



WESTERN RECORDER

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FOR THE RECORD

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Amish newspaper expresses thanks to 'English' world

Harrisburg, Pa. (RNS)—Every Monday for more than 30 years, the Die Botschaft ("The Message") newspaper has gone into the mailboxes of Amish subscribers nationwide.

Filled with letters from correspondents across the country, the weekly publication prints information from the Amish, for the Amish.

Last week's issue, though, was an exception. The front page of Die Botschaft reaches out to the "English"—non-Amish—world.

"Thank You," reads the simple headline at the top of the page.

Under that is a three-paragraph message thanking the state police and emergency crews for their handling of the Oct. 2 Amish school shootings in Lancaster County.

The message also thanks members of both the English and Amish communities for their kind acts in the aftermath of the tragedy, and thanks people around the world for their donations and prayers on behalf of the victims and their families.

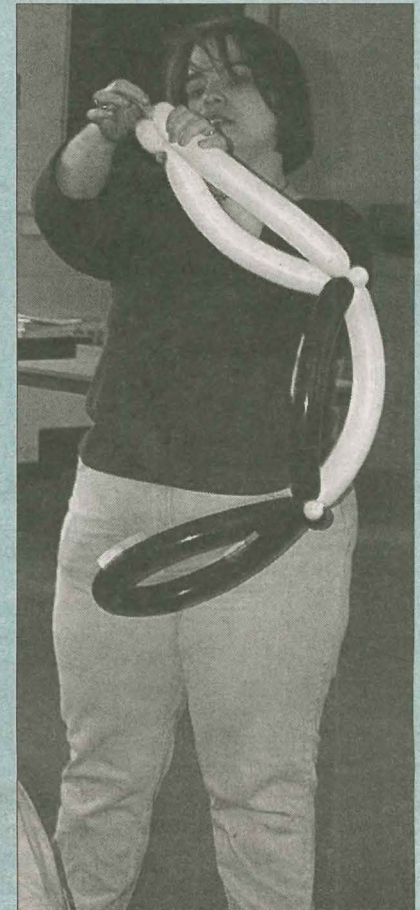
"It has never happened before. Never. This is very unusual," said the paper's editor, Elam Lapp, when asked when Die Botschaft last printed information aimed at the non-Amish community.

Equally unusual was Lapp's decision to contact a reporter at a non-Amish newspaper, offering a copy of the publication. The Amish customarily do not seek attention. In this instance, an exception was made in order to reach the world with the message of thanks, Lapp said.

"There really is no other way for us to reach out, except through the media. We could have printed the message the way we did, but if (the media) didn't pick it up, who is going to see it?" Lapp said.

The front page of last week's Die Botschaft also carries a prayer, two verses of the hymn "How Beautiful Heaven Must Be" and a short message on forgiveness.

Creativity 101



MINISTRY IMPACT The Kentucky Baptist Convention's recent Creative Ministries Workshop 101 at Union Baptist Church in Northern Kentucky highlighted the basics of drama, puppetry, mime and other creative ministries. ■ Above left: Ashley Nielsen presents an interpretive movement. ■ Above right: Sharon Kelley of Jester Ministries demonstrates how to create a balloon hat. A second 101 workshop will be held Nov. 4 at Bellevue Baptist Church in Owensboro. (Photos by Dannah Prather)

Creative ministries fit churches of all sizes, budgets

By Dannah Prather
Partnerships Editor

Union—Experts in drama, puppetry, mime, balloon sculpting and other creative ministries said Kentucky Baptists who think those efforts are only for big churches with big budgets should think again.

Several presenters at a recent Creative Ministry Workshop 101 held at Union Baptist Church in Northern Kentucky told the 100

participants: "Your only limits are the limits of your own imagination."

"It's not a show, it's a message," said Tom Smoot, director of the creative ministries group for the Kentucky Baptist Convention. "It's not a performance, it's a sermon."

The 101 workshops are designed to give participants a glimpse into several types of creative ministries to help them determine which ones

might work best for their church. The KBC also hosts Creative Ministries Festivals each spring featuring more advanced training and additional resources.

Kelly Wasson of Burgin led sessions on stage and puppet making and other behind-the-scenes skills. Wasson said throughout his Christian walk he has been part of, and ministered through, small □ See Creativity 101 ... Page 7

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, October 25.

Changing priorities lead many adults to quit church, survey finds

Nashville—Seeking to better understand why people stop attending church and what it would take to bring them back, LifeWay Research recently surveyed 469 "formerly churched adults."

The survey focused on those who regularly attended a Protestant church as an adult in the past but who no longer do so. The results indicate that, while some losses are inevitable, opportunities abound for churches to hold on to members who are headed for the door.

According to the study, 59 percent of formerly churched adults left their church because of "changes in life situation." While that might suggest that most losses are

outside of the church's control, the research indicates that is not necessarily the case, said Brad Waggoner, director of LifeWay Research.

Noting that the formerly churched provided more detailed reasons behind this decisions, Waggoner said, "It is interesting that the most prevalent reasons come down to personal priorities rather than an external change in the person's life."

The top two life-situation reasons adults stop attending are "simply got too busy to attend church" (19 percent) and "family/home responsibilities prevented church attendance" (17 percent).

The second most common cat-

egory of reasons adults leave the church is "disenchantment with pastor/church," accounting for withdrawal of 37 percent of the formerly churched.

Three specific sources of disenchantment within that category include stating that church members "seemed hypocritical" (17 percent), "were judgmental of others" (17 percent) or "the church was run by a clique that discouraged involvement" (12 percent). Those findings indicate that leadership and relational dynamics of a church can prove to be obstacles that prevent involvement.

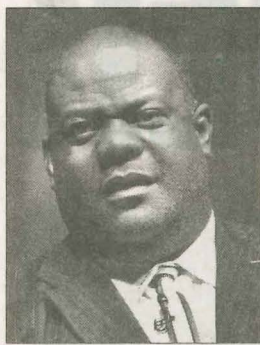
"While some may use disenchantment issues as a smokescreen to hide

behind, the large percent of the formerly churched who struggle with disenchantment deserve some honest attention," Waggoner said.

He noted that only two of the top 10 reasons include formerly churched adults admitting to spiritual causes, citing "church was not helping me to develop spiritually" (14 percent) and "stopped believing in organized religion" (14 percent).

The latter reflects creeping secularism, Waggoner suggested, and is underscored by the number of respondents who consider themselves "spiritual, but not religious" (24 percent) and "Christian, but not particularly devout" (42 percent). Fewer □ See Changing priorities ... Page 9

Southwestern takes stand against charismatic practices



"Since when did majority opinion dictate theological interpretation in SBC life beyond the Baptist Faith & Message?"

Southwestern Seminary trustee Dwight McKissic

Fort Worth, Texas (BP)—Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary will not knowingly endorse contemporary charismatic practices such as a private prayer language or hire professors who advocate the practice, according to a policy adopted by trustees Oct. 16.

Earlier this semester one of the seminary's new trustees preached a chapel message in which he defended the practice of a private prayer language. In an Aug. 29 sermon, Dwight McKissic, pastor of Cornerstone Baptist Church in Arlington, Texas, took issue with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board policy against appointing missionary candidates who engage in the practice.

With the latest action, Southwestern becomes at least the third Southern Baptist Convention entity to adopt a policy officially opposing extraordinary expressions of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. In addition to Southwestern and the IMB, the North American Mission Board has a similar policy.

Southwestern Seminary President Paige Patterson, former president of the SBC, described the prayer language issue as "ill-timed, inappropriate, unhelpful, unnecessarily divisive, and contrary to the generally accepted understandings and practices of Southern Baptists."

At Patterson's encouragement during a closed-session forum, trustees adopted a statement detailing the seminary's perspective on charismatic practices by a vote of 36-1. McKissic was the only trustee to vote against the measure.

In a letter addressing the trustee action, McKissic wrote, "I do not understand the agenda of those who wish to drive into the shadows those of us who are open to this area of the Spirit's work, as clearly attested in Scripture." (See related article.)

No charismatic professors

The seminary statement emphasized that the school wishes "to remain faithful to the biblical witness and its emphases, taking into careful account the historic positions of Baptists in general and Southern Baptists in particular."

"As it concerns private practices of devotion, these practices, if genuinely private, remain unknown to

Southern's leadership school seeks 'unified vision' for family ministry

Louisville (BP)—Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's School of Leadership and Church Ministry will alter its approach to equipping students for local church ministry by giving more attention to the family, new dean Randy Stinson told seminary trustees Oct. 10.

In recent years churches have fragmented families by segregating them according to gender, age or other categories, Stinson said. Southern Seminary hopes to change that by teaching future leaders how to integrate local church ministries in a way that builds healthier families and churches.

"Most local church ministries tend to act independently of one another," Stinson said. "You have a women's ministry doing its thing over here, and you have a men's min-

McKissic challenges trustee action

Fort Worth, Texas (BP)—In a five-page letter Oct. 16, Texas pastor Dwight McKissic set forth his opposition to a planned vote by trustees of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary to disassociate the institution from Pentecostal/charismatic doctrines and practices.

"My conscience and biblical convictions necessitate that I vote against our president's recommendation," McKissic, wrote in reference to Southwestern President Paige Patterson. When trustees voted on the issue, McKissic registered the lone opposing vote.

McKissic stated in the letter that he intends to maintain his friendship with Patterson, expressing appreciation for the Southern Baptist Convention's conservative shift that Patterson helped lead.

But, he asserted, the stance recommended by Patterson and the trustees' executive committee will tell "potential faculty, administrators, students, donors and the entire Southern Baptist family ... that

the general public and are, therefore, beyond the purview of Southwestern Seminary," the statement added. "Southwestern will not knowingly endorse in any way, advertise or commend the conclusions of the contemporary charismatic movement including 'private prayer language.' Neither will Southwestern knowingly employ professors or administrators who promote such practices."

Such gifts as speaking in tongues and healing are spoken of in several New Testament passages. However, many modern-day Protestants believe those gifts ceased with the passing of the first generation of Christian apostles. That belief, known as "cessationism," historically has been held by many Southern Baptists. However, Pentecostal and charismatic Christians, including some Southern Baptists, believe in the continued validity of such gifts—a belief known as "continualism."

McKissic, in his statement to fellow trustees, said the board's decision moves dangerously beyond the parameters required by the SBC's

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary is not a place where a diversity of views about the work of the Holy Spirit within the history and theology of Baptists is tolerated."

"De facto cessationist school"

McKissic claimed that the stance will shift "the historic position of Southwestern Seminary from a place of open and diverse theological discussion within the parameters of the Baptist Faith & Message to a de facto cessationist school" that believes some of the spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit have not been operative since the New Testament church.

Citing the statement's description of such practices as a private prayer language as "unnecessarily divisive," McKissic wrote, "The source of division in Southern Baptist life is not from those of us who want more of God's empowering presence in our lives, and are willing to seek His power earnestly. The source of division seems to

come from those who wish to silence and deny us the freedom to serve in a convention that has never in its history spoken definitively on this matter."

In his letter, McKissic referenced "other differences that threaten to divide us as a family," such as Calvinism, the end times and the question of whether "a woman should teach a man in any context."

"It is time for Southern Baptists to recognize our diversity on these matters," McKissic wrote, reiterating his call for the Southern Baptist Convention "as a whole to address this matter."

"I have been told that because the majority of Southern Baptists hold to the cessationist or semi-cessationist viewpoint, my (chapel) message was out of line with the majority of Southern Baptists," McKissic wrote in an earlier letter to trustee chairman Van McClain. "Since when did majority opinion dictate theological interpretation in SBC life beyond the Baptist Faith & Message?"

Call to "test the spirits"

Patterson noted that most Southern Baptists both acknowledge and advocate the practice of spiritual gifts as described in the New Testament. But faithfulness to the entirety of the New Testament requires the need to "test the spirits" to see if they are of God, he added.

He warned that some charismatic practices have been used improperly in churches, both in the modern day and in the apostolic era.

"Southern Baptists have always recognized true brothers and sisters in Christ within various charismatic groups and denominations," Patterson said. "In keeping with our historic Baptist convictions, we affirm the right of all to believe and to promote the convictions of their hearts."

Based on "best efforts" to interpret Scripture, he added, "Neither in the past nor in the present have many Baptists believed that the Pentecostal or charismatic movements represented an accurate representation of New Testament doctrine and practice."

"We can favor the unity of God's born-again saints, which does not involve compromise," Patterson said, "but we cannot countenance any ecumenical movement, whether it be the National Council of Churches or the pressure of the contemporary neo-charismatic perspectives."

Trustee chairman Van McClain of New York indicated no further statement will be issued by the trustee board on the subject.

"I believe the board has addressed the issue of the Aug. 29 chapel service by this statement," McClain said. "I believe Dr. Patterson handled the matter in an appropriate manner and there is no need for the board to make any other statement at this time."

With additional reporting by Associated Baptist Press

faith statement.

"The issue we now face as a family of Southern Baptists is whether or not we will follow a narrowing path of confessional latitude on theological matters not included in our statement of faith, the Baptist Faith & Message," he said.

