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FOR THE RECORD

Baptists
IMB phasing out unrestricted funding to WMU. *Page 2.*



Kentucky
Shepherding the Shepherd speakers urge pastors to seek God's answers. *Page 3.*

Editorial
KBC Pastors' Forum affirms evangelism, sanctity of life. *Page 5.*

Ministry
Daytona Beach church marks 25 years of FAITH ministry. *Page 6.*

Nation
Pro-life supporters gather for annual March for Life in Washington, D.C. *Page 9.*

Kentucky relief workers respond to winter storms

Nixa, Mo. (BP)—In the wake of powerful winter storms blamed for the deaths of at least 90 people in the Midwest, Kentucky Baptists were among nearly 1,000 Southern Baptist disaster relief volunteers deployed to clean up downed trees and debris in Missouri and Oklahoma.

Danny Decker, state disaster relief director for the Missouri Baptist Convention, called the recent ice storm a "level four" (out of five) disaster. Twenty counties along both sides of the Interstate 44 corridor in southwest Missouri were declared national disaster areas by President Bush.

"It's Hurricane Katrina with ice," Decker said. "Some are being told that it will be four weeks or longer before they get their power back."

Responding to needs in Missouri and Oklahoma, Southern Baptist units already have prepared more than 45,000 meals, completed more than 660 chainsaw jobs and provided nearly 500 showers and laundry loads. Approximately 3,500 to 4,000 chainsaw jobs remain to be completed, Decker added.

"It's going to be a two-month recovery process if the number of volunteers holds out," he said. "It's very extensive."

About 70 Baptist volunteers are working out of the incident command team headquarters at the Tri-County Baptist Association in Nixa, Mo., an area south of Springfield hard-hit by the ice and snow storms.

In all, approximately 40 disaster relief recovery, chainsaw, feeding and laundry units were mobilized to southwest Missouri and 30 teams were dispatched to Oklahoma, according to Jim Burton, director of the disaster operations center at the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board in Alpharetta, Ga.

Lessons from Muriel



SHEPHERDS' OASIS Kentucky Baptist ministers and spouses gathered in Lexington Jan. 18-20 for the KBC's ninth annual Shepherding the Shepherd conference. (KBC photo by Larry Brannin)

McQuilkin shares 7 truths about love at Shepherding event

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

Lexington—It has been nearly 17 years since Robertson McQuilkin resigned as president of Columbia Bible College and Seminary to care for his wife, Muriel.

Then moving into advanced stages of Alzheimer's disease, Muriel lived for 13 more years, her husband continuing to care for her until her death.

No matter how much time passes, though, people still want to hear their story, which McQuilkin

shared at the closing session of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Shepherding the Shepherd conference Jan. 18-20 in Lexington.

"People would ask, 'Why don't you put her in an institution?'" said McQuilkin, whose name adorns a faithfulness-in-marriage award given annually by Family Life Today.

"And I'd say, 'Well, I will when somebody else can take of her better than I can.' I loved her and I loved pouring out my life for her."

McQuilkin was the last of four

plenary session speakers at the Jan. 18-20 conference, which included former Kentucky Baptist pastors Steve Pettit and Clay Smith, and author Gary Thomas.

Each of those speakers also led breakout sessions, as did McQuilkin's second wife, Deborah. Formerly a pastor's wife for 29 years, she led a workshop on coping as a pastor's family.

The annual conference, which attracted more than 300 participants, is co-sponsored by Baptist

□ See McQuilkin details 7 ... *Page 3*

Kentucky pastors challenged to confront sanctity of life issues

By Kristie Randolph
Kentucky Baptist Convention

Elizabethtown—Kentucky Baptist pastors are being encouraged to bring a renewed focus on abortion and other sanctity of life issues to ensure that congregations have an understanding of what the Bible teaches on these topics.

The Kentucky Baptist Convention Committee on Public Affairs, following up on the Southern Baptist Convention's annual Sanctity of Human Life Sunday Jan. 21, introduced a new pro-life initiative at a Kentucky Baptist Pastors' Forum held Jan. 23 at Severns Valley Baptist Church.

Committee Chairman Paul Badgett, pastor of First Baptist Church of Pikeville, urged pastors to address the issue from their pulpits in a way

that does not condemn but educates their members about the high value God places on all human life. He said that while the committee is initially focusing on abortion, sanctity of human is a broad topic that includes such areas as stem cell research, care for the elderly and end-of-life issues.

Paul Chitwood, immediate past KBC president, said he and other pastors have not spoken out enough on pro-life issues.

"There is a deafening silence coming from our pulpits on this issue," said Chitwood, pastor of First Baptist Church of Mount Washington. "Many of us mention abortion from time to time, but there is much more we could be doing."

In a session titled "Preaching that Addresses Issues Facing Our

Culture," committee members also offered practical tips on educating congregations. An information packet included fact sheets, a sample bulletin insert available through the SBC's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission and a sample sermon.

Chitwood shared clips from "The Biology of Prenatal Development," an educational film distributed by National Geographic that shows video footage of a developing baby inside the womb. Chitwood said the video was instrumental in changing his approach to pro-life issues, and encouraged pastors to use the video as a tool for educating others.

Wayne Spivey, pastor of Cynthia Baptist Church, issued a plea for pastors to prayerfully consider the best way to preach the topic to their congregations. Spivey shared

a personal account of his decision to address the issue with his congregation and emphasized the need to speak the truth while extending grace.

"I might not ever change Washington D.C., but I have influence in my church and I have influence in my town," Spivey noted. "As Baptists, we're often known for what we're against. Let's show that we are for life."

The Committee on Public Affairs is developing materials that will be included in a preaching values kit designed to help pastors address cultural issues. The kits will be available later this year.

A section of the KBC Web site also has been dedicated to the issue. It is available at <http://www.kybaptist.org/publicaffairs>.

South African pastor shot, killed during Bible study

Fish Hoek, South Africa (ABP)—Phillip Mokson, founding pastor of Masiphumelele Baptist Church near Fish Hoek, South Africa, was shot and killed Jan. 22 as he taught a Bible study inside the church building. Family members including his wife, children and grandchildren witnessed the event.

The gunman also shot and seriously wounded a young woman who was known to have spurned his romantic advances, despite the efforts of another pastor to protect her. After others had left the church, the man reloaded, turned the gun on himself, and killed himself, according to John Thomas, a close friend of Mokson who arrived at the scene soon after the shootings.

Thomas is pastor of Fish Hoek Baptist Church, which sponsors the work in Masiphumelele. Residents are predominantly young and poor. As many as 25 percent of them are HIV positive, Thomas said.

The man who shot Mokson had been baptized as a member in late 2006, and the pastor had sought to counsel him during a period of deep depression. The man, known as Vusi, had attempted suicide at least twice. On one occasion Mokson had discovered him hanging inside the shack where he lived and cut him down.

Following the shootings, thousands of township residents surrounded the church building in hushed silence in tribute to the respected and influential pastor.

Mokson is remembered as a gifted individual who devoted his life to ministry among the people of Masiphumelele, often putting himself in danger for the sake of others, always promoting peace instead of violence.

A memorial service for Mokson was held Jan. 27 at the King of Kings Baptist Centre, a ministry center sponsored by Fish Hoek Baptist Church.

IMB cutting unrestricted funding to WMU

By Steve DeVane
North Carolina Biblical Recorder

Richmond, Va. (ABP)—Woman's Missionary Union of the Southern Baptist Convention, which has seen its annual revenues drop precipitously in the last eight years, now stands to lose hundreds of thousands of dollars more from one of the two mission boards it helps support.

The SBC's International Mission Board is phasing out unrestricted funding to WMU beginning this year. WMU records show that the IMB sent between \$200,000 and \$325,000 a year in such funds over the last 20 years.

IMB spokesperson Wendy Norville said the mission board has given WMU \$250,000 annually for the past three years. This year, that amount will decrease to \$200,000. Next year, it will drop to \$100,000 before being eliminated completely in 2009.

WMU raises more than half of the IMB's annual budget by promoting the annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions. An auxiliary of the SBC, WMU is governed independently of the SBC and receives no funding from the denomination's Cooperative Program budget.

WMU revenue sources

National WMU's budget comes from sales of missions education materials as well as individual and church donations, conference fees and other revenue sources.

Conservative SBC leaders have long had tensions with WMU's more moderate leadership. Previous attempts to exert more SBC control over the auxiliary have failed. However, WMU has suffered declines in

its revenue and other forms of support in recent decades, as younger women in many churches increasingly eschew traditional WMU groups in favor of women's ministries that focus more on individual development than missionary support.

Income from WMU's periodical subscriptions has dropped from about \$9.2 million in 1999-2000 to about \$6.76 million in 2005-2006.

Norville said the IMB will continue reimbursing WMU for promoting the annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. The IMB has sent national and state WMU organizations about \$350,000 a year to cover the costs of producing and shipping offering materials, she said.

Julie Walters, a WMU spokesperson, said the reimbursements cover the costs of printing and mailing the materials but not the salaries of WMU employees who write and design them. WMU has not sought money to cover those costs, she added.

Norville said stopping the IMB's contributions to WMU is part of a move by the agency to do away with such grants. Similar contributions to other groups also are being eliminated in favor of specific contractual arrangements, she noted.

IMB leaders will consider increasing funding to WMU if there are other expenses related to promotion of the offering, Norville said.

"We continue to value our partnership with WMU and intend to continue to work together to promote the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering," she said.

WMU owns the trademark to the offering's name, but all funds collected go to the IMB. Since the agency first began collecting the offer-

ing in 1888, it has provided approximately \$2.5 billion to Southern Baptist international missionaries.

WMU leaders said that despite WMU's financial challenges, they are excited about the organization's future and remain committed to engaging Christians in missions.

"It is through missions education that preschoolers, children, youth and adults develop missions awareness that leads to a lifestyle of commitment and obedience to the Great Commission," said WMU Executive Director Wanda Lee and national WMU President Kaye Miller in a statement.

"We firmly believe that this is what God has called us to do since our inception in 1888—to challenge Christian believers to understand and be radically involved in the mission of God. While our purpose had not changed in 118 years, some of the delivery approaches and methods have to ensure relevance for today" they added.

