical' spokespersons do not fully represent Christianity, and Christianity's vision for the world, to the pre-Christian populations of the United States. ... Two indispensable objectives in our public role, therefore, are to build all the bridges possible to lost people who need to be found and to accurately and fully represent the Christian faith and ethic when we represent it."

Evangelicals in the Public Square: Four Formative Voices on Political Thought and Action. J. Budziszewski. Baker Baker Books. \$19.99. 224 pages.

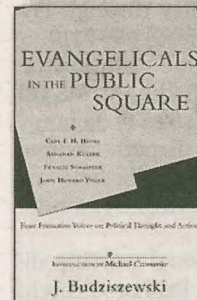
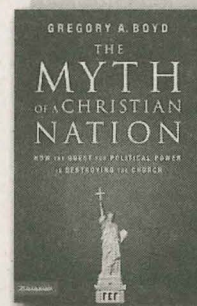
A philosopher and his dialogue partners reflect on the political activities of four historical figures in American evangelicalism. He concludes that the tradition has always struggled—and still does—to ground its arguments for public policy in generally accepted principles that transcend sectarian differences.

Excerpt: "Historically, the most common fallacy of evangelical political theory has been projective accommodation: accommodating Scripture to one's own political views by reading those views into the biblical text. The longevity of this habit will make it hard to break."

Evangelicalism: An Americanized Christianity. Richard Kyle. Transaction Publishers. \$34.95. 353 pages.

An evangelical historian tackles what makes evangelicalism in America distinctive. He concludes that adherents have long been both wary of secular culture, and also eager to embrace it.

Excerpt: "On one hand, the very birth pangs of the Christian Right can be seen in its resistance to modern cultural trends. ... On the other hand, few religious bodies have Americanized the Christian faith as have conservative Protestants."



PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following Kentucky Baptist ministries and missionaries:

Eaton Memorial Baptist Church in Owensboro. Pastor Dennis McFadden reports he is excited about the church's new "neighborhood dinner" ministry. The ministry provides an evening meal in the church each Monday for the hungry in the community. As a result, the congregation has new people in the church and has witnessed a stronger connection with the community. Pray that those who come for food also will discover the "Bread of Life." Pray that church members will open their arms to the needy and live out the gospel in their community.

Mission Service Corps Missionaries Jimmy and Faye Stallons of Hopkinsville. The Stallons serve as directors at the Oak Grove branch of Impact Ministry. They provide food, clothing and spiritual counseling to those who visit the ministry center. Many of those ministered to through Impact are military families stationed at Fort Campbell. Pray that those visiting the center will see and feel the love of Jesus through each volunteer who serves. Pray also that lives will be changed as individuals are introduced to Jesus Christ.

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

■ **BEDFORD**—Bedford Church ordained **Terry Guinn** and **Don Poe** as deacons Sept. 24.

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Saloma Church will host a Fall Revival Celebration Oct. 20-22. Guest evangelists include **Al Hardy**, Oct. 20, 7 p.m.; **Skip Alexander**, Oct. 21, 7 p.m.; and **Scott Wigginton**, Oct. 22, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. **John Chowning** is pastor.

■ **CLAY CITY**—Powells Valley Church will hold revival services Oct. 11-15, 7 p.m., with **Shannon Back** as evangelist.

■ **DORTON**—Faith Church recently ordained **Luke Vanhooose** to the gospel ministry. **Dave Hammond** is pastor.

■ **EAST BERNSTADT**—Arthur Ridge Church recently called **Michael Hampton** as pastor.

■ **FRANKFORT**—First Church is partnering with churches in North Carolina and Tennessee to sponsor **Paula Settle** in a three-year missions assignment in Eastern Kentucky as part of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's rural poverty initiative. Settle, a graduate of Campbellsville University and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, is a former missionary to West Africa. She will serve in Owsley and Powell counties.

■ **GREENVILLE**—Macedonia Church will hold revival services Oct. 15-19 with **Tommy Wilhite** as evangelist. For more information, call (270) 338-4248.