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The new vision of local church ministry, Stinson said, will equip students to:

- Integrate women's ministries in local churches with children and youth ministries so that older women are teaching and mentoring younger women in a mold akin to the second chapter of Titus.

- Coordinate men's ministries that work directly with ministries to women, children and youth to provide male leadership for families, widows and orphans as reflected in James 1:27.

- Promote a philosophical unity between the various ministries of

the local church to include unified views of marriage and parenting as well as a unified vision of gender roles in the home and church.

- Equip and encourage husbands and fathers to serve as spiritual leaders in their homes.

- Aim all local church ministries toward evangelism. "I see this operating in a way that there is a specific evangelistic component in all of this," Stinson said, "so that when a father recognizes that there is a young boy in the church that doesn't have a father, he reaches out to that young man, so when he takes his boys to a ballgame or a fishing trip, he is bringing this young man with him and in turn will eventually meet the boy's father and will eventually have the opportunity to share the gospel with that father."

Draper, Hemphill to speak at KBC annual meeting

Louisville—Jimmy Draper, retired president of LifeWay Christian Resources, and Ken Hemphill, national strategist for the Southern Baptist Convention's Empowering Kingdom Growth strategy, will be among featured speakers at next month's Kentucky Baptist Convention annual meeting.

Highlighting the theme, "Kentucky Baptists Connect: Leading with Integrity and Godly Vision," the Nov. 14-15 meeting will be held at First Baptist Church of Bowling Green.

This year's theme continues the KBC's Kentucky Baptists Connect initiative which was unveiled at the 2004 annual meeting. Kentucky Baptists Connect is a five-year emphasis focused on renewing commitments to evangelism, missions, leadership training, church growth, networking, and relationships with Baptist agencies and institutions.

Primary business items during the two-day meeting include the election of state convention officers, consideration of a proposed \$24 million Cooperative Program budget goal for 2007-08 and a nine-point recommendation presented by a special Cooperative Program study committee to the KBC Mission Board.

Presidential candidates

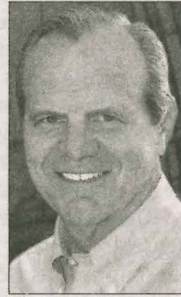
The election of a new KBC president and first vice president will be held during the Tuesday afternoon session. Two candidates have announced plans to be nominated for KBC president: Steve Ayers, pastor of Hillvue Heights Church in Bowling Green, and Darren Gaddis, pastor of Central Baptist Church in Corbin.

Ayers also will preach the convention sermon after the presidential election. Gaddis will preach the day before at the Kentucky Baptist Pastors' Conference.

The proposed CP budget is a 1.86 percent increase from the current budget goal of \$23,562,000. The proposal calls for distributing 63.3 per-



Jimmy Draper



Ken Hemphill

cent of CP gifts to KBC causes and 36.7 percent to SBC causes. The SBC allocation is a 0.35 percent increase over the current year as the KBC moves toward an SBC allocation of approximately 37.4 percent by the 2009-10 budget year.

The nine-point CP proposal was first adopted by state convention executive directors during their annual meeting in February. The recommendations were revised by SBC leaders and adopted by SBC messengers in June.

The proposal, which seeks to enhance Cooperative Program education and support among Southern Baptists, encourages "each church to give an increasing percentage of undesignated receipts through the Cooperative Program for five successive years beginning in 2007."

It also encourages "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."

In addition to Draper, Hemphill and Ayers, featured speakers will include KBC President Paul Chitwood, pastor of First Baptist Church of Mount Washington, who will speak on Tuesday morning, and immediate past KBC President Hershael York, who will lead a Tuesday evening "Celebrate Cooperation!" emphasis.

The convention's opening session also will feature several reports, in-

cluding a report on the results of Cross Over Kentucky, an evangelistic outreach event to be held prior to the annual meeting.

Ten workshops offered

This year's annual meeting also will include a choice of 10 Wednesday morning workshops:

- "Finishing Well: A Biblical Perspective on Faithful Leadership" led by Jimmy Draper, retired president of LifeWay Christian Resources.

- "KBC & Florida Baptist Convention Hispanic Partnership," led by Larry Baker, director of the KBC new work/associational missions department; Grundy Janes, ethnic/language consultant; and the KBC's regional Hispanic strategists.

- "Habitudes: Images that Form Leadership Habits and Attitudes," led by author Tim Elmore.

- "Women Leading with Integrity and Godly Vision," led by Shelly Johns, KBC women's/senior adult ministry associate, and Wanda Walker, adult consultant for Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union.

- "You Can Double Your Class," led by Josh Hunt, Sunday school growth expert and author.

- "Transforming Your Church through Ministry," led by David Crocker, pastor of Central Baptist Church in Fountain City, Tenn.

- "More than Sunday Morning: A Roundtable Discussion on the Role of Worship in Retaining New Members," led by Tog Goodson, director of the KBC worship/music department.

- "Models for Closing the Back Door," led by Ron Davis, pastor of Franklin Crossroads Baptist Church in Cecelia; John Mark Toby, pastor of Beacon Hill Baptist Church in Somerset; and Kevin Milburn, minister of education at Beacon Hill Church.

- "Connecting People to Christ through Evangelistic Preaching," led by Hershael York, pastor of Buck Run Baptist Church in Frankfort and professor of Christian preaching at

Pastors focus on integrity, vision

Louisville—Highlighting the theme "Leading with Integrity and Godly Vision," Kentucky Baptists' 2006 Pastors' Conference will be held Nov. 13 at First Baptist Church of Bowling Green.

"Hopefully this conference will provide encouragement, fellowship and a time to recommit our focus on connecting people to Jesus Christ," said Pastors' Conference President John Mark Toby, pastor of Beacon Hill Baptist Church in Somerset.

The annual conference, held the day before the Kentucky Baptist Convention annual meeting convenes, will include an afternoon session from 1 to 4:30 p.m., and an evening session from 6 to 9 p.m.

Speakers on Monday afternoon include Adam Dooley, pastor of Red Bank Baptist Church in Chattanooga, Tenn.; Chuck Rowless, dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Church Growth at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville; Richard Gaines, pastor of Consolidated Baptist Church in Lexington; Darren Gaddis, pastor of Central Baptist Church in Corbin, and a candidate for KBC president; and O.S. Hawkins, president of GuideStone Financial Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Speakers on Monday evening are Dan Garland, pastor of Crestwood Baptist Church in Oldham County; Thomas Hammond, director of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board's Personal and Mass Evangelism Unit; and Ken Hemphill, national strategist for the Southern Baptist Convention's Empowering Kingdom Growth strategy.

Worship music will be led by Marvin Reynolds, worship pastor of Beacon Hill Baptist Church in Somerset.

In addition to Toby, conference officers include President-elect Floyd Paris, pastor of Unity Baptist Church in Ashland, and Secretary Adam Greenway, pastor of The Baptist Church at Andover in Lexington.

For more information, visit <http://www.kybaptist.org/pastorsconference>.

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

- "Using Computer Technology in Bible Study and Sermon Preparation," led by John Fallahee, ministry relations representative for Logos Bible Software.

For more information about the annual meeting, visit www.kybaptist.org/annualmeeting.

Compiled from reporting by Editor Trennis Henderson and Brenda Smith of the KBC communications department

Skip Alexander, Kevin Smith to be KBC first vice president nominees

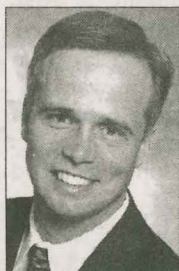
By Trennis Henderson
Editor

Bowling Green—Skip Alexander, pastor of Campbellsville Baptist Church, and Kevin Smith, pastor of Watson Memorial Baptist Church in Louisville, will be nominated next month as Kentucky Baptist Convention first vice president.

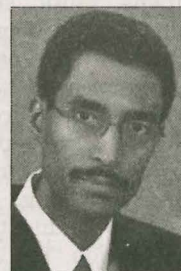
Alexander, who served as KBC second vice president in 2003-04, will be nominated by retired pastor Wendell Romans of Glasgow Baptist Church. Smith, who was named earlier this year as an assistant professor of church history at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, will be nominated by Bill Henard, pastor of Porter Memorial Baptist Church in Lexington.

Romans described Alexander as "an excellent speaker, a good thinker."

"I think with his personality and wonderful way that he gets along with people, he would be a winning force," Romans added. "He has all the leadership qualities that the convention could use and be made better by."



Skip Alexander



Kevin Smith

Henard noted that Smith is "an intelligent young man" who "has a commitment to convention work and wants to be involved in the convention."

"With the emphasis on trying to get younger pastors involved in our convention, Kevin is a good representative of younger pastors," Henard added.

Alexander, 40, said he was approached by several people about being nominated for first vice president.

Describing himself as "a product of Kentucky Baptist life," he noted, "I'm a Kentucky Baptist pastor trying to lead effective change through increased baptisms and Cooperative

Program giving."

Alexander has been pastor of Campbellsville Baptist Church since 2002. The church, which gives 13 percent of undesignated receipts through the Cooperative Program, has given more than \$4 million through CP during the church's history. The church reported 27 baptisms in 2004-05.

Alexander previously was pastor of West Broadway Baptist Church in Louisville and Salem Baptist Church in Shelbyville. A graduate of Georgetown College and Southern Seminary, he currently is pursuing a DMin degree from Samford University's Beeson Divinity School. He preached the 2003 KBC annual sermon, is a member of Western Recorder's board of directors and has served on the KBC Mission Board.

Smith, 39, said immediate past KBC President Hershael York, a fellow professor at Southern, suggested he consider being nominated for first vice president.

Smith has been pastor of Watson Memorial Baptist Church since 2004. The church, which previously was affiliated with the Progressive Nation-

al Baptist Convention, became a KBC church two years ago.

Giving approximately 1 percent through the Cooperative Program last year, Smith said the church has adopted a "3-6-9 plan" to increase CP giving to 3 percent this year and add an additional 3 percent each of the next two years. The church reported nine baptisms in 2003-04.

He said one of his goals would be to assist other African-American churches considering KBC affiliation.

"I see this as an opportunity to show the KBC is open to involving churches in missions in a cooperative way all over the state," Smith said. "I'd like the opportunity to show the oneness of Kentucky Baptists."

Smith is a former associate minister at St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church in Louisville. He is a graduate of Hampton (Va.) University and Church of God Theological Seminary in Cleveland, Tenn., and is pursuing a PhD degree at Southern Seminary. He was named this year to fill an unexpired term on the KBC Committee on Committees.

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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Traveling mercies around the globe

By **Erich Bridges**

Richmond, Va. (BP)—When the pedestrian crosswalk light turns green on the broad avenues of Moscow, you better walk fast—but not before the three or four cars running the red light race through the intersection.

If you still have the nerve to step into the street, you have got 20 seconds to cross 10 lanes; the digital counter on the crosswalk light tells you so. Meanwhile, hundreds of Russian drivers wait for green to floor it.

Moscow traffic is a bit intimidating, but it's a model of safety compared to Cairo or Mumbai or Bangkok. I could tell you some white-knuckle stories of traveling overseas. Many a missionary kid, though, could tell you lots of better ones. They deal with dangerous roads and crazy drivers every day.

War, chaos, terrorism and hostility to the gospel are realities many missionary families face in today's world. By far the most frequent

threat to life and health, however, is the mundane—yet often hair-raising—risk of getting from one place to another.

"Upon our safe arrival home we were praising the Lord (for surviving) all the near-misses we had," reported a Southern Baptist missionary in South Asia after one auto trip. She told of barely avoiding collisions with a woman running to catch a bus, two large lizards, several cows, a policeman on a motorbike—and a large, red bus barreling straight for their mission vehicle.

A worker in East Asia describes the adventure of public transportation to far-flung cities to share the gospel:

"You board a bus with about 30 other people. There is lots of smoking, lots of throwing up. It takes about nine hours to get to the closest city.

"It's winding roads. We pass over a couple of spots over 12,000 feet high. ... The first couple of times

COMMENTARY

True peacemakers

The Amish of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, may be out of step with the world in regards to using modern technology, but they are far ahead of the rest of the world in what is more important—the ability to forgive those who wrong them, even kill them. What an example of Christ-like love!

Overcoming evil with good is foreign to most individuals and nations. Forgiveness is a bold, transforming peacemaking initiative which is rarely used in today's world.

Getting revenge, which begets more violence, currently is the world's standard operating procedure. Blessed are the Amish peacemakers; they are truly God's children.

Paul L. Whiteley Sr.
Louisville

Acceptable worship

In the Oct. 17 Baptist Forum letter titled "Too high a price?", the writer refers to an observation made in a previous article that stated "worship in the church, when found to be boring by young adults, needs to be reshaped and formatted to attract those who find it boring." He then goes on

to say that many churches have "given away worship essentials for guitars, drums, blue jeans and microphones."

Since when are an organ, piano and hymnal "worship essentials"? There was a day when the piano, considered a saloon instrument, was considered vile by the church. Who determines what is essential for worship?

According to Scripture, God and God alone determines what is an

you're fearful for your life. After a while you realize this is how it works here; near-misses are kind of an everyday occurrence."