Deficit tops \$5 million since '95

WMU records show that its expenses have exceeded revenues five out of the past 11 years. Including investment gains and losses, WMU's expenses have exceeded revenues by about \$5.08 million since 1995.

"We are doing everything we can proactively to turn that around," the WMU's Walters said.

WMU also has lost funding in recent years from the other SBC missionary agency it promotes, the North American Mission Board.

Gifts to WMU from NAMB and its predecessor, the Home Mission Board, have dropped from more than \$450,000 in the late 1980s and early 1990s, to \$50,000 a year for the last three years.

Female professor denied tenure at Southwestern

Fort Worth, Texas—Sheri Klouda, a former professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, said she lost her job teaching Hebrew in the seminary's school of theology because she is a woman.

But she wasn't prepared for the fallout that followed.

News of her story first broke on a Jan. 17 blog post by Oklahoma pastor Wade Burleson. In the entry, Burleson said Klouda was dismissed by President Paige Patterson because of her gender. Patterson declined to comment on the issue.

Public outcry at the dismissal, chronicled in reports in the Dallas Morning News and Religion News Service, has given the issue unexpected prominence.

"It just kind of ballooned," Klouda said, adding that the situation "got bigger" than expected. "The Southern Baptist Convention and Southwestern are all so big, and I'm so little. I'm just one person."

Klouda joined the school in a tenure-track position in 2002. In 2003, Patterson, who had recently been hired as the school's president, personally assured her the administration change would not jeopardize her position, she said.

"He made some pretty grim statements in press conferences following his appointment," Klouda said, "but he told me in a meeting that I

would not lose my job because of my gender."

On June 7, 2004, Klouda said, she was told by a school administrator that Patterson would not recommend her for tenure.

"It's no secret that the issue was my gender," Klouda said. "When I wasn't assigned any classes for the fall semester of 2006, Patterson encouraged me to tell my students that the decision was based on his views and convictions about women teaching men. He believes the local church is a paradigm for the school, and in the local church, women may not be in leadership."

Burleson and other critics insist that interpretation is an unnecessary narrowing of the parameters of leadership and participation in the SBC.

After learning in 2004 that she would not get tenure at the school, Klouda's contract was terminated in December of 2006. She has since received a teaching position at Taylor University in Upland, Ind.

T. Van McClain, chair of Southwestern's board of trustees, released a statement denying that Klouda was dismissed. "Actually, she did not have tenure and, like hundreds of professors around the U.S. every year, was told that she would not be awarded tenure," he said.

McClain also denied that gender

discrimination played a role in Klouda's departure.

"The second issue involves the desire of (the seminary) to have only men teaching who are qualified to be pastors or who have been pastors in the disciplines of theology, biblical studies, homiletics and pastoral ministry," he wrote. "This is in keeping, of course, with the statement of faith of the SBC that clearly says the pastorate is reserved for men."

McClain said the school was free to hire only men for these positions, saying, "It is a matter of freedom of religion in this country for a private institution to align itself with the majority views of its constituency."

McClain called Klouda's hiring a "momentary lax of the parameters" and said the school has now returned to "its traditional, confessional and biblical position."

Benjamin Cole, pastor of Parkview Baptist Church in Arlington, Texas, and a part-time student at Southwestern, has filed complaints with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and Association of Theological Schools, the two agencies that accredit the seminary. Klouda said she didn't know whether she'd do the same with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or other academic bodies.

Compiled from reporting by Associated Baptist Press and Religion News Service

Lebanese Baptist leader requests prayer for Beirut

Beirut (ABP)—An urgent communiqué from a Lebanese Baptist leader warned Jan. 25 that escalating violence is threatening the Beirut Baptist School.

Nabil Costa, executive director of the Lebanese Society for Educational and Social Development, sent an e-mail message to friends and colleagues at Baptist institutions worldwide requesting prayer for Lebanon and for the school, which serves preschool through high school-age students. It is located near Beirut's commercial center.

"The security situation deteriorated sharply this afternoon in the vicinity of our Beirut Baptist School," wrote Costa, whose organization runs the school and the nearby Arab Baptist Theological Seminary. "Til this very hour some of our students remain at BBS, unable to go home because of the shooting in the streets."

The conflicts were outgrowths of a weeks-old protest that supporters of Hezbollah, an extremist Shiite Muslim political party in Lebanon, and its allies have waged against the Sunni-led government of Prime Minister Fouad Siniora. The unrest followed a devastating bombing campaign by Israeli fighter jets and naval vessels in July and August of 2006, mainly aimed at Hezbollah-friendly areas of the country.

During the Israeli attacks, the nation was shut down and much of its infrastructure destroyed, killing hundreds. Israeli officials said the attacks were in response to a cross-border raid by Hezbollah guerillas and Hezbollah missile attacks on northern Israel.

During the Israeli bombing campaign, both Beirut Baptist School and the seminary housed hundreds of Shiite refugees from other parts of the nation. However, the schools remained relatively safe.

But Costa noted the latest conflict has led to minor conflicts all over Beirut.

"Please pray that God may intervene and calm the spirits of the two main conflicting groups," he wrote.

Costa also requested prayers for Lebanon's diverse Christian community, which is among the Middle East's largest and encompasses Catholics and Orthodox Christians as well as various Protestant groups.

"Pray that the Body of Christ in Lebanon refrains from taking sides, but maintains its focus on the Lord and seeks amidst this difficult time to bring about a spirit of reconciliation and peacemaking," he wrote.

Costa requested guidance "as I seek to lead the decision-making process in relation to when we should open or close our schools during this delicate period of time."

Shepherding speakers urge pastors to seek God's answers

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

Lexington—Every pastor will face crises in ministry, but too many quit before they see God's deliverance, a South Carolina pastor told participants at the recent Shepherd conference.

Speaking during a Jan. 19 plenary session, Clay Smith said arriving at a crisis of confidence often comes in the midst of anger or depressing circumstances.

"We have to decide if we're going to roll the dice, if we're going to have faith, if we will ask, 'God, are you really good?'" said Smith, pastor of Alice Drive Baptist Church in Sumter, S.C.

Highlighting "The Three Acts of Ministry," Smith, a former Kentucky Baptist pastor, described being invited back for a significant anniversary by a church he left under unpleasant circumstances.

Smith sparked laughter when he told of praying that God would let him preach so well that people would be sorry they let him go.

That day Smith said he preached a message so stirring that at the end the congregation stood in unison and exclaimed, "Amen!"

Recognize God's blessings

"That's the first act of ministry," Smith noted. "It's the blessing of success. It's when you counsel couples and they stay married. You pray for people and they get healed."

Still, along the way he learned that not many people are that im-



BLESSINGS Former Kentucky Baptist pastor Clay Smith challenged fellow ministers to recognize God's blessings that come through both success and pain. (KBC photo by Larry Brannin)

pressed with his success and he always has to defer credit to God.

"When you've been at a church 12 years like I have, I've run out of stories," he added. "My children aren't cute any longer."

Smith said success isn't negative, citing Job as an example. God never criticized Job for his success or called him sinful for his achievements, he pointed out.

"I know all glory leads to God, but once in a while He lets it shine on you," Smith said. "What do you do in the first stage of success? You dance because God has used you. Don't feel bad about the blessings."

But Smith cautioned that every pastor also will experience the blessings of hurt, which he called the second act of ministry.

That stage is illustrated by people who say, "I don't think you know what you're talking about" or when

a pastor discovers his deacons have been meeting in secret.

"Every pastor lives through the second stage," said Smith, describing the strain on a pastor's spouse, children and health. "You're about ready to scream."

Despite the problems, he said these hurts bring such blessings as forcing pastors to be real, quit hiding in a ministry shell and making them hungry for God.

In addition, such problems lead to the third act of ministry, which is to be like Job and demand that God show up, Smith said.

"When your moment comes, what are you going to do?" Smith asked. "Are you going to implode? Going to run? Or are you going to risk it all and say, 'God, I'm going to roll the dice. I want to know You.'"

Messengers, not messiahs

While Smith encouraged pastors to pursue God's answers, author Gary Thomas reminded them they are messengers, not messiahs.

Thomas, who spoke the previous evening, compared the guilt, mistakes and shortcomings of family life to limitations faced in ministry.

"Can you be a parent without facing guilt?" Thomas asked. "I haven't met one."

"Can you be a pastor without facing guilt? The stakes are so high."

Thomas, the founder of the Center for Evangelical Spirituality in Bellingham, Wash., said the demand for excellence has never been higher, noting that people are exposed

to Chuck Swindoll's preaching, great advice from Focus on the Family and news of growth in Rick Warren's church.

Then, they expect their pastor to duplicate those feats, he said.

"If you could just focus on being a preacher, you'd be fine," Thomas said. "But you're a pastor, a son, husband and father. You feel so spread out."

If such pressures lead pastors to ask God why He put them in a position where they feel so unqualified, that is exactly where the Lord wants them to be, Thomas said.

"If you're feeling that, you're in a place where God can do something great in your ministry and in your home," he declared.

"We aren't called to be messiahs, we're called to be messengers. You don't have to be a messiah in your home; you don't have to be a messiah in your church. You can be the best messenger to point others to God."

Thomas said if he is honest about his faults and shortcomings, then his children might reason that if God can use their father, He can use them too.

Such an outlook paid off recently when his oldest son preached his first sermon and 25 young people went forward for prayer, Thomas said.

"If you're in your church to make an impression, you're like a spiritual mule," he warned. "You can't be God to your church family, but you can point them to God."

"You can't be God to your church family, but you can point them to God."

Gary Thomas, founder of the Center for Evangelical Spirituality in Bellingham, Wash.

McQuilkin details 7 lessons about love at Shepherding conference

Continued from page 1
Healthcare System.

Many pastors and spouses called the annual event "refreshing" and "powerful," said Richard Adams, director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's leadership development department.

"I heard comments like, 'Could we have more time?'" Adams said. "Could we start on Wednesday so we could have more encouragement?"

"We got a deeper sense of God's love and expression of His love to us. God continues to manifest Himself and put the pieces together. He's the Architect here."

McQuilkin, a missionary to Japan before going to Columbia in 1968, also is the author of "Life in the Spirit," an interactive Bible study published by LifeWay Christian Resources.