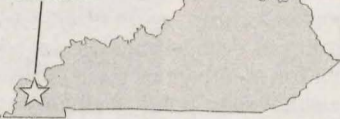
■ **LONDON**—New Salem Church will hold revival services Oct. 15-18 with **Johnny Jervis** as evangelist. For more information, call (606) 843-7802. **Greg Deaton** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Midlane Park Church recently called **Dwayne Ewers Sr.** as pastor.

■ **MIDDLETOWN**—First Church will host a weekend study of the book of Revelation Oct. 13-15 led by **Gerald Borchert**, senior professor at the John Leland Center for Theological Studies in Washington, D.C. For more information, call (502) 245-

Spotlight on ...

Melber



Melber Church will celebrate homecoming Oct. 15 with an 11 a.m. worship service with **Nathan Rogers** as guest speaker. Activities will include a fellowship dinner and a 1:15 p.m. music service featuring the **Moreheads**.

7889. **Jim Cobban** is pastor.

■ **MOUTH CARD**—Mouthcard Church will hold revival services Oct. 14-18 with **Shawn Bruce** as evangelist. **Joe Tuttle** is pastor.

■ **OWENSBORO**—**Bob and Carolyn Whitworth**, members of Buena Vista Church, recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

■ **SIMPSONVILLE**—Simpsonville Church will host the **Booth Brothers** and **Palmer Sisters** in concert Oct. 15, 5 p.m. For more information, call (502) 722-5246.

■ **SOMERSET**—Woodstock Church recently called **Chris Blevins** as pastor. He previously served Calvary Church in Clinton, S.C.

■ **VERSAILLES**—New Hope Church called **Chris Fenner** as worship pastor effective Sept. 10. **Wesley Noss** is the pastor.

■ **WACO**—Bethlehem Church will hold revival services Oct. 15-18. For more information, call (859) 986-1711. **Mark McGuire** is pastor.

What's going on?

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

SEEKING: Sand Run Baptist Church in Northern Kentucky is seeking God's choice for a youth minister. Send resumés to PO Box 88, Hebron, KY 41048; or call the church office Monday through Friday, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.: (859) 689-7110.

SEEKING: Full-time administrative assistant—small church. MS Office required. \$12.50-\$14.50/hour; possible benefits. E-mail resumé to: hunsinger.office@hlbc.net; or fax: (502) 491-4948, Attn: Personnel Committee.

SEEKING: Traditional worship director for Calvary Baptist Church, Lexington, Ky. Principle function of this 20- to 30-hour per week position will be directing the sanctuary choir and related groups, leading congregational singing and working with the pastor in planning and directing traditional worship services and special events related to traditional worship. A more detailed job description may be seen at www.calvarybaptistchurch.com. Please send resumés to: Dr. Robert G. Baker, pastor, 150 E High St., Lexington, KY 40507.

SEEKING: Part-time worship leader for Alton Baptist Church. Please send resumés to: Personnel Team, Alton Baptist Church, 1321 Bypass North, Lawrenceburg, KY 40342.

SEEKING: Bivocational (part-time) youth director. Send resumé to Buena Vista Baptist Church, 324 Clifty St., Somerset, KY 42501; or bvbc@windstream.net.

SEEKING: Payroll accountant (immediate need) for The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. This position is responsible for the accurate and timely preparation of all seminary payrolls, resolution of payroll-related problems and questions, and the organization and maintenance of payroll records. This position requires an associate degree in accounting, at least two years of accounting experience and at least one year of payroll experience. The seminary offers a fast-paced, multi-tasking work environment, plus a competitive salary and benefits package. Qualified candidates should e-mail their resumés with cover letters and salary histories to: humanresources@sbts.edu.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October

13-14 Women On Mission/Baptist Nursing Fellowship Fall Retreat, Cedarmore.

14 101 Workshop, Union Baptist Church, Union.