One of the ongoing miracles of modern missions is the rarity of fatal travel accidents among missionary families. They occur, to be sure. But the infrequency of deadly incidents is nothing short of amazing.

The only explanations that make sense to me are prayer—and God's merciful protection.

Southern Baptist missionaries and their families need our prayers more than ever. As their numbers rise, as they push farther into difficult areas, as relentless global urbanization increases the number of cars on congested roads, the daily risks of travel inevitably will climb.

Ask God to guide the footsteps of His missionary servants—and their children. Ask Him to shine a light along their paths and to protect them from harm. They carry a precious cargo: the light of salvation to the nations.

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

acceptable form of worship. Scripture, not tradition, not preference or culture should determine our worship practices.

The writer of "Too high a price?" would likely agree with the previous sentence, if it did not include "tradition."

Rick Long
Frankfort

Book is 'must' read

Thank you for the Sept. 26 book review of "The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief." I had wondered if the book would be reviewed.

I think it is one of the most relevant and important books that has been published in several years. Of course, many will disagree with it. However, in this day it is a "must" read.

Harold Greenfield
Princeton

My top 10 reasons to attend KBC

Here are my top 10 reasons for participating in the Kentucky Baptist Convention annual meeting Nov. 14-15 at First Baptist Church of Bowling Green:

10. To experience the exhibits and bookstore, and connect with various ministries (and collect free promotional items).

9. To network with fellow ministers in auxiliary meetings, such as associational directors of missions, musicians, ministers of education, ministers of youth, young leaders, annuitants and others.

8. To strengthen relationships with friends and develop new friendships (and discover new ideas for ministry, a sermon idea or a significant new book).

7. To be inspired by the theme: "Kentucky Baptists Connect—Leading with Integrity and Godly Vision" (based on Psalm 78:72). It seems that too many people in ministry are making unwise choices these days. Choose to live with integrity in your

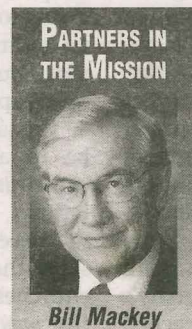
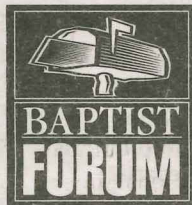
calling and follow God's vision with all your heart and mind (see 1 Corinthians 10:13).

6. To experience creative insights and learn best practices for ministry through Connect Workshops on Wednesday morning. There will be special guest leaders, including Jimmy Draper, Tim Elmore, Josh Hunt and many other top presenters. Arrange for church staff and lay leaders to attend so your church can benefit from all 10 conferences.

If you get three ideas that you can use in your ministry, it will have been worth your investment.

5. To participate in Cross Over. On Saturday before the convention, there will be door-to-door witnessing and use of a prayer request questionnaire. Prayer will open many doors to witness based on needs. A new Hispanic church also has been constituted and will be dedicated Sunday, Nov. 12. I plan to participate.

4. To celebrate missions on Tuesday night, Nov. 15, at 6:50 p.m., with



FAMILY

Have you clearly determined how much is enough?

By **Jeremy White**

FINANCIAL FORUM

I've been fortunate to write several books with Ron Blue, a well-respected former financial advisor and current president of Christian Financial Professionals Network. In

the books we've written, Ron says that all financial planning comes down to the question: "How much is enough?"

When I ask the question "How much is enough?" most people immediately start thinking about how much money they need to live on or to save or to achieve their long-term goals. Instead of thinking about minimums, think of a maximum standard of living.

It's so ingrained in us as Americans that the more we make, the more we spend. It's the "natural" progression of moving up to nicer houses, bigger cars, more luxuries. When there's a raise in pay, an inheritance, an improvement in business, you're "supposed" to change neighborhoods, get a boat, save more for retirement and enjoy yourself. This is just what prosperous Americans do and it's rarely questioned—even in the church.

The Bible describes our insatiable appetite: "All things are wearisome, more than one can say. The eye never has enough of seeing, nor the ear its fill of hearing." (Ecclesiastes 1:8).

How much is enough? What is your finish line? Will there be a point where you've reached your maximum lifestyle and then can give far more? How much is enough to save? How much is enough to give?

I know you're expecting me to provide you with financial answers, but these questions are for you to answer. They are deeper than merely financial questions; they are spiritual questions involving contentment, faith and eternal perspective. I'm going to let the Lord lead you in answering these questions because I don't really know the answer for you.

If someone regarded as both the richest and wisest man had something to say about this topic, then I'd want to hear it. Despite the fact that Solomon was going through a mid-life crisis and was a bit depressed perhaps, he addressed this topic:

"Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless" (Ecclesiastes 5:10).

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

Someone will teach your kids about sex. Will it be you?

Q: As a Christian parent, why is it important for me to talk to my children about sex?

Sex saturates our society, and children are not immune to that influence. Music, movies, television and friends all contribute to a child's knowledge, understanding and attitude about sex. As a result, most children already know more about sex than you think they do, and perhaps than you wish they did. However, much of what they know is wrong. Even if the information is correct, it probably is devoid of the values and context that God intends sex to have.

Many parents make the mistake of waiting too long to begin talking with their children about sex and sexuality. They fear talking with their children for a variety of reasons, including their own embarrassment. As our kids would say, Get over it! Remember that the "sex talk" as we often refer to it needs to be an ongoing conversation as opposed to a one-time, "check-that-off-my-list" exchange. Beginning the conversation early makes it easier for children to come to you as questions about sex arise.

Younger children need to know that boys and girls are alike in some ways, but different in others. They need to know that sex is a part of God's plan for all people—something private, but not dirty. Middle children need to know the basic facts of how life begins. Sure, they'll probably think it's gross, but they also will appreciate being told the truth. Older children need to know about the changes their bodies will experience as they enter adolescence and puberty begins. Frame all discussions within a context of love, family and commitment.

Someone will teach your children about sex. It might as well be you!—David Garrard

Q: There's a guy in my Sunday school class who always wants to talk to me about his personal problems. I have a wife and child at home and I'm starting to feel like I'm not there for them or for myself. Where does balance come in regarding God's call for us to love others?

You are to be commended for reaching out to the hurting. This might be a lesson in the difference between providing pastoral care (exercising the gift of caring for someone) and pastoral counseling (structured time involving a specialist trained in counseling skills).

Pastoral care usually is expected of church staff, deacons and occasionally other leaders in a Sunday School class. For example, when there is a sickness, death or some other loss, the pastor or church member practices "being there" for the hurting person. Pastoral care can happen over lunch, in the hallway or with a scheduled phone call. Everyone needs a little pastoral care now and then, based on what happens in his or her life. It is one of the reasons for the community of faith.

Pastoral counseling, on the other hand, is a specialized discipline. For someone who has had the supervision of a nationally accredited agency, such as the American Association of Pastoral Counselors, there have been vital classes and supervision in order to know best how to listen to hurting people in a clinical setting.

One thing pastoral counselors and individuals engaged in pastoral care have in common is the need for personal boundaries. Whether you are a layperson acting as a hurting person's friend or their professional counselor, you need to be clear about how much you have to give. You are not a bottomless pit of life for others. At some point, you have to refresh yourself. The most popular book on the subject of boundaries is "Boundaries" by Cloud and Townsend. In that book and others, look for suggestions on how to set boundaries that ultimately are best for the other person and vital for yourself.—James Stillwell

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It's time to say, 'Never again'—and mean it

As occasionally happens, this is not the editorial I initially intended to write this week. But once in a while an issue surfaces that demands immediate attention. Such was the case this past week.

A page 10 article details the efforts of 24 evangelical leaders urging President Bush and the American public to stop genocide in the Darfur region of western Sudan. There are few crises on the global front that require a stronger response.

For anyone unfamiliar with the details of the Darfur crisis, widespread torture, rape and murder have been centered in a Muslim region of western Sudan since 2003. The violent attacks by the Sudanese military and government-backed militias began in response to rebel activity in the region.

The number of deaths ranges from 200,000 to 400,000 with 2.5 million to 3.5 million people displaced by the violence, according to various reports. The U.S. government declared the attacks extensive enough to be considered genocide. A typical dictionary definition of genocide is "the deliberate extermination of a people or nation."

Since these atrocities have been raging for three years, what is the sudden urgency to address the issue?

For one thing, according to Baptist Press, the United Nations adopted a resolution in August that "authorized a peacekeeping force for Darfur to replace an underfunded and resource-short African Union force assigned to protect Darfuri refugees. Yet the Sudanese government continues to block the deployment of the U.N. peacekeepers to the region. So the killing and mayhem continue."

Another key issue is the growing public outrage over the lack of American and international intervention in the area. The simple fact is that if such diverse evangelical leaders as Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, and Brian McLaren, a leader of the emerging

church movement, can set aside other differences to focus on Darfur, other Christians should take note and follow suit.

Among other notable participants in the "Evangelicals for Darfur" coalition are author Tony Campolo; Ted Haggard, president of the National Association of Evangelicals; Bill Hybels, pastor of Willow Creek Church; William Shaw, president of the National Baptist Convention, USA; and Jim Wallis, president of Sojourners/Call to Renewal. Their willingness to speak with one voice offers a hint of the vital issues that could be addressed through true bipartisan initiatives in Washington as well as sincere cooperation among various denominations and other groups.

In a commentary published a few weeks ago in the Western Recorder, Baptist ethicist

David Gushee posed the question, "Will anyone act?"

Citing past genocide during the Holocaust of World War II, Cambodia in the 1970s, Rwanda in 1994 and Bosnia in 1995, Gushee noted that the world repeatedly responds, "Never again."

"There always are reasons why genocide happens and no one does anything," he wrote. "But those reasons never look real good when the bodies begin to pile up and we prepare to say 'never again' once again. It is time for the United States to lead the world in addressing the Darfur crisis before it is too late."

But the sad reality is that Darfur likely won't become a top priority on Capitol Hill in the midst of a hotly-contested election season. As a result, thousands more will suffer torture and death.

The Evangelicals for Darfur coalition has sounded a clear call for President Bush and other leaders to insist on the deployment of U.N. peacekeeping forces in Darfur. Will you do your part to call attention to the issue and urge government leaders to take a strong, immediate moral stand?

It's time once again to say, "Never again." And this time, we need to mean it.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

Three signs of optimism for churches

By Thom Rainer

Nashville (BP)—I am deeply concerned about the American church. Evangelistic effectiveness is waning. Biblical illiteracy is growing. And many of the 400,000 churches in the United States seem to be caught up in activities with little purpose or meaning.

You might be surprised that I would even begin to suggest that the American church has reasons for optimism. Indeed, I must be careful in making such claims. Our initial work at LifeWay Research indicates that the American church is still in a mess. I cannot claim that significant negative trends are reversing.

But what compels me to write about reasons for hope are the exceptions we are discovering in our research. Some of the stories are just too good to neglect. Please allow me to categorize these exceptions as three signs for optimism.

The first sign is that we are finding more churches that are focusing on conversion growth rather than total growth. For years the most heralded churches in America have been those that are growing the fastest numerically. But, upon closer examination, these churches often are growing at the expense of others. This transfer growth, rather than conversion growth, is the source of the large numbers reported by the churches. Still, we are see-

ing hopeful signs as many church leaders are asking serious questions about their methodologies and theology. They have a growing desire to impact the world of the lost and the unchurched rather than gaining members from other churches.

If more church leaders begin to move in this direction, we may truly see a significant evangelistic impact.

Second, in a growing number of churches we are seeing a concern for both meaningful membership and evangelistic outreach. The more common pattern we documented in the past focuses on one at the neglect of the other. In other words, some of the churches with the most focused resources on evangelism have done little to develop new converts into fruit-bearing disciples. Or, in the desire to see decisions, these churches have sometimes produced unregenerate members, or members who are not really Christians.

Yet other churches are focused on regenerate and meaningful membership while neglecting evangelism. The result is a small church of non-evangelistic but otherwise dedicated disciples.

Imagine what a church could be if it had the fires of evangelism and the devotion to produce true disciples.

A third and hopeful sign is a growing desire for more significant and deeper teaching and preach-

ing. I recently was visiting a church where the pastor of 15 years lamented that many members sitting under his preaching for his entire tenure were still, by their own admission, woefully ignorant of biblical doctrine. I commend him for stating his clear decision to change the ministry of the church and his preaching ministry so that the riches of God's Word would be consistently taught and preached.

My lamentations of the past are still valid. The American church as a whole is hardly evangelistic at all. Membership is so inconsequential in many denominations, including my own, that a "good attendance day" is when only half of the purported saints show up. And biblical ignorance among evangelicals is pervasive.

Yet I have taken careful note of the exceptions. As more people take note of these incredible churches, more will emulate them. And in doing so, they will not simply be copying yet another church growth fad or idea. Instead, they will be emulating a healthy New Testament church.

The trends are not sufficient to declare a new direction of the American church. But these exceptions give me hope. Perhaps God is not yet done with our churches. Perhaps the exceptions will become the rule. Perhaps the best is yet to come.

Such is my prayer.

Thom Rainer is president of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention

Creativity 101: Ministry for churches of all sizes, budgets

Continued from page 1

churches. He understands financial limitations.