Quiet, soft-spoken and unassuming at age 79, McQuilkin professes to have no idea why the story of caring for his wife seems to have taken on a life of its own.

Platform for testimony

He said his oldest daughter might have expressed it best when she told him, "Dad, you think God put you here on earth to be a missionary or president of Columbia. He didn't do that."

"He just gave you those to give you a platform for your story of taking care of Mom to be disseminated."

McQuilkin noted that he knows

many other couples in Columbia, S.C., who have endured more grievous situations, yet seemingly go unnoticed.

Still, McQuilkin professes to have learned much through the pain of watching his wife of 55 years slowly die. He highlighted seven things Muriel taught him about love:

■ **Love needs to be expressed.** That needs to be more than a routine "Honey, I love you," he said, noting that Solomon's "love talk" with the Shulamite bride sounded so good it was enshrined in Scripture.

■ **Love needs to be demonstrated.** McQuilkin said Muriel lived for him, with her primary goal making his ministry successful.

"The idea of self-assertion and self-fulfillment ... never occurred to her," McQuilkin said. "Hers was all self-sacrifice for her children, for me, the church and the world."

■ **Love forgives.** After Muriel's death, McQuilkin was reading through old love letters when he came across one that had never been delivered.

In it, she wondered if it were possible that he had been wrong on occasion and she was right, yet she never said anything.

"She and God would bear the pain so I would not," McQuilkin said. "Muriel taught me that true love forgives—over and over."

■ **Love partners.** When they were starting churches in Japan and didn't have a musician in their small

group, Muriel taught herself to play a concertina so she could lead music. She also attracted crowds by drawing artistic scenes.

After they returned to the States, she formed numerous outreaches to students and found other ways of supporting Columbia.

"Muriel mobilized all her superlative creativity and inexhaustible energy to make my work succeed," McQuilkin said. "Doing that, she taught me to do the same for her dreams."

■ **Love is companionship.** McQuilkin added that love takes intentionality. Even after his wife couldn't communicate and was bed-ridden, McQuilkin said he talked to her continuously.

"You know there's a wonderful relationship that comes when someone is wholly dependent on you," he said. "It's nice to be needed."

■ **Love endures.** McQuilkin noted that in the United States seven of 10 couples split up when one spouse gets a terminal illness.

God doesn't like that, he said, noting that Psalm 15 expresses approval for the one who "swears to his own hurt," while Solomon said God loathes the promise breaker.

Endurance is a matter of integrity and commitment, both to God and each other, McQuilkin said.

■ **Love is vertical as well as horizontal.** The Old Testament speaks of God as the husband of Israel, while the New Testament describes Christ as the bridegroom of the church, McQuilkin said.

When Jesus prayed in John 17

that "they may be one," He wasn't just talking about humans' relationship with each other, McQuilkin added.

"The main force of His prayer in John is that we may be one as He and the Father are one, that we may be one in them," McQuilkin said. "This is what He's after."

McQuilkin's letter of love

Robertson McQuilkin resigned as president of Columbia Bible College in 1990 to take care of his wife who was suffering from Alzheimer's disease. He wrote in his resignation letter:

"My dear wife, Muriel, has been in failing mental health for about eight years. So far I have been able to carry both her ever-growing needs and my leadership responsibilities at CBC. But recently it has become apparent that Muriel is contented most of the time she is with me and almost none of the time I am away from her. It is not just 'discontent.' She is filled with fear—even terror—that she has lost me and always goes in search of me when I leave home. Then she may be full of anger when she cannot get to me. So it is clear to me that she needs me now, full-time.

"Perhaps it would help you to understand if I shared with you what I shared at the time of the announcement of my resignation in chapel. The decision was made, in a way, 42 years ago when I promised to care for Muriel 'in sickness and in health ... till death do us part.' So, as I told the students and faculty, as a man of my word, integrity has something to do with it. But so does fairness. She has cared for me fully and sacrificially all these years; if I cared for her for the next 40 years I would not be out of debt. Duty, however, can be grim and stoic. But there is more; I love Muriel. She is a delight to me—her childlike dependence and confidence in me, her warm love, occasional flashes of that wit I used to relish so, her happy spirit and tough resilience in the face of her continual distressing frustration. I do not have to care for her, I get to! It is a high honor to care for so wonderful a person."

Conflict provides opportunity for couples to learn & grow

Q: There is a couple in my Sunday school class who talk as if they never have any conflict. Sometimes I get the impression that Christian couples should not have conflict if they are reading the Bible and spending time with God.

MARRIAGE

I don't share about conflicts I have with my husband because I feel embarrassed. Is it a sin when my husband and I don't get along?

Conflict is a normal part of relationships. Conflict arises from differences. Because God has created you and your husband uniquely, conflict will arise as part of that natural design.

There are skills involved in managing conflict. Scripture is filled with directives for guiding our behavior. When you and your husband have conflict, each of you has a choice about how you manage your behavior. Research describes five conflict styles: Avoidance, Accommodation, Competition, Compromise and Collaboration. There is a time and place appropriate for each style. Balswick and Balswick (1999) describe how Jesus used each of these conflict styles. Couples can get stuck in patterns where they use one style exclusively. If a spouse uses avoidance routinely, then the couple will struggle to resolve conflict.

Conflict can be considered one of God's good gifts. It is an opportunity to acknowledge and discover the differences between two people. When you and your husband have conflict, you have an opportunity to grow in your understanding of your husband's uniqueness and expand your self-awareness.

Try to reframe conflict as an opportunity for growth and intimacy. Often the better we know and understand someone else, the closer and more connected we feel to them.

Conflict has a bad reputation. The ways in which some couples handle conflict are sinful. It does not have to be that way. Couples who desire only smooth sailing probably are avoiding conflict. They are missing an opportunity to deepen their relationship. Learn the skills for managing conflict and then pray that God will use each of these opportunities to strengthen your marriage and bring greater intimacy.—Valerie Vincent

Q: How important is it to keep current with my kids' interests and activities?

Okay, let's take a little quiz. Who is Miley Cyrus? What is My Scene My Bling Bling? What is Neopets? What are Uggs? What is a Digi-makeover interactive makeup kit? What is American Dragon? If you're not sure, ask your kids!

They will probably know. As parents, teachers and friends of children, we might need to know too.

Keeping current makes it easier for you to relate to kids and to build relationships with them. Whether they are your kids, kids you are coaching or kids you are working with in Sunday school, staying current will give you more points of connection for conversation and common interest.

Children's minister Tara Waldrop reminds us that, by definition, keeping current is not something we do just once. Because trends change, we must constantly pay attention. We also must constantly sift ideas, information and products to make sure they are consistent with our values and beliefs, and thus suitable for our children. Popular does not necessarily mean good and right.

Ultimately, you have to decide for yourself about the Harry Potter books, the Yugioh card game and the host of television shows and related products. If you don't have children, visit a toy store from time to time; search the Internet for trends; talk to children. Keep current!

(Answers: Miley Cyrus plays popular singer Hannah Montana on TV; My Scene My Bling Bling is a Barbie doll; Neopets is an online virtual pet simulation game; Uggs are popular shoes; the interactive makeup kit was the most popular toy for girls in 2006; and American Dragon is the No. 1 ranked kids show on TV.)—David Garrard

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Forum affirms evangelism, sanctity of life

Seldom does a single conference tackle the diverse issues of both evangelism and abortion. But that was the case during last week's Kentucky Baptist Pastors' Forum.

The one-day seminar, held Jan. 23 at Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown, was designed to address key topics of concern to Baptist ministers. In addition to sessions highlighting evangelism and pro-life concerns, the event included roundtable discussions about churches' new member assimilation efforts and other ministry-related issues as well as a session on Bible study software.

But the forum's primary emphases included a message by Craig Loscalzo on "Raising the Spiritual Climate for Evangelism through the Use of Preaching and Teaching" and a pro-life initiative outlined by three Kentucky Baptist pastors during a session on "Preaching that Addresses Issues Facing Our Culture."

Loscalzo, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington, cited Christ's warning to the church in Ephesus in Revelation 2 that the congregation had lost its first love.

Noting that such a crisis can impact any church, Loscalzo said many pastors reach the point where their primary responsibility is to keep the church's machinery running rather than focusing on sharing the love of Christ.

"Before too long, we become nothing more than mechanics of a self-perpetuating machine that has grown so far from the heartbeat of Christ that we're not sure why we're doing what we do any longer," he lamented.

To overcome such obstacles, Loscalzo said churches must carefully discern the difference between ritual vs. worship, religion vs. relationship, busyness vs. holiness, programs vs. discipleship, church vs. Christ and culture vs. Christ.

"What we must do is find ways of doing what Jesus did by encountering people in their pathways and then talking about Jesus," he suggested. "If we are going to love Jesus Christ, we're got to love the people in the world Jesus loves and move beyond empty relationships with Him and them."

On the sanctity of human life front, Kentucky Baptist pastors Paul Chitwood, Paul Badgett and Wayne Spivey highlighted pro-life efforts being promoted by the Kentucky Baptist Committee on Public Affairs.

Chitwood, pastor of First Baptist Church of Mount Washington and immediate past president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, shared clips from "The Biology of Prenatal Development," a video distributed by National Geographic.

Noting that the video is being used in science class-

es on the high school and university levels and elsewhere, Chitwood added that it is "an incredible tool in the struggle for life among pro-life, Baptist-believing people."

Voicing concern that "by and large there is deafening silence coming from our pulpits on this issue," Chitwood said, "There is so much we are not doing that we could be doing... You have the power to save lives."

Spivey, pastor of Cynthiana Baptist Church, told conference participants that he spent 23 years as a pastor without directly addressing the abortion issue.

"It wasn't because I didn't believe abortion was wrong, because I do," he said. "It wasn't because I was afraid to preach the truth."

Rather, he said, it was because "I didn't want to be labeled an anti-abortion fanatic" and be lumped together with abortion clinic bombers or picketers screaming anti-abortion slogans.

"So what did I do? Nothing. What did I say? Nothing," Spivey recounted.

After viewing the National Geographic video, however, "for the first time I saw a pro side to this whole issue... I saw what was actually taking place in the womb."