16 Senior Adult Choir—East, Immanuel Baptist Church, Lexington.

27-28 Quarterly Prayer Meeting for Spiritual Awakening, Northside Baptist Church, Mount Vernon.

November

3-4 International Student Conference, Cave City Convention Center.

4 101 Workshop, Bellevue Baptist Church, Owensboro.

10-12 All State Jr. High Choir, Eastwood Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

10-12 Crossover, Bowling Green.

13 Kentucky Baptist Music Conference, Rich Pond Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

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

Cumberlands' Mountain Outreach receives \$1 million endowment

Williamsburg—The University of the Cumberlands' Mountain Outreach program received a \$1 million endowment last week from Monroe and Sandra Trout of Knoxville.

The Trouts presented the gift to Cumberlands President Jim Taylor during the dedication of a Mountain Outreach house built this summer in Whitley County.

The endowment will be used to build one house every year, with the remainder going to the school's Trout Scholars Fund. The Trouts dedicated the endowment in honor of Taylor and his wife, Dinah, as well as Trout's high school Latin, English, math and gym teachers, without whom, Trout said, "I would nev-

er have gone on to college."

"There are no words to express our profound and personal appreciation," Taylor responded.

Since the program's start in 1982, Mountain Outreach has constructed 123 homes for residents of surrounding communities. The ministry also distributes donated clothing and household items for those in need.

The Trouts also presented the house recipients a mountain landscape oil painting that Trout painted for the family, as well as a check for \$1,000.

The Trouts, who have been supporting Mountain Outreach since 1990, were named Knoxville's 2004 Philanthropists of the Year.

Campbellsville to host folk musician

Campbellsville—Campbellsville University will host folk singer/songwriter Kate Campbell in concert Oct. 26 as part of the Kentucky Baptist school's year-long centennial celebration.

The free concert will be held at 7:30 p.m. at Campbellsville Baptist Church.

Campbell, the daughter of former Southern Baptist Convention

President Jim Henry, made her recording debut in 1995 with the album "Songs from the Levee." Her albums "Moonpie Dreams" and "Visions of Plenty" earned Folk Album of the Year nominations from the Nashville Music Awards.

To reserve free tickets for the concert, contact Andrew Ward, Campbellsville's director of student activities, at (270) 789-5161.

CLASSIFIED ADS

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for New Hope Baptist Church, a conservative, rural SB church in West Liberty, Ky. Parsonage provided. Contact Stephen Howard, 270 Ridgeview Court, West Liberty, KY 41472. (606) 743-7437.

SEEKING: Pastor of student ministries. Growing church (average: 2,000) seeks a leader/teacher passionate about reaching students to serve on a staff that has a clear vision and strategy. Resumés to: Danny Bennett, Calvary Baptist, 110 N McMullen Booth Road, Clearwater, FL 33759; or e-mail: dbennett@calvarybaptist.org.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for conservative Southern Baptist church (to replace pastor who is retiring). Please send resumé to Palomar Baptist Church, 2190 Fort Harrods Drive, Lexington, KY 40513, Attn: PSC.

SURVEY: Pastor search committee members (current and recent), please take confidential online survey to help SBC pastor with PhD research. For username and password, contact info@southernbaptistresearch.com.

SEEKING: Part-time interim student minister (20 hrs./wk). Please send resumé to: Immanuel Baptist Church, 800 Rhodes Drive, Elizabethtown, KY 42701, Attn: Student Minister Selection Committee.

SEEKING: Part-time children's minister for First Baptist Church of Charlestown, Ind. (20 minutes from downtown Louisville). Send resumés to office@fbctown.com, or mail to: First Baptist Church, PO Box 36, Charlestown, IN 47111, Attn: Search Committee.

SEEKING: Director of missions for Severns Valley Association of Baptists. The deadline for submitting resumés has been extended until Oct. 31, 2006. Resumés already submitted will be retained. Please submit a cover letter, resumé and references to: DOM Search Committee, PO Box 541, Elizabethtown, KY 42702.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music for blended/traditional worship in Corbin area. Mail resumé to: Calvary Baptist Church, 96 Calvary Church Road, Corbin, KY 40701. Phone: (606) 523-0696.