"That's where 80 percent of all Southern Baptists are," he said.

Wasson's first session was on constructing stages for puppet shows. The most basic—which would accommodate one or two puppeteers and is ideal for Sunday school classes—starts at an unlikely place: the local funeral home.

"Every casket comes wrapped in cardboard," he said. The wrapper is heavy enough to stand without additional support but also can be cut and scored with X-acto knives or box cutters to create doors, windows and other features. He said contact paper works well to cover the "stage" and new paper can be applied to change the look for future presentations.

(See related article on how to construct a larger, sturdier stage to accommodate more puppeteers.)

Professionally made puppets can be expensive, but a ministry can put on its first show without a major cash investment, Wasson said. When he began making puppets, his first stop was the local library where he checked out a book on puppet making, and also researched catalogs from which to order supplies and kits.

His daughter created a puppet from a paper towel core by covering it in construction paper and drawing a comical face with markers. She then slipped a small "collar" of construction paper attached to a Popsicle stick over the core. By moving the stick up and down with one finger, the puppet "speaks."

"Sock puppets are still good," Wasson said, adding that by taking the time to sew and stuff "arms" on the side of a sock, then attaching a small dowel rod to one of the arms, the creator has added personality and movement to an otherwise "ordinary" puppet.

For preschoolers, puppets made from felt—and that have moveable mouths—are easy for children to make themselves. "The kids have ownership. It's not just about a puppet, it's about creating a personality."

When children outgrow interest in stuffed toys, Wasson suggests, instead of tossing out the toys, remove the stuffing and use the "skin" to create a puppet.

Using a method Jesus perfected

Leading a session on "object lessons," Julie Bauscher encouraged adults and children to find ways to illustrate Bible truths through everyday objects.

"The Lord used object lessons in His teaching," Bauscher said, using Luke 6:41 as one example: "Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but don't notice the log in your own eye?"

"Jesus could have said, 'Don't judge others,' but He used an illustration, Bauscher added. She noted that object lessons "allow for recall."

Key to presenting object lessons is Scripture, she said. "Make sure you have your Bible with you and make that connection" back to Scripture, she said.

For the session, Bauscher brought



IMAGINATION IN ACTION Caela Roads, 14, of Verona, attentively watches balloon artist Sharon Kelley create a balloon hat.

dozens of small objects and placed them on a table in the classroom. After giving participants tips on how to develop object lessons, she asked each person to select one of the items and develop a one-minute lesson.

A small, plastic toy trumpet represented the Second Coming; a fabric butterfly, the transformation through salvation; and protective glasses represented spiritual blindness.

Bauscher said believers should look for opportunities to use object lessons to share the gospel, because people unfamiliar with the Bible need a familiar reference. "You don't have to be in a formal setting," she said. "You could be with friends hanging out. This comes naturally."

"Idiot-proof" art mentors youth

With a plastic pump and pocketful of balloons, Sharon Kelley and many other balloon sculptors have an open door to share the gospel.

A community, or a country, where people treat Christians with suspicion will welcome good-hearted people who only want to make children of any age smile by giving them a piece of balloon art, she noted.

Kelley's husband, Terry, began clowning, juggling, illusion and balloon sculpting nearly 20 years ago. She joined the effort—Jester Ministries—about 10 years ago.

"It always draws a crowd," Sharon Kelley said. She led sessions on pocket magic, basic balloon art and balloon hats at the recent workshop.

With an investment of approximately \$125, a congregation with a team of five willing learners can start a balloon ministry, Kelley said.

Her first recommendation to beginners is to find an established balloon ministry willing to help train the team.

"They need to see someone do it," Kelley said. "I had a real hard time learning from diagrams." Also important is learning the proper technique to twist balloons so the team will not develop Repeated Stress Injury.

"I don't want any of our students to get carpal tunnel (syndrome) from

twisting balloons for the Lord," Kelley said.

If a congregation cannot locate an established ministry nearby, Kelley said she and her husband are available to help train teams.

Although many "veteran" balloon sculptors have the lung capacity to inflate dozens of balloons in one sitting, inflating by mouth can cause injury if the balloon deflates back into a person's lungs. Kelley recommends that teams invest in double-action pumps that cost from \$6 to \$10 each.

Ordinary birthday party-type balloons found in drug stores or general merchandise stores are not recommended because in the shipping process they can go from extreme heat to extreme cold several times before purchasing, she said. This makes the balloons weak and prone to popping.

Jester Ministries recommends ordering Qualtex or Granger brands that ship directly from the manufacturer. A bag of 260 balloons of assorted colors can cost as little as \$6. "If you have balloons left over that you aren't going to use right away, seal them in an airtight bag and put them in the refrigerator," Kelley said.

In addition to a crowd-pleasing outreach ministry, balloon sculpting is a way to mentor Christian youth, she said. "You're teaching a lot of responsibility."

Because balloons are a choking hazard, team members never should give a child under age 8 a balloon, Kelley said. "You give it to the parent ... (which) is great because, with the balloon, you give them a card from your church. That way you are connecting with the parent and the child."

Describing balloon art as "idiot proof," Kelley said Jester Ministries has developed many resources to help congregations start or grow their own ministries. Resources include books, DVDs and hands-on training. The Kelleys also can order pumps and balloons in cost-saving bulk. For details about Jester Ministries, visit www.jesterministries.org or call (502) 966-3993.

The final Creative Ministries Workshop 101 is Nov. 4 at Bellevue Baptist Church in Owensboro

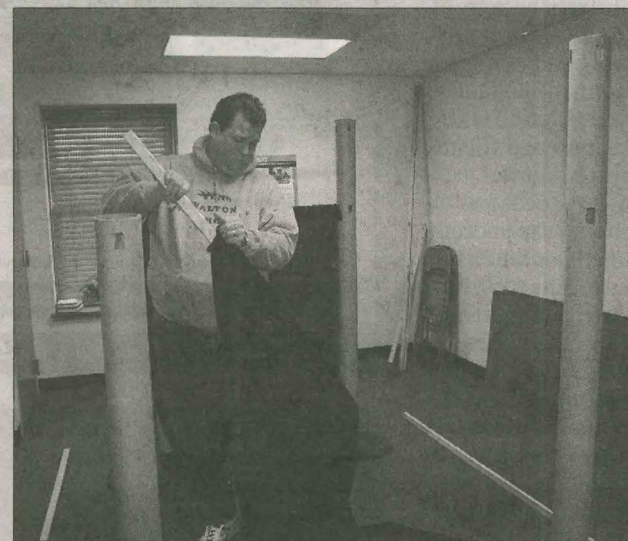
Setting the stage on a shoestring

To construct a large stage to accommodate multiple puppeteers, Kelly Wasson suggests starting at a nearby carpet or home improvement store.

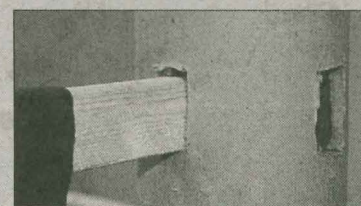
The heavy cardboard cores around which carpeting is rolled make excellent stage supports, he noted. Remaining materials can be purchased at a local hardware, lumber or other home improvement store. A drill or jigsaw creates notches through which 1x2 furring strips are threaded.

Available at most home improvement stores, furring strips can cost as little as 90 cents each, Wasson said. The stage he assembled at the workshop used two strips that were four feet long, and two more that were eight feet long. The carpet cores are slipped over 2x4s attached to flat particleboard plates that resemble baseball bases.

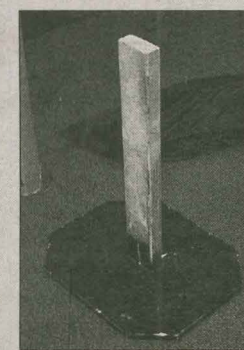
To drape the stage, Wasson recommends upholstery-weight material. If a store does not have low-priced remnants in black, "buy whatever they have and dye it in the washing machine," he suggested.



BEHIND THE SCENES Pete MacAdams threads fabric through furring strips to assemble a sample puppet stage at the recent Creative Ministries Workshop 101 event held at Union Baptist Church. MacAdams and his wife work with youth at New Bethel Baptist Church in Verona.



■ **ABOVE:** Cores around which commercial carpeting is wrapped make sturdy stage supports. ■ **RIGHT:** To assemble, slip the cores over bases made from 2x4s and particle board.



Bush signs bill restricting Internet gambling activity

Washington (BP)—President Bush signed into law Oct. 13 a measure restricting Internet gambling.

The legislation became law when the president signed the Security and Accountability for Every Port (SAFE Port) Act in a White House ceremony. That bill to increase protection for America's ports included the Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act, which requires financial institutions to block credit card and other payments to Internet wagering businesses, which primarily are located overseas.

Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, applauded Bush for his action and commended Congress for its passage of the anti-gambling legislation.

"All friends of families should be pleased with this measure," Land said. "It will certainly help insulate homes from a parasitic addiction to gambling that sucks the life out of families and destroys marriages."

"Thousands of families have faced financial ruin and bankruptcy because of one of the fastest-growing addictions in the county," he said. "This legislation will make it more difficult for these Internet gambling predators to reach into the pockets of America's families and steal the future of children and spouses."

Americans were expected to pay \$5.9 billion, almost half of the \$12 billion wagered worldwide on Internet gambling, to overseas, online casinos this year, bill sponsors noted. Online gambling sites frequently act as fronts for money laundering, drug trafficking and financing for terrorists, they added.

The legislation requires the Treasury Department to publish regulations that would require financial institutions to bar transactions between U.S. bettors and online gambling companies. Violators could be fined or penalized.

Rally challenges conservative Christians to vote Nov. 7

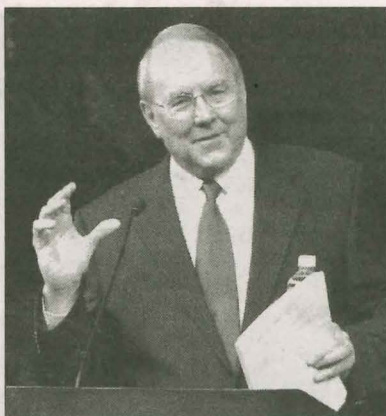
Nashville (BP)—Christian conservatives must turn out in November to vote for candidates who will support biblical values, pro-family leaders said at a high-energy rally in Nashville Oct. 16.

The "Stand for the Family" rally was sponsored by Focus on the Family Action and held before a near-capacity crowd of approximately 2,700 people at Two Rivers Baptist Church that gave the speakers dozens of standing ovations. Previous rallies have been held in Pittsburgh and Minneapolis.

The rally was held just three weeks before voters in Tennessee and seven other states will go the polls to vote on constitutional marriage amendments. Nationwide, voters will decide which political party controls the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate.

"This election will be decided by which side gets their base motivated and gets their base out to vote," Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, told the crowd. "That is why the liberal media has abandoned any semblance of objectivity ... to launch an all-out attack on values voters and on the candidates of values voters to seek to suppress our vote."

Focus on the Family founder James Dobson said there is a concerted effort by some to use the Mark Foley scandal to keep Christian conservatives home on Nov. 7, Election Day. But Dobson said such issues as



RALLY Urging conservative Christians to vote in the Nov. 7 elections, Focus on the Family's James Dobson noted, "I'm going to cast my vote. ... Are you?" (BP photo by Kent Harville)

the sanctity of human life and the direction of the Supreme Court are too important for conservatives not to vote.

"What Mark Foley did was unconscionable. It was terrible," Dobson said. "Thankfully he's gone. But tell me—now that he's gone, why is it still with us? Why are they still talking about it? Why are they trying to blame somebody for it? It is because they are using that to suppress the values voters."

Jerry Sutton, pastor of Two Rivers Baptist, said the stakes in the upcoming election are high.

"We're in a great civil war again today. It's not a war of bullets and guns but a war of ideas and arguments," Sutton said. "And it's ev-

ery bit as important as the Civil War that our nation fought almost 150 years ago. For us, it's a war against secularists ... who would like to take us back to the immorality of the days of ancient Rome.

"Our goal is to motivate every single believer—everyone who names the name of Jesus—to be involved in the political process. ... We will not be silent."

Dobson pointed to a headline in The New York Times that read, "Gay Marriage Losing Punch as Ballot Issue." The story asserted that "supporters of same-sex marriage this year are likely to be as mobilized as the opponents."

"There are these statements that values voters don't care this year and they're going to stay home," Dobson said. "I'm going to cast my vote anyway. Are you?"

Dobson cited five issues that he believes should motivate Christian conservatives to vote: gay marriage, control of the Supreme Court, the sanctity of human life, the legal bat-

tle over religious liberty and the war against Islamic militants.

Dobson said he has never seen the hatred for conservatives that exists in America today. He said he is "being bludgeoned" by some in the media.

"Why now?" he asked. "It is that they identify me as one of the people that helped turn out the values voters last time. And they're determined it isn't ever going to happen again."

Ken Hutcherson, pastor of Antioch Bible Church in Redmond, Wash., said Christians must not be identified with a political party but must vote according to their values.