Noting that an average of four or five babies are aborted in the typical Kentucky county each week, Spivey said, "I might not ever change Washington, D.C., but I have influence in my church and I have influence in my town and I can't remain silent any longer."

Spivey challenged fellow pastors to speak the truth, extend grace to those who fail and be proactive on the issue.

Paul Badgett, pastor of First Baptist Church of Pikeville and chairman of the KBC Committee on Public Affairs, said he has called on his congregation to be concerned about life from his congregation to be aware that God offers forgiveness, be cautious in how to approach the issue and be thankful for life, including the abundant Christian life and eternal life offered by God.

Drawing the topics of evangelism and pro-life ministry together, Badgett said he also called on church members to be soul winners. Noting that the ultimate solution to the abortion crisis will not be found through politics, he declared, "To end this abortion thing, we are going to have to reach our communities for Christ."

As each of the forum speakers clearly communicated, approaching both evangelism and sanctity of life issues from a positive rather than a negative slant offers the greatest hope for impacting our hurting culture with the life-affirming message of the gospel of Christ.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

Seeking unity in cooperative missions

By Frank Page

Taylors, S.C. (BP)—As Southern Baptist Convention president, I repeatedly have called on Southern Baptists to seek the Lord to "send His reviving Holy Spirit."

There are many areas in which we need the Holy Spirit's help. One of those areas is church transformation. Another is personal repentance and confession. Yet another area is our call for God to help energize our evangelistic efforts.

But I also believe we need to call upon our Lord to unify us in a cooperative mission task. As I have traveled around our country in the last few months, I have become increasingly aware of deepening factions within our convention. Some differences are based on age, while others are based on theology. There are

factions among us regarding methodology and philosophy. There are groups that have developed because of common interests. I believe that

varying differences are understandable and even acceptable. However, when the groups become so closed that they fail to recognize our common bond, then we begin to see deep trouble.

Is there not a common bond that should pull us powerfully together in a common direction? I believe the answer to that question lies in the cooperative mission task God has set forth for us. Can we not agree that this mission task is the common denominator for Southern Baptists?

Much has been said recently about the Cooperative Program. Can we not agree that the Coopera-

tive Program has been the common funding source that has called us to set aside regional differences and personal agendas? Again, I believe the answer is yes.

I am calling for Southern Baptists to renew a passion for a worldwide evangelistic and mission thrust. I believe that God's Holy Spirit can empower a unified mission movement which truly shares the relevant message of Christ with a lost and dying world and continent. It will not be done as long as Southern Baptists "fuss and fight" among themselves. It will not be done if we seek to promote personal agendas and political initiatives. It will be done only when we—even though we are in varying interest groups—decide that the common unified mission task is our prime agenda!

Frank Page, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, is pastor of First Baptist Church of Taylors, S.C.

COMMENTARY

Daytona Beach church marks 25 years of FAITH ministry

By Norm Miller
Baptist Press

Daytona Beach, Fla. (BP)—An accident on a construction site blinded Shane. For three years he remained mad at God, wondering if blindness was his punishment for a self-described wild lifestyle.

Mark Larson knew none of that as he and two other people approached Shane's apartment door to which they were "drawn by God," Larson says.

Larson—a member of First Baptist Church of Daytona Beach, Fla., where the Sunday school-based FAITH evangelism strategy originated—told the rest of the story to hundreds of participants attending a FAITH training clinic Jan. 24.

Shane explained that just two

nights prior to the visit he'd had a dream in which he saw people from a church come to his door and tell him about Jesus. Two nights later they did, and Shane prayed a prayer of repentance and faith, committing his life to Jesus Christ.

"I no longer feel as if God is against me," said Larson, recounting Shane's comments. "But I feel like He is with me now."

Successful strategy

Shane's story and Larson's testimony are among the thousands of experiences that highlight 25 years and 50 semesters of intentional evangelism at the Florida church.

Through the evangelism strategy, the gospel is shared by using the acronym "F.A.I.T.H." The letters stand for "forgiveness," "available," "impossible," "turn" and "heaven."

Bobby Welch, co-founder of the FAITH evangelism strategy and keynote speaker for the training clinic, cited some of his experiences in telling people about Jesus.

Welch, the immediate past president of the Southern Baptist Convention and pastor emeritus of the church, said that while driving one night he noticed his gas gauge was nearly on empty. He didn't want to stop because gas along the interstate was overpriced. But he did. When the receipt failed to pop out of the pump, he went inside. The next few minutes found Welch leading the

clerk in a prayer of repentance from sin and of faith in Christ with Welch sharing the gospel using the FAITH outline.

Recalling another occasion, Welch said he drove into a convenience store parking lot, then went inside not knowing why. He decided to get a cup of coffee. When he paid for the coffee, he also shared the gospel. That clerk also prayed, committing her life to Christ.

The woman explained that she needed spiritual help because her baby had died recently, Welch said. Then she reached for a stack of gospel tracts that people had given her and told Welch no one had explained what they meant.

"You're the first one to do that," Welch quoted the woman as saying. "And you're the only one to pray with me."

Preaching on the theme of endurance, Welch read from 1 Timothy 2:3-4, reminding the crowd that Christians witness "not so the parking lot will be full, or that the offerings will go up. We do this for Jesus. We do this for Jesus. Some of you preachers out there need to hear me on this."

Welch told Baptist Press that 50 consecutive semesters of evangelism "is a hallmark in the equipping and training of people to reach the world and meet needs in their own community."

"I think what is so powerful about

this is the focus FAITH evangelism can give to church leaders and members, because they all function out of one set of core values," he said. "FAITH evangelism provides that cohesive boost that so many churches need to first get united and then to get pointed in the right direction."

A call for consistency

Emphasizing the need for a consistent plan of church evangelism, Welch said, "The longer it goes, the stronger it gets."

"When I heard about the milestone that First Baptist had reached, I was elated and thankful that this church has been so intentional about evangelism for so many years," said Jay Johnston, director of FAITH evangelism and discipleship at LifeWay Christian Resources.

"For this church to dedicate 32 weeks a year for 25 years in sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ—it's not only commendable, it also reveals the church's compassion for those who don't know our Savior, and a commitment to equip the saints for the work of the ministry according to Ephesians chapter four," Johnston said. "First Baptist's dedication provides an example worthy of imitation for all pastors and churches throughout the Southern Baptist Convention."

More information about the FAITH evangelism strategy is available at www.lifeway.com.

FAITH FOCUS Jerry Huey (left), pastor of St. Matthews Baptist Church in Merced, Calif., and Philip Kincaid, a member of First Baptist Church of Daytona Beach, pray together during a FAITH training clinic Jan. 24 at First Baptist, Daytona Beach. (BP photo by Norm Miller)



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1:00 pm-9:15 pm CST • Conference Sessions

Tuesday, February 27

8:30 am-8:30 pm CST • Conference Sessions

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Mike Licon

Director of Apologetics & Interfaith
Evangelism, North American
Mission Board, Atlanta, Georgia



Charles Carter

Pastor Emeritus, Shades
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Bill Wagner

Professor of World Missions,
Golden Gate Seminary, Mill Valley,
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Richard Gaines

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Don Wilton

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Jeff LaBorg

Senior Pastor, College Heights
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Tennessee



Raul Vazquez

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9:30 am CST • Registration/Continental Breakfast
10:00 am-11:30 am CST • Breakout Session
12:00-1:30 pm CST • Lunch featuring speaker: Carol Kent



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This event is sponsored by the Church Development & Evangelism Team of the Kentucky Baptist Convention and is made possible by your gifts to the Cooperative Program.

The KBF story comes to life (part 2)

Foundation helps donors maintain ministry legacy

The story of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation comes to life not in its impressive balance sheet or investment performance, but through the stories of the men and women from a variety of financial stations in life, who have believed in the Foundation's ministry and committed to it all or part of the financial resources God entrusted to them, for the perpetual benefit of one or more of the missionary, educational and benevolent ministries for which they had affection.



Barry Allen

Here are additional examples of the ways people used the Foundation this past year to accomplish what they understood to be God's will for the material resources with which He blessed and entrusted to them.

Upon the death of a widow, a perpetual endowment was established by a bequest in her will, which will benefit the Cooperative Program, her church and three Christian education institutions.

A couple established a donor advised fund with an initial gift of appreciated stock. The couple will make recommendations to distribute funds to a variety of charitable organizations at various times and

in various amounts.

A couple established a charitable remainder trust with the gift of real estate. They will receive income for both of their lives; the remainder will benefit a Christian ministerial training institution.

A widow who had entered into a charitable gift annuity with the KBF several years ago died; the remainder was transferred to the Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union Heritage Fund, as she had designated.

A church established a missions endowment and a capital improvements endowment to receive members' gifts, memorial gifts and bequests. Earnings from these will provide perpetual income to the church for the designated purposes.

A number of institutions, including churches, transferred endowment gifts they had received directly to the KBF for investment management purposes.

I hope the examples I have shared in my last two columns have been helpful to you as you prayerfully consider God's purposes for what He has entrusted to you.