The 'Amish 9/11'

Tight-knit community searching for healing, forgiveness after shootings

By Daniel Burke
Religion News Service

White Horse, Pa. (RNS)—The boys walked home after school Oct. 2 from their one-room schoolhouse just across the fields and groaned to their mother that a substitute teacher would be leading the next day's lessons.

"Well, boys, I'm in no position to hear complaining about schools," Mary R. said to her four young sons.

Then the 42-year-old Amish woman told her boys that students at a nearby school "needed their prayers."

There had been a hostage-taking earlier that day at an Amish school 15 miles down the road in Nickel Mines, she explained, and several children had been hurt.

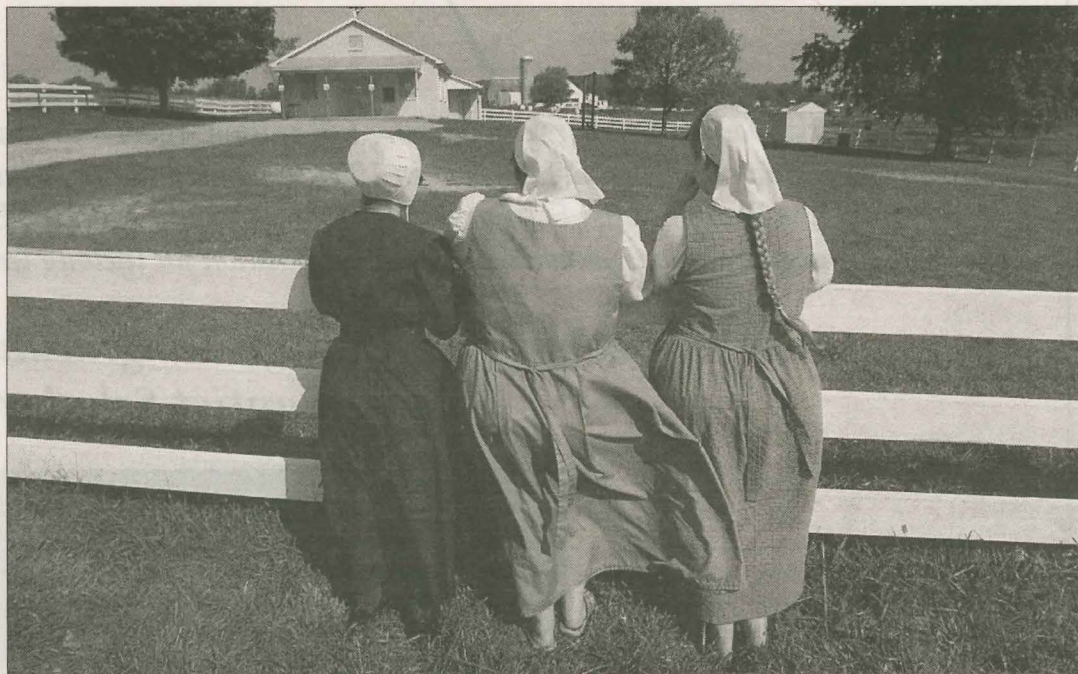
In an attack some in this tight-knit Christian community are calling "the Amish 9/11," an armed man burst into an Amish schoolhouse in Lancaster County on Oct. 2 and shot 10 young girls, killing five, before killing himself. The gunman, identified as Charles Carl Roberts IV, shot and killed himself at the scene.

"That's exactly what this is—the Amish 9/11," said Sam S., an Amish carpenter from Gordonville, a town about five miles from Nickel Mines. "We've never experienced anything like this before here." Like many Amish men and women, Sam and Mary asked that their full names not be printed because they didn't want to stand out from other members of their community.