"I am not a Republican. I am not a Democrat," he said. "I am a righteous man before God who stands for righteousness. ... Because we hold righteousness as our goal, ... we have the obligation, the responsibility, the call to make sure unrighteousness is not pushed upon a nation that was founded on God's Word and His principles."

Leading Small Groups?

What influences faith development in adults? How do small groups function? Why do some small groups bond and others melt away? What are effective techniques and approaches for teaching small groups?

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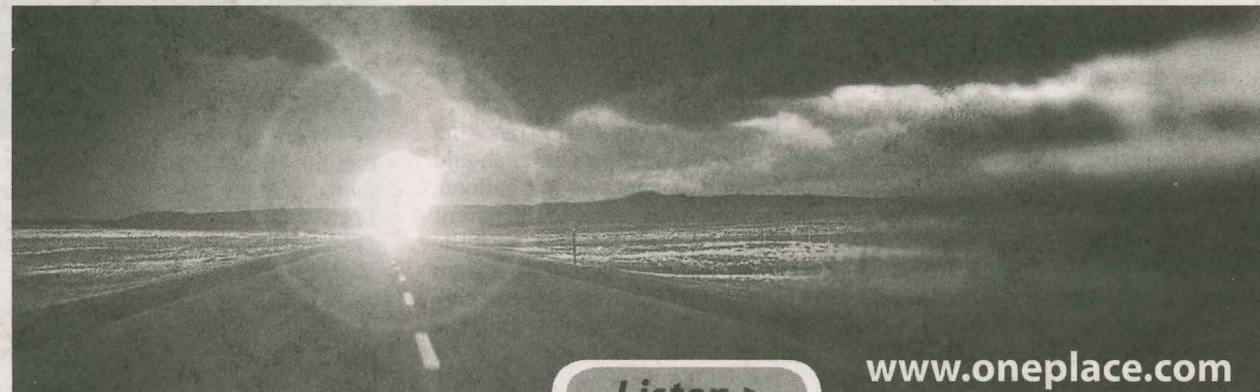
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Survey: Most formerly churched adults open to returning

Nashville—More than two-thirds of formerly churched adults are open to the idea of attending church regularly again, according to a recent study by LifeWay Research.

"We were delighted to see such a large percentage of the formerly churched willing to consider church again in the future," said Scott McConnell, associate director of LifeWay Research. "This was particularly surprising because the average formerly churched adult has not attended regularly for 14 years."

The "formerly churched" are defined as those who regularly attended a Protestant church as an adult in the past but who no longer do so.

Four percent of formerly churched adults are actively looking for a church other than their previous church, the study found. Six percent would prefer to resume attending regularly in the same church they had attended. The largest group, 62 percent, is not actively looking, but is open to the idea of attending church regularly again.

McConnell noted that such openness might reflect a cultural Christianity rather than genuine interest, but the fact remains that the majority are not closed to the idea. "The small portion who are 'unlikely to consider' returning (28 percent) should be encouraging when you

think about the three out of four who are willing to give it another try," he added.

For some people, the openness to returning reportedly is a yearning for what they once had at church. More than a third are motivated to consider returning in order "to fill a gap felt since stopping regular church attendance" (34 percent). Despite multiple reasons for leaving that often include their own life changes as well as disappointing action or inaction of the church, a number of the formerly churched indicated they miss the benefits of attending church.

The most common motivation of

those who would consider returning is "to bring me closer to God" (46 percent). The desire for an improved relationship with God is expressed primarily by those who still consider themselves Christian.

"Many members are vulnerable to attrition because of either a nonexistent or immature faith," said Brad Waggoner, director of LifeWay Research. "When individuals begin to seek out membership, they should be guided through a process whereby they are clearly taught the gospel and then, following salvation, grounded in strong biblical truth."

"Far fewer people would drop out of church if their spiritual foundation was deep and strong," he added. "The church also must be sensitive to this combination of a less developed but genuine desire for faith as they approach the formerly churched about returning."

Building relationships in a Christian community is another strong motivator to return to church. Thirty-two percent of those surveyed want to "be around those with similar values" and 31 percent would consider returning "to make friends." A similar number would return "to make a difference/help others" (30 percent) in their community.

"One of the many biblical metaphors of church leadership is that of the shepherd," Waggoner said. "Throughout Scripture we see that the shepherd was to protect, guide and care for the flock and to go after those who have strayed from the fold. These findings indicate that churches should seek out those who have lapsed as well as take steps to reduce further departures by meeting members' needs for a welcoming and spiritually fulfilling church environment."

Waggoner noted that prompting the formerly churched to visit a church with a goal of attending regularly requires some work. Most of those individuals had multiple reasons for leaving. He said the work of the Holy Spirit along with the efforts of church members, friends and family members is needed to help motivate them.

More than half of those surveyed said they would be inspired to regularly attend church "if I simply felt it was time to return to church" (58 percent), and nearly a third said "if I felt God was calling me to visit a church" (31 percent).

"Clearly we can encourage Christians to pray that the unchurched would sense God calling them back, but God works through His people," McConnell said. "The survey showed that many would respond to an invitation from a friend or acquaintance (41 percent), their children (25 percent) or an adult family member (25 percent)."

The issue of affinity also surfaced in the responses. Thirty-five percent indicated they would be inspired to attend church "if I knew there were people like me there."

"Affinity will never happen at a significant level without the church fostering a culture of concern, fellowship and involvement," Waggoner said. "The openness of the majority of the formerly churched to rejoin the flock is reason enough for the church to seek them out."

Changing priorities lead many adults to quit church

Continued from page 1
More than one in five formerly churched adults claim to be "a devout Christian with a strong belief in God" (19 percent) and a somewhat smaller number are wavering on Christianity (10 percent) or belief in God at all (6 percent).

Many of the reasons people no longer regularly attend church are interrelated, the study indicated. More than 80 percent of the formerly churched do not have a strong belief in God, explaining why work and family are a higher priority than church.

Although many formerly churched adults stay away from their former church for the same reasons they initially left, some indicate the church did not notice or care. Sixteen percent said "nobody contacted me after I left" and another 16 percent said "nobody seemed to care that I left."

"The responsibility and influence of the church varies across the different reasons for withdrawal," Waggoner said. "One clear influence is the expectations that churches have of attendees as they come into the life of the church," he said, noting that some church practices might be contributing to low levels of church commitment and limited biblical knowledge.

"In the end, it's important for church leaders to not only assume responsibility for those who seek to join their churches, but also for those who attempt to leave," Waggoner said. "Be vigilant at both the front door and the back door of the church."

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It's that time of year

Fall is season to recruit staff members for next summer

It is that time of year again—fall recruiting. Each year shortly after camp ends, our process for the next camp season begins and recruiting for summer staff plays a significant role in our efforts during the fall season.

During the months of September, October and November, six of our staff will travel in various directions across our state and several other states to seek out the best possible applicants to serve with our ministry for the coming summer. This year we will conduct interviews at more than 20 schools and seminaries. We also anticipate that approximately 250 students will submit applications for interviews.

In spite of these large numbers, our goal is to find those who are the very best and most suited for camp ministry. If you know of young adults who potentially would be suited for this work, please have them contact us or visit our Web site at www.crossingsministries.org and fill out an application.

I personally believe that camp is one of the most difficult jobs because the hours are long and the

emotional demand is very challenging as well. As with most areas of life, where the greatest challenge lies, the greatest opportunity usually goes hand in hand. In serving with our camps, staff members will see thousands of students make life-changing decisions and the future results of those decisions are impossible to quantify.

I ask that you continue in your prayers for our ministry as the task of selecting 70 to 80 students from the 250 or more who interview is of utmost importance.

As our ministry continues to grow, I realize more each day that we are not capable of what we seek to accomplish; it can only be done by God's power through us, His strength perfected in our weakness.

To everyone who has prayed for us over the years, I am truly thankful. If you would like to be added to our mailing list so you can be more informed about what goes on with Crossings, please contact us at (502) 491-7000.

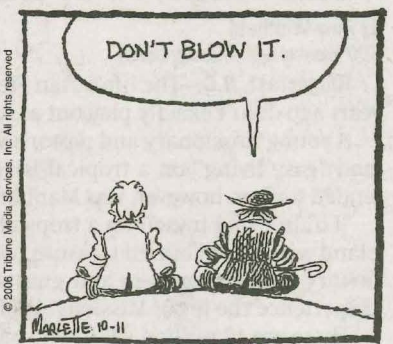
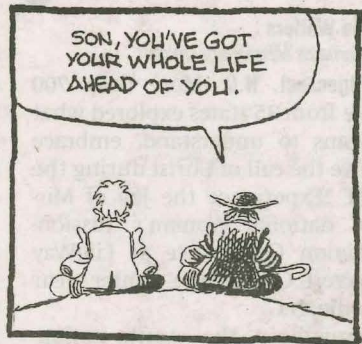
David Melber is president of Kentucky Baptist Assemblies. Contact him at Box 99918, Louisville, KY 42069-0918; phone (502) 491-7000.

KENTUCKY BAPTIST ASSEMBLIES



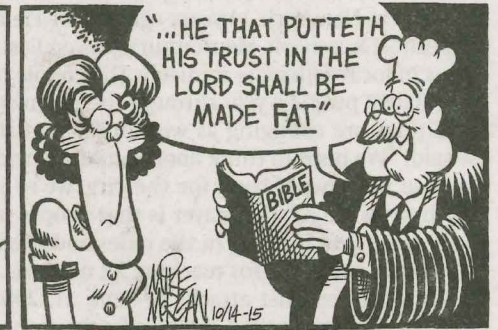
David Melber

Kudzu



Doug Marlette

For Heaven's Sake



Mike Morgan

Bible Crosswords

- Across**
- "They had ordained them elders in every ____" (Acts 14:23)
 - "Better is a dry ____, and quietness therewith, than an house full of sacrifices with strife" (Proverbs 17:1)
 - "It is a ____ thing that the king requireth" (Daniel 2:11)
 - North central state whose capital is Madison, abbr.
 - J, K, L, __, __, __
 - American traitor, Benedict ____
 - Strange
 - South American language, abbr.
 - Do, ____, mi
 - Carpet
 - Hawaiian standard time, abbr.
 - "____ out heaven with the span" (Isaiah 40:12)
 - "How long ... ____ thou be quiet?" (Jeremiah 47:6)
 - Assigned a monetary punishment
 - "They make a noise like a ____" (Psalms 59:6)
 - Curt
 - Do over, prefix
 - "Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ____" (Matthew 27:50)
 - Exist
 - Adam's wife
 - "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the ____ of life" (Revelation 2:7)
 - To arrange or plan

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11					12			13	
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16					17			18	
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40						41	42	43	
44				45					
			46	47		48			
49								50	

Cheryl Keiser

- Help
- This man had 454 descendents who escaped captivity in Babylon (Ezra 2:15)
- Tender loving care, abbr.
- "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye ____" (2 Corinthians 6:17)
- Note of debt
- Son of Judah (Genesis 38:4)
- "And David was the ____ (son of Jesse)" (1 Samuel 17:14)
- Degrees, suffix
- "We have both straw and provender enough, and room to ____ in" (Genesis 24:25)
- "Though (your sins) be ____ like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18)
- "According to the working of his ____ power" (Ephesians 1:19)
- Nervous
- Haze
- What a spider spins
- "I rejoiced ____" (3 John 3)
- "A ____ shall be saved" (Romans 9:27)
- "The brightness of his glory, and the ____ image of his person" (Hebrews 1:3)
- "The tree of knowledge of good and ____" (Genesis 2:9)
- Either
- Kettle
- European Defense Community, abbr.
- "Sons of ____" (Genesis 46:23)
- Modern Persia
- "If any man will ____ thee at the law, ... let him have thy cloak also" (Matthew 5:40)
- The opposite of out
- King of Bashan (Joshua 13:12)

Last week's solution

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

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Fields seek NYC's 'buried treasure'

By Amy Whitfield
SBC Woman's Missionary Union

Ridgecrest, N.C.—The life Susan Field dreamed for herself years ago didn't exactly play out as expected.

A young missionary and pastor's wife, she said she imagined "easy living" on a tropical island. The island God intended for her, however, was Manhattan.

"I didn't find myself on a tropical island but I am on an island with lots of buried treasure," Field told Woman's Missionary Union members and guests attending the recent "Experience the Joy of Missions" WMU Conference.

There are 13 million souls who pass through Manhattan on a given day, she said. "In each one of those people is a buried treasure."

Field and her husband, Taylor, answered God's call to missions in New York 20 years ago. Taylor Field is pastor of "Graffiti" Church on Manhattan's Lower East Side. Susan serves in local collegiate ministry. The couple reaches more than 10,000 people a year through their ministry.

"Things are changing as we think about the city," Taylor said. "We need to think about building bridges. ... God's promise has always been for the city, we're just learning now how to see it." His prayer is that people will have eyes to see what God is doing in the cities and the immense opportunities that exist for reaching all nations.

Since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, much has changed. Taylor recalled looking for his son, who attended school a block from the World Trade Center, that day. He found his son alive, but admitted he felt anger as other families weren't so fortunate. He said the event was a spiritual turning point for his son, and a turning point for their city too. The couple has started nine churches in the wake of the tragedy.