Barry Allen is president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, PO Box 436389, Louisville, KY 40253; (866) 489-3533; www.kybaptistfoundation.org

Kudzu

Doug Marlette



For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



Bible Crosswords

Across

- 1 Jesus is the good ____
- 8 Thank you, Br.
- 10 Jesus made water into this at Cana
- 11 Prophet in Jerusalem that warned Paul he would be arrested (Acts 21:10-11)
- 14 To set apart for a duty of the church
- 15 "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood ... but ... against the ____ of the darkness" (Ephesians 6:12)
- 16 To have a strong smell
- 17 The people of Athens had an altar to an ____ God (Acts 17:23)
- 19 This servant of God must be the husband of one wife, grave, and not double-tongued (1 Tim. 3:8-12)
- 20 "____, and ye shall receive" (John 16:24)
- 23 Tower where Jacob (Israel) camped on his way to Canaan (Genesis 35:21)
- 25 The opposite of live
- 27 Poisonous snakes (Deuteronomy 32:33)
- 29 Myself
- 30 Where Israel was held in bondage for centuries until Moses led them to freedom
- 31 Remaining residue after something has been burned
- 33 Pertaining to farming, prefix
- 34 A servant of the high priest lost this to Peter's sword
- 36 God asks us to improve or ____ our ways (Jeremiah 7:3)
- 37 "Teaching them to ____ all things" (Matthew 28:20)
- 40 ____ and fro

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

- 41 Second note of the musical scale
- 42 People sacrificed this to atone for sin
- 45 Helped Moses speak before Pharaoh
- 48 Revise
- 50 One who held up Moses' hands at the battle of Amalek (Exodus 17:12)
- 51 "Let us draw near with a true heart in full ____ of faith" (Hebrews 10:22)
- 18 Negative
- 21 "Seek ye first the ____ of God" (Matthew 6:33)
- 22 Swine
- 24 God's name for Himself: I ____ (Exodus 3:14)
- 25 The fourth of Israel's judges, a woman
- 26 Sight organs
- 27 Ancestor of family of porters who returned from exile (Nehemiah 7:45)
- 28 "Children, obey your ____ in the Lord" (Ephesians 6:1)
- 32 "Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a ____ that breaketh the rock" (Jeremiah 23:29)
- 33 Sluggards should learn from this insect
- 35 Assyrian region from which Sargon brought men to populate devastated Samaria (2 Kings 17:24)
- 38 Boyfriend, Fr.
- 39 The conscious self
- 43 Woman's name
- 44 Linear, abbr.
- 46 Railed transportation, abbr.
- 47 Sodium, chem. symbol
- 49 Technetium, chem. symbol

Down

- 1 The Word of God is sharper than this
- 2 "The labourer is worthy of his ____" (Luke 10:7)
- 3 Terminated
- 4 Reached a maximum
- 5 "Thus saith the Lord unto the ____ that keep my sabbaths" (Isaiah 56:4)
- 6 The absence of light
- 7 Ring of light
- 8 Spins.
- 9 Balaam's spoke to him by God's power
- 12 Firearm
- 13 "____ of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing" (Matthew 7:15)

Last week's solution

1	G	I	F	T	4	N	O	T	6	T	R	U	E
2	O	L	I	G	H	T	11	B	O	R	N		
12	D	W	E	L	T	14	G	E	M	15	D	W	
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24	E	L		25	R	E	C	E	I	26	V	E	D
28	A	D	29	30	31	E	V	32	I	V			
33	B	A	34	35	36			37	N	E	W		
39	D	A	R	K	N	E	S	41		42	E	R	O
43	R	E	E	S	T	44	O	S	S	47	Y	R	
48	B	E	A	R	W	I	T	N	E	S	50	S	T
51	O	N	S	52	E	T	O	53	T	R	U	T	H
55	W	A	T	E	R	56	C	H	57	N	A	Y	

Love Helping Kids Grow in Faith?

How do children develop their faith in God? What teaching methodologies are appropriate for helping children in faith development? What are the characteristics of an effective Preschool and Children's Ministry?

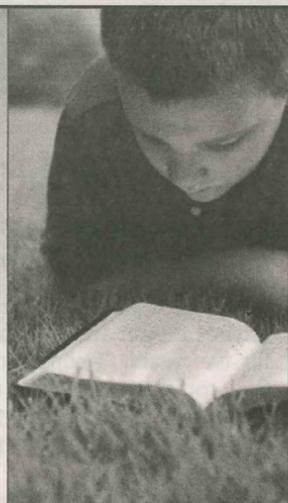
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WESTERNRECORDER



New school under construction near location of Amish tragedy

By Monica Von Dobeneck
Religion News Service

Nickel Mines, Pa.—An Amish one-room schoolhouse is quietly rising in Nickel Mines, Pa., in a field at the end of a private drive behind a row of houses.

Half-a-dozen men were working on the construction on a recent afternoon, within walking distance of the site of the school where a gunman shot 10 Amish girls Oct. 2, killing five of them.

An Amish man who did not give his name said the construction crew expected to open the school in March. The Amish community knocked down the original schoolhouse Oct. 12.

Nickel Mines became the center of worldwide media attention after Charles Carl Roberts, 32, lined up 10 girls and shot them after releasing the boys in the school. He then killed himself.

The boys and four of the surviving girls are attending classes in a garage. The fifth girl is disabled.

Mike Hart, treasurer of the Nickel Mines Accountability Committee, said Amish families whose children attended the old school will take their children to the construction site several times while the building is going up to ease the transition to the new school.

"From what I've heard, it's a bitersweet thing," Hart said. "This is the final part of the process of moving on."

At the nearby Bart Township Volunteer Fire Company, 60 percent of the firefighters are Amish, but they don't talk about the shootings

much, Chief Curt Woerth said.

"It's been a tough couple of months. We're just trying to move on," he said. "I would say this is a new start, a way to leave the past behind. ... Their strong faith has gotten them through it."

A "comfort quilt" hangs in the front of the firehouse. It was made by schoolchildren in Ohio who sent it to children affected by the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in New York. From there, it went to comfort children affected by Hurricane Katrina. Now it is in Nickel Mines.

Woerth said it will be passed on if there is another national tragedy affecting children, so for that reason, he hopes it never leaves.

Hart said contributions are trickling into the Accountability Committee from people around the world who were touched by the shootings and the Amish reaction to them, which included forgiving the gunman and welcoming his widow.

The \$3.6 million raised is being used for medical bills, counseling and transportation for the affected families. Some of the money will go toward the schoolhouse.

Woerth said the firehall still receives about 100 letters a week from well-wishers.

"It's amazing, the support of the world," he said. "But there's also something the Amish gave the world."

Hart said he hopes the world doesn't forget the Amish message of forgiveness.

"This has changed a lot of people's lives," he said. "Hopefully the message is not a short-lived one."

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A close-up, Kingdom view

Where else but Oneida could God assemble such a team of servants?

By Michael Spencer, assistant to the president

Sometimes, God shows you a picture of His Kingdom. I'm glad that a few weeks ago I was in the right place to see one.

It was a Sunday morning in Advent, and I was at Oneida Baptist Church. This particular morning the choir was mostly staff from OBI. As I looked at the men's section of the choir, I was looking through a window into God's Kingdom. God brings together, for His purposes, those who have a common Savior, a common faith and a common call.

They may be different in every way and their Kingdom assignments may not be the same, but they share the journey of walking with Jesus in serving others for the sake of the gospel. I looked at these men and realized what a miracle God does to bring people together on our ministry team.

Here was a man finishing his 32nd year at Oneida. A classroom teacher of great patience, he has shown Christ through teaching and patient encouragement for three decades.

Next to him was a seminary professor, back from the mission field, teaching music at OBI while his children attend our school. This is a man with qualifications and gifts to be anywhere, and we are blessed to have him and his wife with us for a second year. A gifted evangelist, many of our students will find Christ through his witness.

There was a middle-aged man who came to OBI out of college, married and has served here for almost 20 years. He is a talented poet and songwriter with a servant's heart and love for Oneida.



W.F. Underwood

Next to him stood a former pastor, seminary trained. He teaches English, lifeguarding and counsels students who decide to follow Christ. There's no more consistent encourager on campus.

Beside him was our farm manager—at one time a hugely successful swine breeder and a leader in using swine genetics in agriculture. God brought him and his wife to Oneida where he has used his love for students and farming to continue transforming our farm into a real ministry showcase. Often dealing with physical pain, he shows Christ to students and staff every day.

And then a retired public school teacher, using retirement years to be our middle school principal and girls' basketball coach. A layman with tremendous wisdom and gifts in education, he's made a huge difference in our school.

Finally, one of our longest-serving employees—a man with some limitations, but whose heart is unlimited in its desire to serve. By doing small but crucial jobs with great love and care, he reminds us of the humility of Christ and the importance of purity of heart.

In no other place would these men come together to serve as they do for the kind of financial compensation we offer. They do it for Jesus, because of Jesus, and in Jesus' name. That's why OBI is a place God uses; it is full of people who come to serve Him in His way and for His glory.

Perhaps you can be part of this team and offer your gifts to God in service here. No matter what else you do, please give and pray for our work.

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

Answering the call

Somerset student grows through studies & service

Second-year student Greg Haynes fought the call to ministry for two years. "I couldn't see how God could use me with my past," Greg said. "But in May 2004 the weight lifted off me when I obediently responded."

His wife and mother were not surprised about his decision; they had told Greg he was going to be a minister. "But it has to be God's call," he said.

He also recognized the need for preparation. Retired Somerset pastor C.E. Jacobs encouraged Greg to visit Clear Creek. He started as a commuter and moved his family to campus the weekend before Thanksgiving 2005. "We don't like change," he said. "It was a tough transition but we've been blessed."

He met his wife, Angie, at High Street Baptist Church in Somerset. "The only way she would date me was to meet her at church," Greg said. "God has provided for us. I started school this past semester owing money on my account. A scholarship came in and the Lord provided double what I owed to meet needs throughout this semester."

The family now includes Bailey, 6; Elijah, 2; and 1-month-old Jona-

thon. They live in the Bear Trail student housing area. They are grateful Bailey can play with neighbor children; the family also enjoys the Family Life Center.

On the student "workshop" program, Greg is responsible for the chapel sound system and production of "Clear Creek Chimes," a 15-minute devotional and interview program sent to about 15 radio stations.

His ministry studies find a practical application through his service as pastor of Hardy's Creek Baptist Church in Jonesville, Va.

"The things in class and the experiences of my teachers constantly relate to my work as a pastor," Greg said. "The Lord continually puts it together."

The family enjoys the 35-minute drive on Sunday mornings. The church prepared a basement room for them to use while on the field; Greg visits on Sunday afternoons.

"It is a country church with 15-20 in Sunday school," he said. "They love the Lord and want to see people reached for Christ. We're blessed by their loving support."

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

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

Pro-life supporters hold annual D.C. march

Washington (BP)—Tens of thousands of pro-life Americans gathered Jan. 22 in Washington for the annual March for Life on the 34th anniversary of the Supreme Court's Roe v. Wade decision legalizing abortion.

The marchers gathered on a lightly snow-covered National Mall for a rally in near-freezing temperatures that preceded their walk up Constitution Avenue past the Capitol to the Supreme Court building.