Among the Amish, who honor a humble lifestyle modeled on the Gospels, such provocative statements are rare. But as Lancaster County's estimated 25,000-member Amish community struggles to make sense of the shooting—the shocking violence, the chaotic search for loved ones, the conflicting and confusing news reports—many say it carries unmistakable echoes of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

Shunning modern conveniences

Though friendly with outsiders, whom they call "English," the Amish keep counsel among themselves. Forgoing modern conveniences, such as electricity, cars and computers, they live in close settlements,



where family and friends are seldom more than a buggy ride away.

The lessons of the shooting, always grounded in the understanding that earthly events are driven by a divine hand, will be imparted in the living rooms and kitchens of the large, inseparable Amish families.

After the evening's chores were done, Mary R.'s family gathered for dinner Oct. 3 around a large kitchen table at their farm in White Horse.

The conversation quickly turned to the shooting.

"This is our 9/11," said Mary's husband, Ben, 41, as his wife and their young sons picked at their supper. "Out here this is just so uncommon."

Mary's pregnant cousin—the mother of the Nickel Mines teacher—was visiting the school and was taken hostage, though she was let go before the shooting began.

As Mary and Ben explained the day's violence to their sons, they emphasized the importance of forgiveness and trusting in God.

"I just feel bad for the gunman," Ben said. "He had a mother and a wife and a soul and now he's standing before a just God."

While outsiders might be sur-

prised at the forgiveness immediately extended to Roberts, Donald Kraybill, an authority on Amish culture, said that reaction is typical of the nonviolent Christian community.

"That theme of forgiveness really comes from the example of Jesus, Who carried that spirit even to the cross," said Kraybill, a professor of Anabaptist studies at Elizabethtown College in Lancaster County.

Better prepared?

In Gospel lessons, hymns and prayer books written in German dialect, those teachings are passed down through generations in Amish settlements.

"I think the Amish are much better prepared to cope with something like this than most Americans," Kraybill said. "They see things as having a higher purpose, there's a higher good, so they are more able to absorb and accept things in a spirit of humility."

But as their family gathered beneath a gas lamp in their living room after dinner, Ben and Mary struggled to explain why a gunman would want to hurt Amish children. They told their sons that he had a "little problem in his head that made him do mean things."

One of the boys stared at his plain black pants, fingered his suspenders and again asked, in a respectful tone: Why?

Settling her hands on her lap, Mary said: "Sometimes we don't understand. I understand that the Lord does let this happen, but I do not know why."

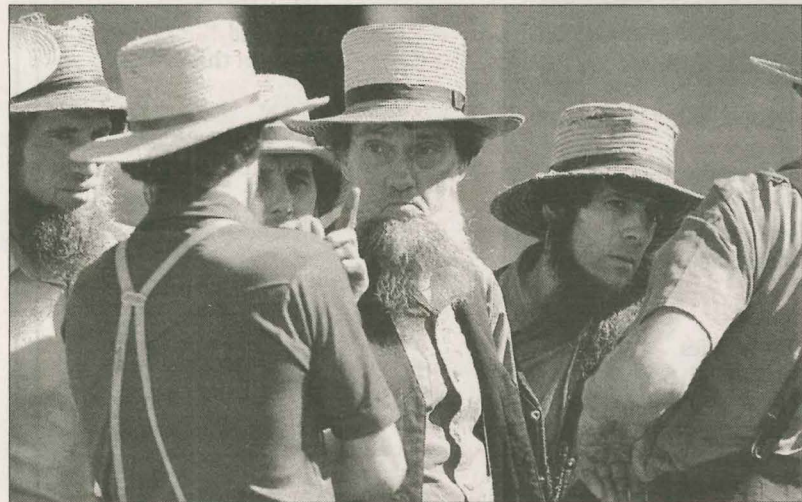
"Really the only way to answer this is to toss it in the Lord's lap and say, 'You take care of it, I can't,'" Ben said after turning to the boy.

"But you may ask Him to please carry us through," Mary said.