Taylor said as people learn to follow Jesus' lead and find something for which to be thankful in every situation, they will begin to discover the joy of missions. He pointed out when the need was great and resources were small, Jesus thanked God for what He had before feeding 5,000 people with two fish and five bread loaves.

"When you have 17 things bringing you down, you always have 18 things to praise God about," Taylor said. "One person who is thankful can affect an entire block; a thankful block can affect an entire neighborhood; a thankful neighborhood can affect an entire city; and a thankful city can affect the world."

WMU challenges believers to 'Live the Call'

By Julie Walters
SBC Woman's Missionary Union

Ridgecrest, N.C.—More than 700 people from 35 states explored what it means to understand, embrace and live the call of Christ during the recent "Experience the Joy of Missions" national Woman's Missionary Union Conference at LifeWay Ridgecrest Conference Center near Asheville, N.C.

Throughout the event, national WMU Executive Director Wanda Lee and author of the book, "Live the Call," shared stories of Christ followers who were receptive to God's call.

"He calls each one of us to a place of service," Lee said. "We each come to a crossroads where we make a decision to trust His call and embrace it or miss the very best that He has for us."

In each general session, missionaries underscored the importance of prayer, and specifically noted their dependence on prayers offered on their birthday.

"Be specific as you can with prayers ... deep prayer, consistent prayer, abiding prayer," encouraged Edith Burney, who served 29 years in Nigeria as a Southern Baptist international missionary. "As God calls and missionaries go to the ends of the earth, God sustains them, but prayer is the key."

Tammy Cookson, a missionary serving in California through the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, also gave thanks for birthday prayer. "All of us (missionaries) experience illness and healing, dark nights and bright days, discouragement and true victory," she said. "We missionaries count on your prayers."

Featured speakers also included Carlos Ferrer, NAMB's interim chief operating officer. He voiced gratitude and appreciation for WMU and "the women who invest their lives in missions in the local church."

During his address, he announced that giving to the 2006 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions set a new record with three months still remaining in the giving period.

"Thanks to the sacrificial giving of Southern Baptists and the dedicated support of Woman's Missionary Union, we have already received in the first nine months of the year nearly \$55 million for the Annie Armstrong Offering," he said.

Miller re-elected president

During business sessions, Kaye Miller of Little Rock, Ark., was elected to a second term as national WMU president. Kathy Hillman of Waco, Texas, was elected to a third term as national recording secretary. Both decisions passed with unanimous votes.

Miller challenged participants to consider what kind of footprints they leave as they follow God's call. "Perhaps the footprints you leave will be those of a prayer warrior, an encourager or a faithful volunteer," Miller said. "Imagine how many lives can be changed if we really listen for, and follow, God's call."

WMU and WMU Foundation presented Patrice Oats of Dallas with the 2006 Sybil Bentley Dove Award

Endowment. The award singles out a current or former Christian Women's Job Corps participant who desires to advance herself through life skills, academic development and faith in God.

Two 2006 CWJC sites also were highlighted during the meeting. Site coordinator V.J. Sanchez of Metro Columbus (Ohio) CWJC, accepted an award that provides funds to expand parenting classes and purchase computer software for the site.

Also recognized was site coordinator Jeanne Todd of Bethel Baptist Association CWJC in Hannibal, Mo., who accepted an award to help fund textbooks, office equipment and other materials for the site's new classroom.

In addition to general sessions, 80 different workshops were offered during the event. Topics included mentoring, witnessing, prayer and training for missions educators.

Under the leadership of consultant Angela Kim, the Korean WMU leadership team offered a number of conferences in Korean. Approximately 50 Korean women from 15 states attended.

In other business, the board:

- Approved a goal of \$150 million for the 2007 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions.
- Approved a goal of \$58 million for the 2008 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions.
- Approved a redesign of Girls in Action and Children in Action materials to be launched in the fall of 2007.



Kaye Miller

Don't be late!

Once again, school choir hits the road to visit Kentucky Baptist churches

It is that time of the year again when our choir will be on the road nearly every Sunday until school is out in May.

Since the first day of school in August, our choir has been memorizing music. We do not allow them to use sheet music when performing. It is a challenge for them to memorize so much in such a short time, but it comes with the territory and must be done.

We have a good number of students in the choir again this year and many more boys than usual. I always am amazed that so many students join the choir when they know part of the commitment is getting up early on Sunday mornings. There are not too many days when our students get to sleep in and for most, Sunday is the only day to get an extra hour or two of sleep.

It is not uncommon for choir students to get up at 5 or 6 a.m. in order to get to the bus on time. One thing they learn very quickly is not to be late. It nearly is an unforgivable sin!

When I determine what time we have to leave campus in order to arrive at the church 30 minutes before the service begins, I do not allow extra time for someone to be late. It is not uncommon to travel four or five hours to our destination. With very few exceptions, when it is time to leave, if you are not on the bus you are left behind.

So why do students give up their only day to get a little extra sleep? Well, if you ask the choir students, they will be quick to tell you it is because they enjoy getting to eat all the special food the churches provide for us.

Some people would think that is a very poor

reason to make such a commitment, but remember we are talking about teenagers. Also remember that our students eat three meals a day seven days a week here on our campus in the school's dining room. I believe the food is pretty good, but I have to admit that eating off campus once in a while is a treat. I often tell people that if they were to pick their very favorite restaurant and eat there three times a day for the next 30 days, it is a pretty safe assumption that by the end of the 30 days, they will not think of that restaurant as their favorite any time in the near future.

We enjoy those famous Baptist potluck dinners. If you were to watch our students go through the food line, you would think they had not eaten in months. But actually we feed them pretty well three times a day!

Other students would admit that they also enjoy getting to travel and visit different churches. Many of our students like meeting new people every week. During the service, when churches invite the congregation to greet visitors, often several of our choir members leave the choir loft and mingle with the other worshippers. I am proud of their willingness to do that because most teenagers do not particularly enjoy leaving their seats to greet visitors.

Most of our students will long remember their choir trips and the extra early hour they had to get up, especially on those cold January and February mornings. They also appreciate the fact that they would not be traveling each Sunday morning if a church had not invited us to come.

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

A Buckeye among Wildcats

Ohio pastor's daughter works to keep the guys in line

Studying at a Bible college where the majority of students are men hasn't been a big adjustment for second-year Ohio student Joy Risner. She's had experience.

"I grew up as a pastor's child," Joy said. "With four older brothers I try to keep the guys in line." She became a Christian at age 6 in vacation Bible school. She encountered God's call through Girls in Action and Acteens.

"It took me two years to accept it," she acknowledged. "Initially, I thought I would get married, have a family or have a normal job. Confirmation came through prayer and wise counsel; I prayed a lot with my dad."

Her church, Edgewood Baptist in Hamilton, Ohio, has sent several students to Clear Creek over the years. Her brother, Josh, also is a student.

She took classes online for two semesters, completing 12 courses. "I worked full-time while I did it and had to do time management. Online everybody is required every week to participate in the discussion and to respond to other students."

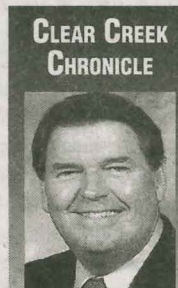
Last year, Joy served an eight-month interim assignment at Calvary Baptist Church in London, leading the Wednesday night youth worship service. "I did the music, praise and worship for 15 to 30 minutes, trying to get students involved."

Missions involvement has helped Joy grow in Christ. "My home church goes somewhere every year," she said.

"The approach is geared to everyday evangelism on the street. Grades six through 12 take a survey and share the gospel about every time they meet someone. It is definitely a growth experience; witnessing is the most important thing we can do for Christ. Some churches don't really teach youth about witnessing and how to deal with confrontation."

As a young woman studying among the preachers, Joy has found a great welcome. "I'm getting used to classes with all the men and their talking." Her experience with four older brothers and a pastor dad probably helps her "to keep the guys in line."

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



Bill Whittaker

Former Bush staffer claims faith push was politically motivated

By Robert Marus
Associated Baptist Press

Washington (ABP)—A new book by a former White House faith official is causing shockwaves with allegations that President Bush's aides have been duping religious conservatives for political gain.

Another former White House official dismissed the book as off base.

MSNBC's "Countdown with Keith Olbermann" program first reported the allegations Oct. 11. They are found in "Tempting Faith: An Inside Story of Political Seduction," a new tell-all memoir by former White House official David Kuo, that was released last week.

From 2001 to 2003, Kuo served as the No. 2 official in Bush's White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. MSNBC reported the book includes charges that high-ranking White House officials referred to prominent conservative Christian leaders as "nuts" behind their backs, used the faith-based office to organize ostensibly non-political events that in reality were designed to boost Republican candidates in tough elections, and favored religious charities friendly to the administration when doling out grant money.

"National Christian leaders received hugs and smiles in person and then were dismissed behind their backs and described as 'ridiculous,' 'out of control,' and just plain 'goofy,'" Kuo wrote. Top political officials in the office of White House aide Karl Rove referred to the leaders as "the nuts," he added.

Charges of bogus rationale

MSNBC also reported that Kuo charged the White House's own rationale for pushing the faith-based initiative—an effort to make it easier for churches and other sectarian organizations to receive federal social-service funding—was bogus.

Bush and his lieutenants regularly argued that religious groups had been unfairly shut out of many government grant programs because of their faith-based nature. However, Kuo said, that may not have been the case.

"Finding (examples of such discrimination against religious groups) became a huge priority," he wrote. "If President Bush was making the world a better place for faith-based groups, we had to show it was really a bad place to begin with. But, in fact, it wasn't that bad at all."

Kuo also alleges that Bush officials administering grant programs under the initiative favored faith groups politically friendly to the administration—even going so far as to discriminate against non-Christian groups.

Kuo, who has strong conservative evangelical credentials in-

cluding past work for Bill Bennett and John Ashcroft, has criticized the administration in recent years for its handling of the faith-based issue. However, his previous criticisms—in congressional testimony and op-ed columns for the religious news Web site Beliefnet—have been neither as dramatic nor as specific as those in his book.

They echo concerns expressed by his former boss. John Dilulio, the first director of the faith-based office, quit abruptly seven months after he started. In his only public interview about the issue, he made headlines by criticizing the administration for playing politics with the initiative to drum up support among conservative Christians but then putting little real muscle behind getting it completed.

Dilulio, reportedly under pressure from the White House, later backed away from those comments. Now a professor of political science at the University of Pennsylvania, he has not spoken to the news media about the issue since.

"Enormous respect for religion"

Dilulio's successor in the White House faith-based office, Jim Towey, said Kuo's reported allegations were seriously off base. Towey, who is now president of St. Vincent College in Latrobe, Pa., said Oct. 13 he had not seen a copy of the book, but has heard about the excerpted sections.

"The White House that he describes is not the White House that I worked four years in," Towey said. "There was enormous respect for religion—for religious leaders of all denominations and faiths."

Reported allegations about politicization of the faith-based office's conferences were baseless, Towey added.

"I visited more Democrat districts than I did Republican ones; I had more events with Democrat officials than Republican ones. I went where I was invited and where the need was greatest," he said.

Kuo "is entitled to his opinion, but he did not make the decisions; I did," Towey said. "I made the decisions focusing on the poor and not politics."

White House Press Secretary Tony Snow said the Kuo who wrote the book sounded very different than the Kuo who left the White House in 2003.

Snow quoted "a very warm letter" that Kuo wrote Bush upon leaving the White House, expressing pride in the accomplishments of the faith-based initiatives of the office.

Snow also said Rove had denied referring to conservative Christian leaders with derisive terminology. "These are people who are friends. You don't talk about friends that way," he said.



Reimagining Evangelism. Rick Richardson. InterVarsity Press, 2006. 167 pages. ♦♦♦♦ (out of five)

Writing from a perspective influenced by a post-modern vision of the missional church, Rick Richardson advocates a fundamental shift in our evangelism paradigm. If we are to engage people in our culture with the gospel message, and if we are to engage people in our churches in the evangelistic task, he believes we have to rid ourselves of the image of "Evangelism as Closing the Deal on a Sales Call." In its place we need to substitute the image of evangelism as traveling with people on their spiritual journey.

Richardson argues that the current spiritual-salesman paradigm is a barrier to most Christians. "If they aren't extroverted, persuasive, an expert on their product, skilled at responding to the questions that will come up, and able to be pushy and assertive when it comes to making the close, then they don't identify with evangelism as part of their life and gifts."

Instead of evangelism as selling Jesus, Richardson suggests Christians need to start by seeing faith conversations as a normal and joyful part of life. Like many who write about post-modernism, Richardson understands that we live in a spiritually hungry and intense time. The questions of meaning and purpose are not far from the surface of most people's concerns.

Listening, patience, openness and a willingness to invest in the lives of other people are the characteristics of the new evangelism. Christians need to learn to see themselves as collaborators with the Spirit in guiding people on a spiritual journey. Much of the book is dedicated to helping readers see what that means. He does an excellent job of showing how evangelism is not reserved for a special subset of Christians, but is well within the grasp of most of us. *Jim Holladay*

So, You Want to Be Like Christ? Eight Essentials to Get You There. Charles Swindoll. W Publishing, 2005. 188 pages. \$22.99 ♦♦♦♦♦

"We live in a spiritual hothouse where we talk religious talk, send out religious letters, write religious pamphlets, and do religious Bible studies. It is so easy to become religious instead of godly," writes author Charles Swindoll.