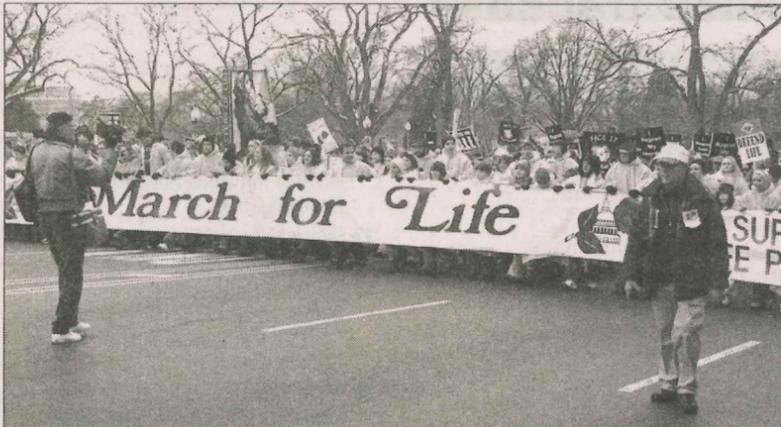
At the rally, President Bush, members of Congress and pro-life leaders encouraged the marchers to continue their efforts.

"I want the folks assembled there to know that we're making progress," Bush said by phone to the crowd. "As we move forward, we've all got to remember that a true culture of life cannot be built by changing laws alone. We've all got to work hard to change hearts."

"The sanctity of life is written in the hearts of all men and women," Bush added. "And so I say, go forth with confidence that a cause rooted in human dignity and appealing to the best instincts of our citizens cannot fail."

The president cited in his four-minute address several pro-life initiatives his administration has promoted, including a ban on partial-birth abortion that is awaiting a ruling by the Supreme Court.

"Although the abortion movement is gathering strength in this city of compromise, Washington, D.C., is the only city in America where life is losing," Rep. Mike Pence, R-Ind., told the marchers. "In the quiet counsels between mothers and daughters, and sisters and



MARCH FOR LIFE Thousands of pro-life supporters march up Washington's Constitution Avenue in the March for Life Jan. 22, the 34th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark Roe v. Wade decision legalizing abortion.

friends, the truth about abortion is being told, young women are being warned and life is winning in America.

"To you who labor in the cause of life, I say, 'Press on, our nation is moved and heaven smiles,'" Pence added. "Your labors on behalf of the unborn are not in vain."

The U.S. House of Representatives already has approved a measure opposed by most pro-life advocates. On Jan. 11, it voted 253-174 for a bill that would provide funds for research using stem cells extracted from embryos stored at in vitro fertilization clinics. The extraction of the cells kills the embryos.

The measure would weaken a Bush policy that allows funds for research only on embryonic stem cell lines already in existence when his rule was announced in August 2001.

The president commented on his veto of the same bill last year and his

reasoning for opposing such funding.

"We are a caring nation, and our values should also guide us on how we harness the gifts of science," he said. "New medical breakthroughs bring the hope of cures for terrible diseases and treatments that can improve the lives of millions. Our challenge is to make sure that science serves the cause of humanity instead of the other way around."

The House vote fell short of the two-thirds majority needed to override a veto.

Abortion rights organizations commemorated the anniversary of Roe v. Wade with a more optimistic view after the congressional turnover. Some, such as the National Organization for Women and the Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice, called for repeal of the Hyde Amendment, which prohibits Medicaid from funding most abortions for poor women.

Bush issued a proclamation declaring Jan. 21 as National Sanctity of Human Life Day. The Southern Baptist Convention, as well as many evangelical churches and the Roman Catholic Church, observed the day as Sanctity of Human Life Sunday.

NATIONAL NOTES

Court upholds ruling against faith-based group. A federal appeals court ruled Jan. 17 that the Michigan government was right to discontinue funding a Christian ministry for abused, neglected and delinquent children. A three-judge panel of the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals unanimously upheld a lower federal court's ruling against Teen Ranch because the organization regularly incorporates overtly religious instruction and activity into its treatment regimen. The ministry had been receiving funds from the Michigan Family Independence Agency for housing and rehabilitating youths since the 1960s. However, after a routine 2003 review, agency officials instituted a moratorium on placing any more at-risk youths at Teen Ranch. They cited state and federal laws that prohibit proselytization with government funds.

Land: Church bears "some responsibility" for abortion. People of faith are at least somewhat complicit in the abortion of millions of unborn babies, Richard Land said Jan. 21 at a pro-life rally, noting an estimated one out of three babies conceived since 1973 have been aborted. "That could never have happened without at least the acquiescence of people in our churches—Protestant and Catholic alike," said Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. "We bear some responsibility for allowing this to continue and not insisting it should stop." Land addressed the Rally for Life, an annual event held in Nashville by Tennessee Right to Life to mark the U.S. Supreme Court's 1973 landmark Roe v. Wade case.

California lawmaker seeks to outlaw spankings. If a Democratic assemblywoman in California has her way, parents in that state could soon be fined or even jailed for spanking their toddlers, a practice Sally Lieber said victimizes helpless children. Lieber, who does not have children, plans to introduce a bill that would make California the first state to make the spanking of children age 4 and under a misdemeanor punishable by a year in jail or a fine of up to \$1,000. The Campaign for Children and Families, a pro-family organization based in California, called Lieber's proposal "the wackiest bill of the year." "This punish-you-if-you-spank-your-children bill is intrusive, unenforceable and the most blatant violation of parental rights I've ever seen," said CCF President Randy Thomasson.

Appeals court upholds kosher food for inmate. An appeals court has affirmed a federal law protecting the religious rights of inmates, denying the state of Virginia's second request that it be declared unconstitutional. The Richmond, Va.-based 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in favor of Ira Madison, a Virginia inmate who sued the state after officials denied his request for kosher meals. Madison claims he is a member of the Church of God and Saints of Christ and a Hebrew Israelite who is required to eat a kosher diet. He argued that the denial of kosher meals violated a provision of the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000.

Wiccan ex-barista sues Starbucks over religion. A former Starbucks barista in Hillsboro, Ore., has sued the coffee giant, saying it discriminated against her based on her Wiccan religion. In a complaint filed in U.S. District Court in Portland, Alicia Hedum said a manager at Starbucks' Hillsboro Landing café asked her to remove her Wiccan cross several times, even though other employees, including the manager, wore Christian crosses. Hedum accused Starbucks of retaliating by refusing to promote or transfer her, reducing her hours and scrutinizing her "minor tardiness." Hedum worked for Starbucks from March 2004 until her Aug. 29, 2005, dismissal. Her suit also accused the retailer of retaliation, wrongful discharge and workers' compensation discrimination.

Donald Lawrence wins big at Stellar Awards. For the second year in a row, gospel artist Donald Lawrence walked away with the most honors at the annual Stellar Gospel Music Awards for his work with his choir, the Tri City Singers. The vocalist won in eight categories, including Artist of the Year for "Donald Lawrence Presents the Tri City Singers—Finale: Act One." He was honored as the producer of that recording, and it also was recognized for the Choir of the Year, Contemporary CD of the Year, and Contemporary Choir of the Year awards. Lawrence's other honors were in categories for special event CD, record music packaging, and music video. The choir staged its final tour last year. The ceremonies at the Grand Ole Opry House in Nashville included a lifetime achievement award for the Mighty Clouds of Joy. The legendary gospel group has produced 35 albums and performed for 44 years. The annual event honors black gospel artists.



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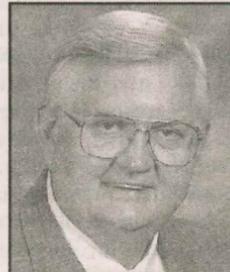
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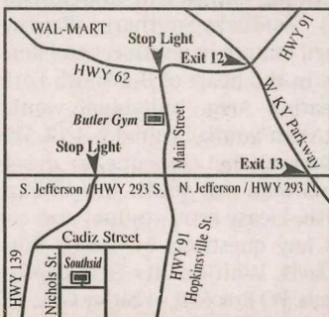
Bob Pittman
Pastor of Kirby Woods
Memphis, Tennessee



John Sullivan
Ex. Dir. of the
Florida Baptist Convention



Jackie Kay
Evangelist and founder of
"Looking Up" Ministries



(The map above is the location of Southside Baptist Church in Princeton, KY)

2007 KENTUCKY BAPTIST EVANGELISM CONFERENCE
FEBRUARY 26-27
EASTWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH, BOWLING GREEN

PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following Kentucky Baptist ministries and missionaries:

Haven of Rest Family Ministries in Inez.

Mission Service Corps Missionary Eileen Mullins and her staff minister to the families of prisoners at the Big Sandy Prison in Martin County. Haven of Rest provides lodging, meals, encouragement and spiritual counsel to those who are visiting loved ones at the prison. Pray that family members and friends who receive care from the Christian staff will have hearts open to the gospel of Christ and the restoration that He offers. Pray for volunteers and resources to complete the second dormitory now under construction.

Mission Service Corps Missionary Vance Viscusi of Oak Grove.

Viscusi serves as a minister to enlisted military personnel and their families at Fort Campbell. He provides leadership for Bible studies, discipleship courses, father & son events, and equips Christian soldiers to share their faith. Pray that God will give him wisdom as he develops an evangelistic strategy to reach single soldiers on the base. Pray also that God will open doors of opportunity for His message to infiltrate the military community.

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

■ **BOWLING GREEN**—Jackson Grove Church called **Larry Eaton** as pastor effective Feb. 18. Eaton, a native of Simpson County, previously was pastor of a church in Missouri.

■ **CECILIA**—Cecilia Church honored **Harold and June Lewis** on their 50th wedding anniversary Jan. 28. **J.T. Kirkpatrick** is pastor.

■ **GREENSBURG**—Trammell Creek Church ordained **Greg Wilson** as a deacon Jan. 28.

■ **LEITCHFIELD**—Little Clifty Church recently called **Tom Pendergest** as pastor and ordained him to the gospel ministry Jan. 14.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Trustees of Baptist Seminary of Kentucky voted this month to promote **Dalen Jackson** to professor of biblical studies with tenure and named him academic dean. Jackson has served at the seminary since its inaugural year in 2002.

Durbin Memorial Church recently called **Paul Lipscomb** as pastor.