As the boys began to yawn, Ben pulled a little black prayer book from the shelf. He pointed to a prayer often read at Amish funerals and provided an English translation.

"Glory Father, we thank Thee for all the blessings which Thou has bestowed upon the departed one, especially now that Thou has redeemed him from this wicked world and brought his sorrows to an end, and as we trust, has taken his soul home to Thee."

PRAYER VISIT An Amish girl and her two Mennonite cousins stop by the West Nickel Mines school to pray at the scene of a shooting that left five girls dead. (RNS photo by Robert Sciarrino)



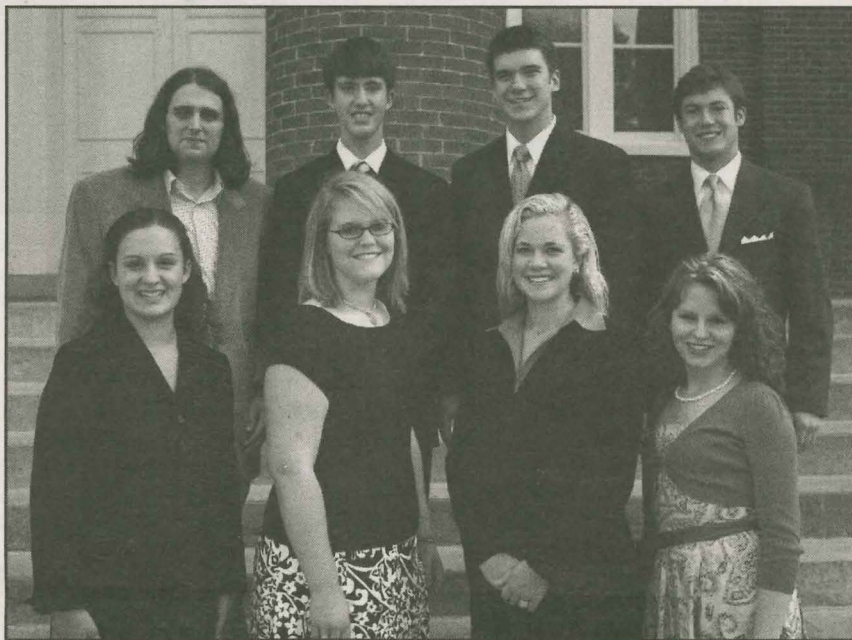
READY TO FORGIVE? Amish men gather outside the schoolhouse. "I think the Amish are much better prepared to cope with something like this than most Americans," said Donald Kraybill, an authority on Amish culture. (RNS photo by Tony Kurdzuk)

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Parks Baptist Scholars Program

The Parks Baptist Scholarship, offering full tuition, room and board, is the most prestigious scholarship offered by Georgetown College. Established in 1994 to pay tribute to former trustee Dr. Paul Parks '43 and his late wife, Phyllis, the Parks Baptist Scholarship recognizes highly qualified Baptist students who pursue an undergraduate degree at Georgetown College in preparation for lifelong learning, teaching, and Christian service.

————— **Georgetown College Congratulates and Welcomes** —————
Parks Baptist Scholars Fall '06



Back Row (left to right):

Adam Glover, Glasgow, KY, Class of 2007, Philosophy
Jacob Price, Somerset, KY, Class of 2010, Pulaski County High School
Tyler Stewart, Crestwood, KY, Class of 2008, Communication
Taylor Rains, Paducah, KY, Class of 2008, Political Science

Front Row (left to right):

Brittany Pappas, Bassett, VA, Class of 2007, Economics
Katie Boyd, Mayfield, KY, Class of 2010, Graves County High School
Sarah Schobel, Union, KY, Class of 2009, Education & Math
Mary Alice Birdwhistell, Lawrenceburg, KY, Class of 2009, English

"... Aside from the opportunity to associate with an incredible group of students, the (Parks) scholarship has allowed me to grow spiritually and given me several leadership opportunities that I might not have received at another college..."

-Adam Glover, Class of 2007

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