Swindoll challenges readers to go beyond being religious and become more than what they currently are.

"So, You Want to Be Like Christ?" is a book that goes beyond a how-to type book of spiritual disciplines to be practiced. Swindoll notes that when one practices the various spiritual disciplines, which is good and necessary, one must be careful not to substitute the practice for godliness. This is similar to what the children of Israel did when the bronze snake was lifted up on a pole to keep them from being snake bitten. They started to look to the bronze serpent and not to the Lord God whom the heal-

ing came through.

Swindoll challenges the reader to go beyond the disciplines into the why and focus on God who is behind it all. Why practice these disciplines if you don't experience the living God? The eight steps are laid out simply and then expanded upon. He challenges everyone to pursue God with intimacy, simplicity, silence and solitude, surrender, prayer, humility, self-control and sacrifice.

In the chapter on silence and solitude, Swindoll encourages the reader to slow down and spend time with God.

Why practice these disciplines? Because they "will enable us to do what we don't want to do in order to achieve what we've always wanted to achieve. To know Jesus Christ. I want fulfillment in my walk with Christ, not just talk about fulfillment."

This book will help readers get past the checklist mentality of "if I do this and check it off my list, I will be spiritual," thinking the process is better than the relationship with God. It is a simple read with great stories that relate, Scripture to read and consume as well as simple things to do to grow in one's faith and walk. *Steve Coleman*

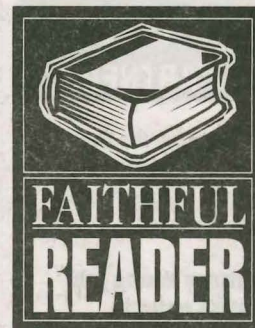
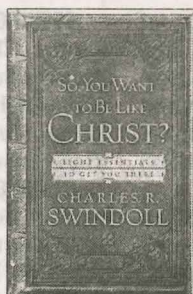
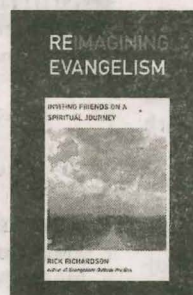
Living the Sermon on the Mount: A Practical Hope for Grace and Deliverance. Glen Stassen. John Wiley and Sons, 2006. 214 pages. \$21.95. ♦♦♦♦♦

This is the best book on the Sermon on the Mount I have read in the last decade. The book is a readable mix between Robert Guelich's first-rate scholarly work and Clarence Jordan's classic study, both titled "The Sermon on the Mount." Stassen manages to address the important textual and critical issues in the midst of an inspiring study of the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount.

Those of us who know Stassen personally know how committed he is not only to the academic study of the Sermon on the Mount but also living it in the Christian life. He "talks the talk and walks the walk." That commitment comes through in every page of this work.

Stassen's interpretation of the sermon flows around his analysis of the sermon through a unique study model that divides Jesus' teachings into three parts: stating the traditional righteousness, diagnosing the vicious cycle, and encouraging a transforming initiative. This model is extremely successful in helping the reader get a handle not only on what Jesus' original listeners would have heard but how we might apply the teaching today.

Stassen insists that the Sermon on the Mount need not be relegated to religious idealism. Through his use of vibrant contemporary illustrations, he demonstrates how the Sermon on the Mount provides a practical way of living a life that is filled with God's grace. Stassen wants the contemporary Christian to claim God's blessing in his or her daily life and devouring this book will move the reader toward that reality. As the title indicates, we can live the Sermon on the Mount. *Wayne Hager*



By Wayne Hager, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Mt. Airy, N.C.; Jim Holladay, pastor of Lyndon Baptist Church in Louisville; and Steve Coleman, pastor of education and youth at New Work Fellowship in Hopkinsville. They welcome feedback or suggestions for book reviews. Contact them via e-mail at: whager@adelphia.net; lyndonpastor@aol.com; risen4me@hotmail.com.

PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following Kentucky Baptist ministries and missionaries:

Whitney Young Job Corps Center in Simpsonville. A new ministry to students at the federal Job Corps campus has been started with the help of several churches in Shelby Baptist Association, HR Ministries and Bible study teacher Bob Hummel. Evangelistic events, fellowship activities, Bible study, discipleship groups and transportation to local churches will begin this month. Pray that more volunteers and churches will become involved in the ministry. Pray that many students will come to know Christ and experience life transformation as a result of this ministry.

Mission Service Corps Literacy Missionary Rebecca Carnell of Eubank. Carnell serves as the literacy consultant for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, equipping and encouraging volunteers who teach literacy and share Christ through English as a Second Language, Tutoring Children and Youth, and Adult Reading and Writing. Literacy ministry is an effective tool for evangelism, discipleship and church planting. Pray for more volunteers with a passion for teaching and sharing Christ. Pray that churches will share a greater vision by using their classrooms for literacy ministry.

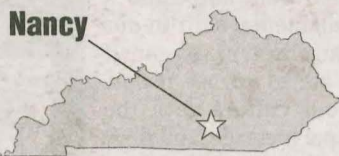
If you would like Kentucky Baptists to join in praying for a ministry of your church or association, please send the information to Eric Allen at Eric.Allen@kybaptist.org or call (866) 489-3530.

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

- **BEREA**—Emmanuel Church will hold revival services Nov. 5-8, 7 p.m., with **Don Jones** as evangelist. **Joey Kays** is pastor.
- **BREMEN**—Bethlehem Church will hold revival services Nov. 5-8 with **Roy Finley** as evangelist.
- **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Saloma Church will host the gospel music group **In His Service** from Burkesville in concert Oct. 29, 6 p.m. Activities will include a 5 p.m. potluck meal. **John Chowning** is pastor.
- **CLINTON**—First Church honored pastor **Howard Kitter** Oct. 15 with a "Pastor Appreciation Day Celebration." Former interim pastor **Aubert Rose** was the guest speaker.
- **FINCHVILLE**—**Tony Smith** recently resigned as pastor of Finchville Church to become pastor of Deer Park Church of North Charleston, S.C.
- **GEORGETOWN**—Dry Run Church will hold revival services Oct. 28-30, 7 p.m., with **Steve Ayers**, pastor of Hillvue Heights Church in Bowling Green, as evangelist. **Tony Shouse** is pastor.
- **HARRODSBURG**—Bruner's Chapel Church recently called **David Crowe** as pastor.
- **LEXINGTON**—Victory Church recently celebrated its 14th anniversary with former pastor **Coye Still** as guest speaker.
- **LOUISVILLE**—Buechel Park Church recently called **Crystal Shepherd** as minister to students. **Don Rogers** is pastor.
- **MELBOURNE HEIGHTS**—Church ordained **Ken Orr** to the gospel ministry and **Ambie Newsome** and **Ethel Penny** as deacons Oct. 8. **Bill Shoulta** is pastor.
- **PARKLAND**—Church recently called **John Sanders** to serve as pastor of Parkland Hills Mission in Spencer County.
- **LOYALL**—Calvary Church recently called **C.B. Rezek** as pastor.
- **MACKVILLE**—Mackville Church will hold revival services Nov. 5-8 with **Adam Greenway**, pastor of The Baptist Church at Andover in Lexington, as evangelist. For more information, call (859) 262-5470. **Micah Carter** is pastor.

Spotlight on ...



Maynard Head, pastor of Burnetta Church, recently observed his 50th anniversary in ministry. He preached his first sermon in 1956 at East Cumberland Avenue Church in Middlesboro. Head also served on the faculty and staff of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College and University of the Cumberlands. He is a graduate of Clear Creek, Cumberlands and Vanderbilt University.

- **PADUCAH**—Bellview Church will hold revival services Nov. 5-8. Speaker include Pastor **Lee James**, Nov. 5, 10 a.m.; **Don Pippin**, Nov. 5, 6 p.m.; **Roger Rice**, Nov. 6, 7 p.m.; **Ronnie Stinson**, Nov. 7, 7 p.m.; and **Terry Sills**, Nov. 8, 7 p.m.
- **TRINITY**—Church will hold revival services Nov. 5, 10:45 a.m. and 6 p.m., and Nov. 6-10, 11:45 a.m. and 7 p.m., with **Joe Mobley** as evangelist. **Kenneth Brown** is pastor.
- **TWELVE OAKS**—Church will hold revival services Oct. 29 to Nov. 1 with **Larry Gilmore** as evangelist. **Louis Brinker** is pastor.
- **ROCKHOLDS**—Tidal Wave Church will hold revival services Oct. 28 to Nov. 1 with **Mark Hampton**, associate pastor of youth at Greenhills Church in Miamisburg, Ohio, as evangelist. **Anthony Taylor** is pastor.
- **TAYLORSVILLE**—Little Mount Church recently called **Ben Reed** as youth minister. **John Mark Tittsworth** is pastor.
- **WADDY**—Graefenburg Church recently called **Sanford Hill** as senior pastor.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October

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

November

3-4 Chaplaincy Training for Suicide Intervention, Baptist Building, Louisville.
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.
13 Kentucky Baptist Pastors' Conference, First Baptist Church, Bowling Green.
13 Kentucky Baptist Youth Ministry Association Fall Meeting, Bowling Green.
14-15 KBC Annual Meeting, First Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

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

Tennessee Baptists follow up on Africa effort started 25 years ago

Burkina Faso, West Africa (BP)—After a long day of traveling, just the promise of refreshing water from the old, green wheel-crank well was worth the effort.

Latisha Reeves, a member of Mount Olive Baptist Church in Knoxville, Tenn., turned the wheel and smiled as cool, clean water from more than 100 feet below the surface came flowing out onto the ground.

Southern Baptist international missionary Phillip Lyons crouched at the faucet and began to drink and wash his face. One by one, members of the group from Tennessee followed his lead.

This was one of more than 100 wells, almost all of them still in use, dug by Tennessee Baptists in a partnership that started 25 years ago with international missionaries to provide water to the people of Sanwabo, Burkina Faso in Africa. During those years they also built three "barrages," or dams.

Because of the partnership, more than 70 churches have been built in the area surrounding Sanwabo. This area now has the highest population of Baptists in all of Burkina Faso.

"I am encouraged by the progress made in previous ministry efforts,"

said Rhonda Mayo, a member of First Baptist Church of Greenbrier, Tenn. "I am challenged by what still remains to be done."

"The goal ... in digging wells is that God would plant a church on every site where a well was dug," said Willie McLaurin, leadership specialist for the Tennessee Baptist Convention. "Our assignment for Sanwabo was to revisit the mission field to let our brothers in Africa know that we are still supporting them through prayer."

More than 15 pastors from the Sanwabo area's Baptist association met with the group to discuss the work they are continuing to do to reach their people for Christ.

"This trip gave the local pastors of (the) Sanwabo area the opportunity to hear that Tennessee Baptists had not forgotten them, that these Burkinab Baptists were still in their prayers and that Tennessee Baptists would continue to remember them and pray for them," Lyons said.

Reeves said she is determined to return.

"We were there for a reason and we all walked away knowing that God desires to use the experience," she noted. "We are sharing and praying with our churches now."

CLASSIFIED ADS

SEEKING: Full-time minister of music and children for First Baptist Church, Eddyville, Ky. Please send resumé by e-mail to eddyfirst@bellsouth.net, or mail to Personnel Committee, First Baptist Church, PO Box 599, Eddyville, KY 42038.

SEEKING: Part-time youth minister to lead tomorrow's future generation at Franklin Crossroads Baptist Church. If interested, please send resumé with cover letter to FCBC, 4695 Hardinsburg Road, Cecilia, KY 42724, Attn: Search Committee.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of youth to work with 7th-12th graders, their families and adult volunteers to develop and implement a comprehensive youth ministry leading youth to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and a deeper spiritual understanding. College degree preferred; seminary desirable. Send resumé by Nov. 30, 2006, to: Search Committee, Westside Baptist Church, 207 Robertson Road South, Murray, KY 42071.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for First Baptist Church, Brandenburg, Ky. Average Sunday school attendance: 170; worship: 275. Mail resumé to: Shirley Jones, 155 Meade Springs, Brandenburg, KY 40108.

SEEKING: Part-time music minister for Ghent Baptist Church in Carroll County, Ky. Minister will be focused on leading the congregation in blended worship. Experience preferred but not necessary. Send resumé to: Ghent Baptist Church, PO Box 457, Ghent, KY 41045. Questions, call (502) 347-5540 or 222-2221.

SEEKING: Bivocational pastor to lead and serve south-central Kentucky church. Must be called of God, willing to work, willing to visit and interact with congregation and community to do God's will to facilitate physical and spiritual growth of church body. Send resumé/profile to Search Committee, Jackson Grove Baptist Church, c/o Lyndell Graven, 6299 Louisville Road, Bowling Green, KY 42101-8409.