Parkway Church recently called **Dale Taylor** as pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—**Phyllis Vincent** recently resigned as minister of music and education at Fern Creek Church. **Linda Barnes Popham** is pastor.

■ **RUSSELLVILLE**—First Church recently called **Josh Yates** as minister of youth and children.

■ **SUMMERSVILLE**—Brush Creek Church recently called **Jerry Noe** as pastor.

Spotlight on ...

Shelbyville



Highland Church will host a Women's Spring Conference March 17 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., highlighting the topic, "What Are You Thinking, God?" Keynote speakers will be **Andy Landis**, author, singer, songwriter and playwright from Nashville, and **Susan Smith**, a writer from Louisville. For more information, contact **Marta Ellcessor** at wowhbc@aol.com or (502) 633-3516. **Gary Ellcessor** is pastor.

■ **VERSAILLES**—Glens Creek Church recently called **Mike James** as pastor.

What's going on?

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



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February

- 1-3 Youth Leaders Conclave, Chattanooga, Tenn.
- 2-3 Deacon/Pastor/Spouse Retreat, Holiday Inn University Plaza, Bowling Green.
- 17 Special Needs Ministry Conference, Baptist Building, Louisville.
- 19 Financial Support Issues for Ministers and Church Employees Conference, Lone Oak First Baptist Church, Paducah.
- 20 Financial Support Issues for Ministers and Church Employees Conference, Daviess-McLean Baptist Association, Owensboro.
- 21 Financial Support Issues for Ministers and Church Employees Conference, Eastwood Baptist Church, Bowling Green.
- 22 Financial Support Issues for Ministers and Church Employees Conference, Versailles Baptist Church.
- 23 Financial Support Issues for Ministers and Church Employees Conference, Florence Baptist Church.
- 24 "Early Bird" Keyboard Festival, First Baptist Church, Murray.
- 24 "Love 101" True Love Waits Conference, Living Hope Baptist Church, Bowling Green.
- 24 Hispanic Evangelism Conference, First Baptist Church, Mount Washington.

26-27 Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference, Eastwood Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

March

- 2-3 Creative Ministry Festival, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.
- 3 All-State Youth Choir/Orchestra Auditions, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.
- 3 Handbell Ring and Share—East, Immanuel Baptist Church, Lexington.
- 3 RA Congress Region 5, Aberdeen Baptist Church, Aberdeen, Ohio.
- 3 Vacation Bible School Clinic—East, Porter Memorial Baptist Church, Lexington.
- 7-21 Kentucky Changers College Blitz, Boone's Creek Baptist Camp, Winchester.
- 9-10 Creative Ministries Festival, First Baptist Church, Bowling Green.
- 10 RA Congress Region 1, Potter's House Baptist Worship Center, Smithland.
- 10 RA Congress Region 3, South Fork Baptist Church, Hodgenville.
- 10 Handbell Ring and Share—West, First Baptist Church, Bowling Green.
- 10 Vacation Bible School—West, Second Baptist Church, Madisonville.
- 17 RA Congress Region 2, Olive Branch Baptist Church, Hanson.

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FOR SALE: Cookware. New Year's clearance. We stopped doing dinner parties; have some beautiful, 17-piece sets left; 7-ply surgical stainless steel; waterless and greaseless; brand new. Were \$2,000; first seven callers buy for \$299. (800) 434-4628. www.vaposeal.com.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Edmonton Baptist Church, Edmonton, Ky. Parsonage provided. Send resumes to Jim Howard, PO Box 150, Edmonton, KY 42141.

SEEKING: Volunteers for Glorieta Conference Center. Volunteer March-November in the mountains, 18 miles east of Santa Fe, N.M., at 7,500 feet. Serve in maintenance, conference support, grounds and food service. Long-term commitments are preferable with a minimum commitment of one month. Each volunteer works at least 30 hours a week for which Glorieta will provide: a full-hookup RV site, or an apartment or hotel room and meals. For information or an application, contact Lee or Bea Carl, Coordinator of Volunteers, at (505) 757-4298; or Lee.Carl@lifeway.com; or mail request to PO Box 8, Glorieta, NM 87535; or visit our website, www.glorieta.com, and download application/information.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music. Please contact Personnel Committee at Beechmont Baptist Church, 4574 South Third St., Louisville, KY 40214. (502) 362-5806.

SEEKING: Baptist church prayerfully seeks applications for full-time senior pastor (see our Web site: williamstownbaptist.com). Average weekly attendance: 300 members, consisting of diverse age groups in a growing, northern Kentucky community. Please send your resumé along with a cover letter, statement of ministry and faith, and audio/video recording to: Pastor Search Committee, Williamstown Baptist Church, 214 North Main St., Williamstown, KY 41097. Resumes will be received until Feb. 28, 2007.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for conservative Southern Baptist church. Please prayerfully consider sending resumé: Pollard Baptist Church, 444 Blackburn Ave., Ashland, KY 41102; or e-mail us at pastorsearchcommittee@pollardbaptistchurch.com. (606) 324-3626. www.pollardbaptistchurch.com.

SEEKING: Trinity Baptist Church, Raleigh, N.C., is seeking qualified candidates for the position of minister of music. Trinity has a resident membership of 2,200. There are two morning worship services which are both traditional/blended in style. Qualifications include degree from accredited seminary and at least 5 years experience. Trinity's affiliations include SBC and CBF. Send resumes to Dr. Jeff Roberts, Trinity Baptist Church, 4815 Six Forks Road, Raleigh, NC 27609; or go online to www.tbrcraleigh.com.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of music and youth. Preferred applicant will have a degree in music with strong background in both music and youth ministries. Please send resumé with cover letter to Hyland Baptist Church, 1400 Wright St., Henderson, KY 42420; or e-mail hyland.jeff@lightpower.net.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of youth and children. Candidate should have seminary degree or equivalent. Minister will equip parents, committees and other adult members to develop an effective discipleship environment for education and outreach for K-12; plan and implement retreats, camps and mission activities. Reply by mail to: Versailles Baptist Church, 125 East Green St., Versailles, KY 40383, Attn: Personnel Committee.

SEEKING: Part-time associate pastor with ministry emphasis on children, young-adult families. Salary based on qualifications and experience. Candidates may e-mail resumes with cover letters to: rdmantooth@hotmail.com; or mail them to First Baptist Church, 123 East Main St., Morehead, KY 40351, Attn: Personnel Committee.

SEEKING: Full-time staff member with a focus on outreach and ministry to children, youth and families. We are a new church start that has an existing committed core group and adequate resources. The position occasionally will require filling in for the senior pastor. Seminary degree and experience required. If interested, please send resumé and cover letter to: Journey Search Committee, PO Box 22137, Lexington, KY 40522-2137.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of students. Seminary degree preferred and experience required. For more information, e-mail aw4Jesus@yahoo.com. Send resumé to: Audubon Baptist Church, 3440 Zion Road, Henderson, KY 42420, Attn: Search Committee.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of youth/children. Salary negotiable based on education and experience. Send resumes: Dr. Tom Stokes, First Baptist Church, 302 North Magnolia, Tompkinsville, KY 42167. Telephone: (207) 487-6538.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of discipleship and evangelism with passion for community outreach and church growth. Duties include planning and implementing balanced program of adult discipleship and evangelistic activities to promote church health and growth; mission trip coordination and leadership; curriculum, space and teacher support for Sunday school, discipleship training. Reply by mail to: Versailles Baptist Church, 125 East Green St., Versailles, KY 40383, Attn: Personnel Committee.

SEEKING: Minister to students for small Kentucky/Southern Baptist-aligned church in south central Kentucky in the heart of Big South Fork Recreation Area. Individual would work with youth in grades 1-12. We are looking for someone to develop and lead our youth in spiritual growth. Please send resumé and address any questions to: Pastor Ronald Davis, Whitley City First Baptist Church, PO Box 670, Whitley City, KY 42653. Phone: (606) 376-2418; e-mail: fbwc@highland.net.

'Super' witnesses

Top coaches Dungy, Smith aren't shy about sharing their faith

By Art Stricklin
Baptist Press

Miami (BP)—Super Bowl XLI will feature two teams making their first Super Bowl appearance in two-plus decades, two Midwestern teams separated by only a couple hundred miles, but most importantly, two coaches who are strong believers in Jesus Christ.

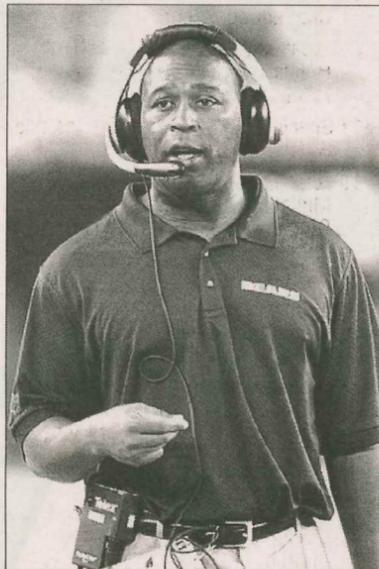
Head coaches Tony Dungy of the Indianapolis Colts and close friend and fellow Christian, Lovie Smith, of the Chicago Bears gave credit to God following their respective teams' victories in the conference championships Jan. 21.

"The Lord set this up in a way that no one would believe it," Dungy said following the Colts' win over New England. "The Lord tested us a lot this year, but He set this up to get all the glory."

The news that two witnesses for Christ would have a two-week international spotlight for their beliefs thrilled William Pugh, executive director of sports ministry for Athletes in Action, a branch of Campus Crusade for Christ.

"We are so excited to see the Bears and Colts in the Super Bowl," said Pugh, a close friend of both coaches. "We could not have picked two better coaches to represent all that is good about sports."

AIA hosts the annual Super Bowl breakfast the day before the game—this year Feb. 3. Last year, Dungy was the keynote speaker, just weeks after his son's suicide, giving an inspira-



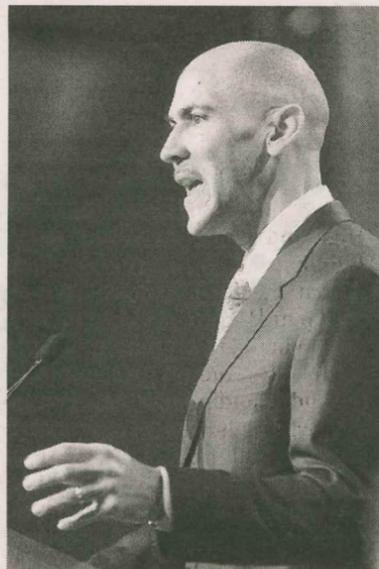
Lovie Smith

tional message about God's love in the best and worst of times.