SEEKING: Part-time music minister and a pianist. Send resumé to Grace Community Baptist Church, 7300 National Turnpike, Louisville, KY 40214; or e-mail to gcbc7300@peoplepc.com.

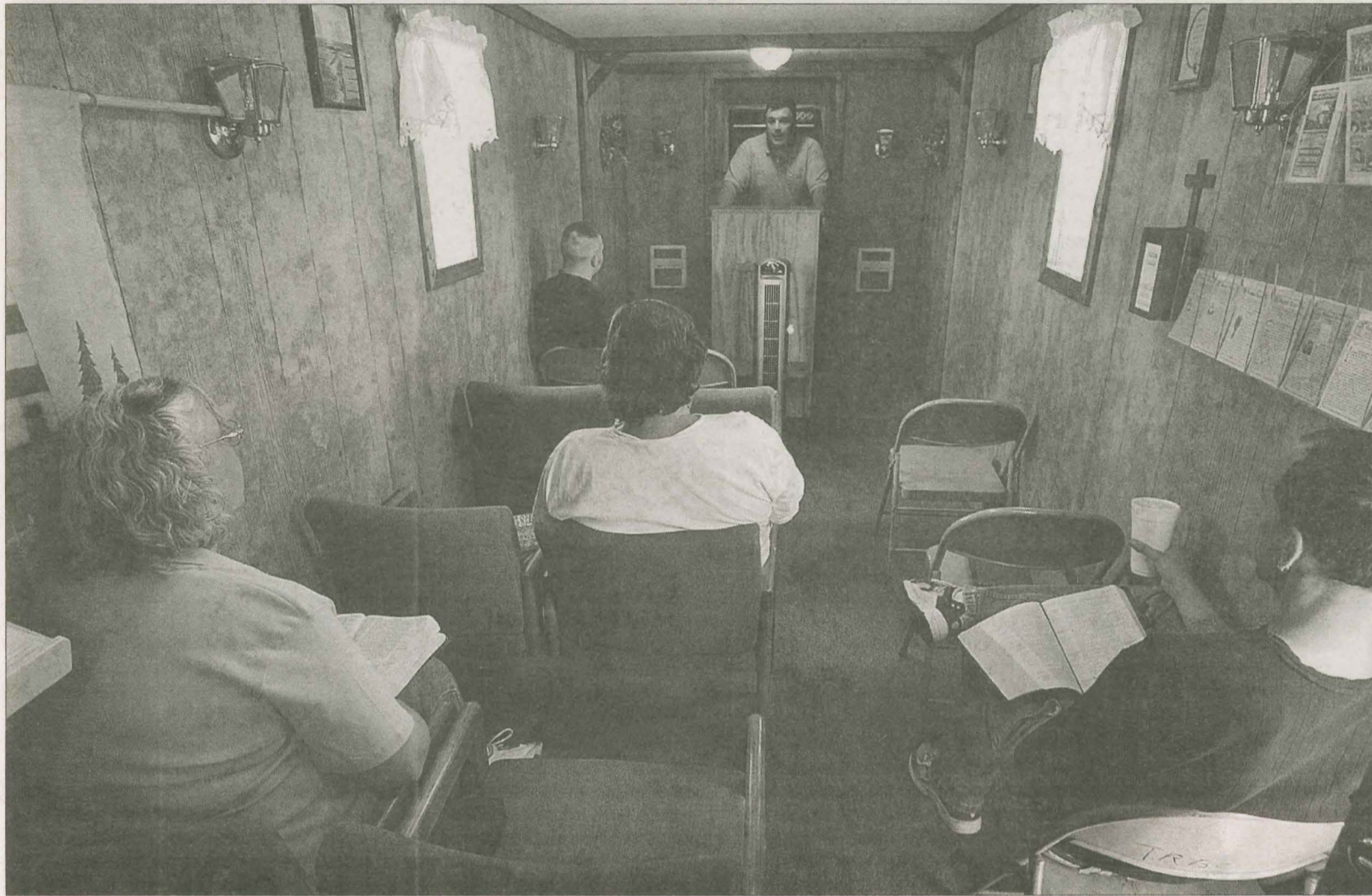
SEEKING: Director of missions for Severns Valley Association of Baptists. The deadline for submitting resumé has been extended until Oct. 31, 2006. Resumé already submitted will be retained. Please submit a cover letter, resumé and references to: DOM Search Committee, PO Box 541, Elizabethtown, KY 42702.

SEEKING: Bivocational minister of music (18-25 hours/week) for Friendship Baptist Church in Paducah, Ky. Experience and seminary education are preferred. For a more detailed position description, visit our Web site at friendshiponthenet.org. Resumé to Music Search Team, 146 S Friendship Road, Paducah, KY 42003; or Jason@friendshiponthenet.org no later than Nov. 10.

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 resumé with cover letters and salary histories to: humanresources@sbts.edu.

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.

Gospel at the gas pump



CHURCH IN A TRUCK Donavan Fowler (top) preaches at the Chapel of the Oasis Truck Stop in Robertsdale, Ala. In the congregation (from left) are Melissa Blanton; Rick Funderburk, song leader; Sam Hernandez, truck driver; and David Blanton Jr. (RNS photos by John David Mercer/The Mobile Press-Register)

Trucker ministry reaches out to people traveling often-lonely roads

By Renee Busby
Religion News Service

Robertsdale, Ala. (RNS)—It was 9:15 a.m. on a Sunday at the Oasis Truck Center near the Alabama-Florida state line when the cashier handed Donavan Fowler the microphone.

A recent graduate of Pensacola Bible Institute, Fowler announced that church services were beginning in 15 minutes in the red semi-truck out in the parking lot.

As the service time neared, seats in the semi-truck remained empty. Melissa Blanton, whose husband, David, started the ministry here two years ago, and her son went out to scour the parking lot filled with rows of 18-wheelers.

They handed out religious tracts and invited truckers to the worship service.

But no one came.

Standing inside the trailer, Melissa watched a trucker dressed in jeans, a T-shirt and baseball cap, pace in front of the truck. "Come on sir," she said, peering out the iron bars on the trailer door. "Come on."

She went outside to encourage the man to come in. It worked. The truck driver came inside the trailer, sat down and filled out a visitor's form.

More than a rest stop

Sundays at some truck stops aren't just places where truck drivers can rest, eat or gas up before getting back on the road. They're places where they can worship.

At trucker church, you don't

have to wear your Sunday best and you're not expected to sit through a long sermon. It doesn't matter if there's just one trucker in the congregation or none. The service still goes on.

"Last week nobody came in at 9:30," said Melissa, whose husband started the Oasis trucking ministry as part of Interstate Chapel Ministries. "We just had the service and kept on going."

Serving 'travelers & transients'

Farther down Interstate 10, at the TA Truck Stop in Grand Bay, Chris Henley has been ministering to truckers for 26 years. "Rarely," she said, "do you actually have churchy-type people dressed for church."

Every Sunday, Henley and her husband, Bob, are at the truck stop preparing for the 8 a.m. service in the truck stop's TV room. They have one service on Sundays.

"It's very one-on-one and very unpredictable," she said. "We have travelers, transients and truckers with varied backgrounds."

More than two decades ago, a friend who was a minister approached the Henleys about helping him start a ministry for truck drivers.

"He was passing by the truck stop one day and the Lord just impressed upon him that truck drivers have a difficult time being in church every Sunday," Chris said. "One, because of the dress code, and some trucks aren't allowed in church parking lots."

Chris started volunteering, and has been involved since. Her husband eventually joined her and now preaches on most Sundays. They are both retired teachers.

Back at Oasis, the coffee is brewing and a gospel CD is playing inside the tractor/trailer before the first of three services started.

The floors are carpeted and wood paneling covers the walls. Cream-colored lace curtains adorn windows that were added to the trailer. A pulpit sits at the front of the trailer, facing four rows of chairs. A window air-conditioner unit blows during the service to cool off worshippers on the humid morning.

An office with a computer is located in the rear of the trailer, near the racks of free Bibles, sermons on tape and "Trucking for Jesus" bumper stickers.

Melissa Blanton was in the Mirage Cafe at the truck stop eating breakfast with truckers, hoping she could get them to church, a job her husband usually does. But her husband, an ordained minister who drives an 18-wheeler for a living, had been on the road for almost eight weeks, and was unable to be in the pulpit.

When he can't be there, students and graduates of the Pensacola school and preachers from around the area take his place.

On this Sunday, Fowler, who drives a 10-wheeler gas truck in Pensacola, filled in.

With only one trucker in the congregation, the service began with Rick Funderburk, another re-

cent graduate of Pensacola Bible Institute, leading the singing. He hopes to start a ministry to bikers one day.

"Anybody have a favorite song they want to sing today?" Funderburk asked. No one responded. So Funderburk selected "Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus" from one of the hymnals in the chairs.

The half-dozen worshippers sang as the noise of diesel engines could be heard in the background.

Coping with loneliness, finances

Following the singing, Fowler, stood in the pulpit and preached a brief sermon. There is no offering since many truckers struggle to make ends meet, the Blantons said.

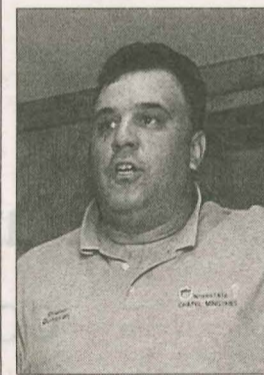
Sam Hernandez, a trucker for 26 years who lives in his 18-wheeler, was the only trucker to attend church this day.

"I figured, 'Why not?'" said Hernandez, who hauls cars from St. Petersburg, Fla., to New Orleans. "It couldn't hurt more than a little bit."

Later, while David Blanton was home during a break from the road, he said he knows the loneliness truckers face on the road. One day he'd like to go into full-time ministry to be available "24 hours a day."

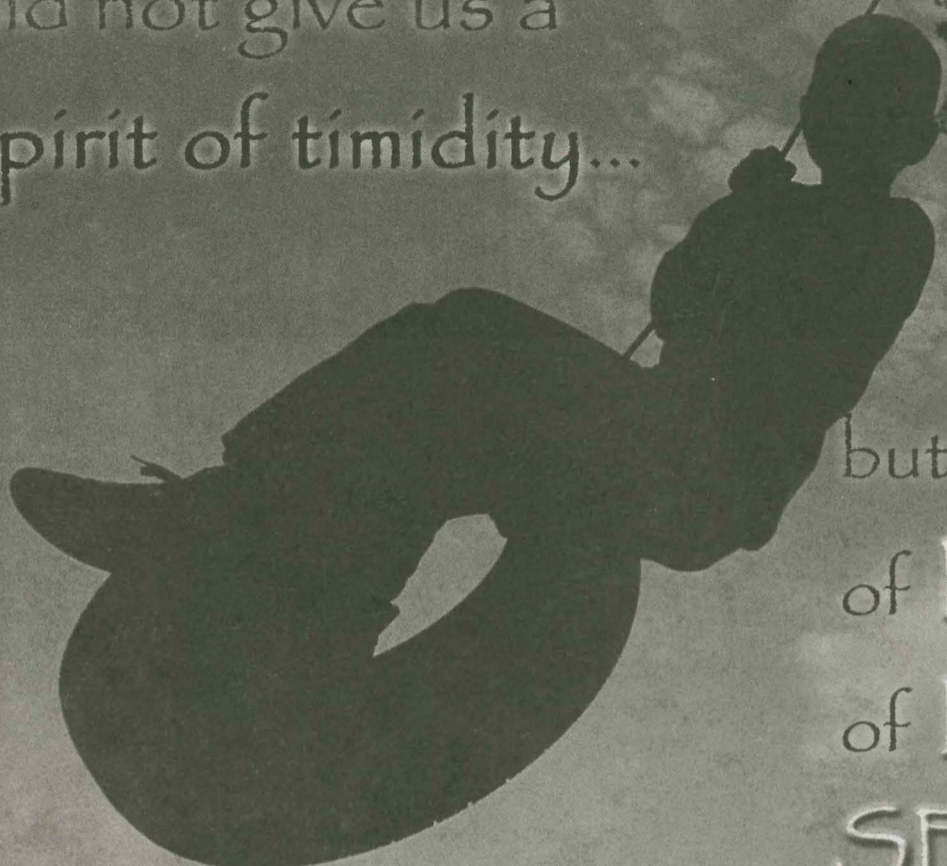
"It's been a tough road being gone this past 10 weeks," he said. "It reminds me how lonely truckers are."

Inside that truck, he said, "It's just me, the Lord and the radio."
Renee Busby writes for *The Mobile Register* in Mobile, Ala.



PREACHER/TRUCKER
Donavan Fowler preaches during a service at the Chapel of the Oasis Truck Stop in Robertsdale, Ala. A graduate of Pensacola Bible Institute, Fowler also is a truck driver.

For GOD
did not give us a
spirit of timidity...



Thanksgiving
Offering

but a spirit
of POWER
of LOVE and of
SELF-DISCIPLINE

2 TIM 1:7

Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children
cares for more than 300 victims
of abuse and neglect each day.

We are reimbursed for some of the over \$19 million
cost by the state, but there is a **\$7 million** gap
that must be filled.

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