Smith, who was named head coach of the Bears in 2004, was named Associated Press NFL Coach of the Year for 2005. In previous interviews, he has told the Chicago media that he believes in Christ, listens to Christian music when driving his car and does not smoke, drink or curse.

"I'm so happy for Lovie who does things the right way, without cursing and shows things can be done differently," Dungy said of Smith. "We give God all the credit."

Dungy has served as the cover spokesman for a special Super Bowl



Tony Dungy

witnessing video and tract. Several of his players, including star tight end Dallas Clark, put out a special faith-based DVD titled "Power to Win" about their faith in Christ, and their desire to honor Him in all that they do.

While most media will concentrate on the game itself, the men in charge of leading their teams to the big show plan to share the most important thing in their lives, something that has nothing to do with runs or passes or even the final score.

Baptist Press sports correspondent Art Stricklin is beginning his fourth year of Super Bowl-related coverage.

Dunn, Lynch, Manning contend for this year's Bart Starr Award

Miami (BP)—Honoring exemplary character and leadership in the home, on the field and in the community, the 19th annual Bart Starr Award will be presented to one of three finalists:

Warrick Dunn, running back for the Atlanta Falcons, created the Warrick Dunn Foundation, an organization that provides opportunities for economically disadvantaged children and single parents who are committed to achieving financial independence and stability. Dunn also has established the program, "Homes for the Holidays," in honor of his mother, to help hard-working single mothers provide for their families.

John Lynch, safety for the Denver Broncos, formed the John Lynch Foundation in August 2000 that provides encouragement and assistance to children and teens, and their teachers and coaches. The foundation offers education and athletic-based incentives for young children, recognition and rewards for student-athletes, scholarships for high school students, and incentives for coaches and teachers.

Peyton Manning, quarterback for the Indianapolis Colts, founded the Peyton Manning Foundation, which helps form community-based programs that provide fundamental leadership and growth opportunities for disadvantaged kids. Since 1999, the foundation has donated more than \$1.3 million to youth organizations in Indiana, Tennessee and Louisiana.

The winner of the 2007 Bart Starr Award will be announced Feb. 3 during the annual NFL-sanctioned Super Bowl Breakfast hosted by Athletes in Action. The breakfast program will feature NFL athletes and coaches, including Indianapolis Colts head coach Tony Dungy, NFL Hall of Famer Bart Starr and Anthony Munoz. Former San Francisco 49er Brent Jones will emcee the event.

The winner of the Bart Starr Award is chosen through NFL player balloting at the end of the regular season, making the award one of the few individual honors selected by the players themselves.

The award was named for Starr, for his lifelong influence as a positive role model to families, teammates and community. Past winners include Munoz, Reggie White, Mike Singletary, Cris Carter, Darrell Green, Derrick Brooks and Curtis Martin.

Archie Manning helps fulfill a mom's football wish for family

By Brian Blackwell
Baptist Press

Greenville, Miss. (BP)—Football legend Archie Manning and his NFL quarterback sons, Peyton and Eli, always have been special to Mark Kelly.

"I guess my relationship with the Manning family began the same way any other person's in the Mississippi Delta did—I was born," said Kelly, youth minister at Emmanuel Baptist Church in Greenville, Miss.

In the fall of 2006, an encouraging phone call from Archie Manning proved to be among the happiest moments for Mark's wife, Kris, as she was in the midst of battling cancer. The disease claimed her life Oct. 23, 2006. Another gracious gesture from Manning came to Kelly and his daughters, Kayden and Cassidy, a few weeks later.

"All those things brought a ray of light in a very dark situation and made my wife happy," Kelly recalled. "That will never be forgotten. Cancer can't steal that from my girls."

While the Mannings were in Kelly's sports DNA, Kris wasn't so fond of the famous football family until Mark and Kris began dating.

"I can remember being offended that she had never even heard of the Manning family when I first met and fell in love with her," Kelly said.

Archie, an Ole Miss star from 1968-70, is former quarterback of the NFL's New Orleans Saints. Peyton is quarterback for the Super

Bowl-bound Indianapolis Colts, and a nominee for this year's Bart Starr Award (see related story above right). Eli, who followed in his father's footsteps to Ole Miss, is quarterback for the New York Giants.

"It didn't take (Kris) long to find out she had better familiarize herself real quick," Kelly said.

"She still wasn't all that impressed until she started watching (Peyton) play at the University of Tennessee," Kelly continued. "She immediately became a fan of Peyton, not just because of his quarterback ability but how he handled himself on and off the field."

When the Colts drafted Peyton, the Kellys instantly became fans of the team now preparing to meet the Chicago Bears in Super Bowl XLI in Miami Feb. 4. Kris' admiration of the quarterback family grew stronger after reading the book, "Mannings." Written by Archie, the book gave Kris insight into a family she knew little about at the time.

For their 10th wedding anniversary in November 2000, Mark surprised Kris with a trip to see the Colts play the New England Patriots.

"That was an awesome time for both of us and in the top three unbelievable experiences we had in 16 years of marriage," Kelly said. "Little did I know at the time that six years later, I would be back without her."

No stranger to tragedy—Kelly watched his brother and best friend die from gunshot wounds—he said

the worst day of his life was July 6, 2002, when doctors diagnosed Kris with cancer.

For the next four-and-a-half years, Kris underwent a series of tests and chemotherapy.

"When she was first diagnosed, we were all scared," Kelly said. "But there were those times when my wife was happy." One such occasion was October 2006, when Kris received a personal phone call from Archie Manning. For the few minutes they talked, Kelly said it seemed like cancer had left her body.

"Those 10 minutes on the phone with Archie were special, but not the best for her," Kelly said of his wife, a schoolteacher in Greenville, Miss. "Her best 10 minutes were when she was taking a kid with a bad home life and making him feel special. Even though she wasn't feeling that very well with cancer, she tried her best to make an impact in others' lives."

Mark and Kris planned to travel to Indianapolis last fall to watch the Colts play. But by then, Kris' condition had deteriorated so much that Mark canceled the trip.

When he broke the news to her, she was quite upset, Kelly recalled. "By the time I calmed her down, reality set in and she understood why we couldn't go. That is when she started the slide, I believe."

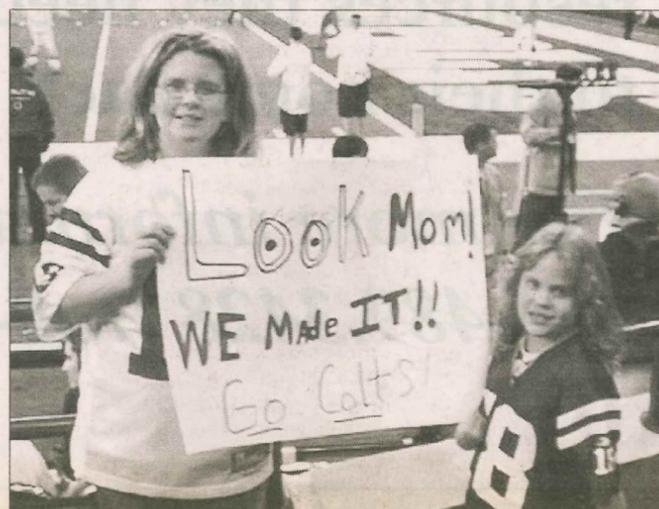
On Oct. 16, 2006, Kris left the Mississippi Baptist Medical Center in Jackson so she could spend her re-

maining days with her family and friends in Greenville. She died a week later.

"When she left this world, the only thing I could say is 'it's OK,'" Kelly said. "I kept saying it over and over," he added. "She was OK, but my life wasn't. She was done with it and didn't have to wait for more CAT scans or PET scan results. That's OK and all right with me."

Two weeks after Kris died, Kelly received an extraordinary surprise. Thanks to a series of phone calls from friends in Mississippi, Kelly and his daughters received tickets to a Colts game—with seats on the 10-yard line—courtesy of Archie Manning and the Colts, along with three nights at the Radisson Hotel and a courtesy limousine.

HI, MOM Kayden and Cassidy Kelly hold up a sign in memory of their mother, Kris, who died last October with the wish that her husband, Mark, and children could attend an Indianapolis Colts game. Through friends, family and former NFL quarterback Archie Manning, whose son, Peyton, quarterbacked the Super Bowl-bound Colts, Mrs. Kelly's wish came true.



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Practical Resources for Christian Living

WESTERN RECORDER

Saving Marriages

Kentucky groups seek to help couples stay together

By Ken Walker
Staff Correspondent

Lexington—After three couples in his church divorced in the late 1990s, Richard Gaines decided he had to do something about it. "You know the people involved, it becomes personal," said Gaines, pastor of Consolidated Baptist Church in Lexington. "I heard one (ex-wife and) me (ex-husband) recently. If I had any idea it was going to be this painful, I wouldn't have done it."

That adversity prompted Gaines to start a marriage ministry in the Lexington congregation, including a monthly Bible study and fellowship for married couples.

Last January the church hosted a citywide "marriage" speakers Jeff and Debby McIlroy. This summer Consolidated will sponsor a weekend couples' retreat in Louisville.

Gaines also recently preached a sermon series on family. He said many couples are ignorant about what God requires of spouses and about such concepts as mutual submission, respect and love.

"God has a picture of marriage and how beautiful it can be if we understand Him," Gaines said. "The church has bought into the societal version of marriage and not what God says it is."

The desire to enhance matrimony and stem a spiraling divorce rate is behind a grassroots movement that has spread through a number of Kentucky Baptist churches.

Nationally, the movement to strengthen marriages cuts across religious and social boundaries, according to James Stillwell, who directs marriage enrichment at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington.

"There's a consensus that there's a lot of lines on marriage experience," said Stillwell, who also writes for the *Western Recorder's* Family Forum column.

See Kentucky griestroads Page 3

