



WESTERN RECORDER

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FOR THE RECORD

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Clear Creek alum Donnie Fox named school's president

By Dannah Prather
Partnerships Editor

Pineville—Trustees of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College elected Donnie Fox as the school's next president April 17. Fox will be the first graduate of the Pineville college to serve as president.



Donnie Fox

Fox, 48, currently is dean of institutional advancement at Clear Creek. He joined the staff in 1999 but his ties to the school extend back to 1962 when his late father, Claude, became Clear Creek's first full-time director of public relations. The elder Fox served under the school's second president, D.M. Aldridge.

"This is basically the only home I've ever known," said Donnie Fox, whose brother, Jack, just completed two terms of service as a Clear Creek trustee. Their late brother, Richard, was a 1972 Clear Creek graduate and Richard's son, Jeff, is a 1988 Clear Creek grad.

Like many of the students at Clear Creek today, Donnie Fox said he was called to Christian service in his 30s.

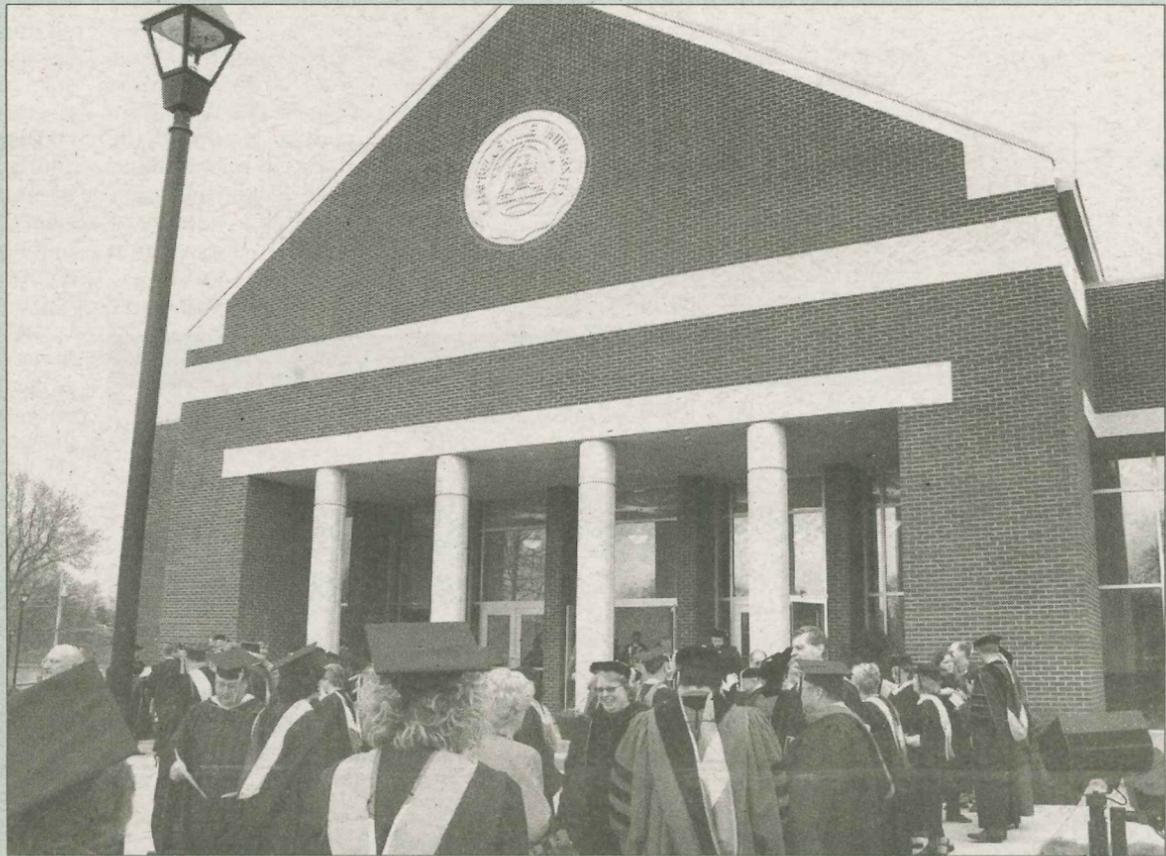
"I surrendered to the ministry in 1990, so naturally I felt Clear Creek was the place I needed to come to get some practical training for ministry."

Fox graduated in 1994 with a bachelor's degree in ministry. He also holds master's and doctoral degrees from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. From 1994 until 1999, he was pastor of Shawnee Baptist Church in Harrogate, Tenn.

In 1999, "God called me back here to serve on the staff," Fox said. As director of college relations, he was

□ See Clear Creek trustees ... *Page 3*

Chapel celebration



Campbellsville University celebrated the dedication of the \$4.9 million Ransdell Chapel April 18. Campbellsville President Michael Carter said the new chapel "stands as a powerful symbol to remind us why we are here" as a Christian university. ■ Above: Faculty members line up outside the new facility in preparation for a processional that opened the dedication service.



■ Right: Marking Campbellsville's first 100 years of ministry, the university chorale performs a commissioned centennial music presentation titled "Ephesian Trilogy" by composer Jeffrey Cranfill. (Photos by Trennis Henderson) See story on page 3.

Campus ministers comfort Va. Tech students in wake of rampage

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, April 25.



CAMPUS VIGIL Thousands of people attended a candlelight vigil at Virginia Tech April 17 to mourn the loss of 32 students and faculty members killed the previous day. (BP photo by Brandon Pickett)

Blacksburg, Va.—As the sun began to set and the wind continued to howl over a wounded campus and city April 16, Virginia Tech students gathered for prayer, comfort and counseling at the school's Baptist student center.

Blacksburg, the small, quiet city that houses the university's 26,000-plus students, was even quieter than usual the night after a massacre unprecedented in American history. The gunman, who police said shot 32 students and professors and then took his own life, had also silenced the usually bustling activity on the commercial strips around the sprawling campus' edges.

One of the few signs of life at Virginia Tech was the 7 p.m. gathering at the school's Baptist Collegiate Ministry Center, a ministry of

the Baptist General Association of Virginia.

Although barraged with requests from national and international news outlets, Darrell Cook, the Virginia Baptist campus minister, focused his attention on the needs of students. By mid-afternoon the day of the shootings, he had invited two of the school's other major Christian campus groups—InterVarsity and Campus Crusade for Christ—to join in prayer for the surviving victims and loved ones of those who died.

Before the gathering, Cook and Mark Appleton, associate BCM director at Virginia Tech and a Mission Service Corps missionary with the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, counseled with the students who dropped by the Baptist

□ See Campus ministers aid ... *Page 6*

SBC baptisms decline despite 'Everyone Can' campaign

Nashville (BP)—The Southern Baptist Convention's ambitious goal to baptize 1 million people in 2006 feel far short of that goal, according to Annual Church Profile statistics reported by Southern Baptist churches.

In fact, baptisms for 2006 declined by 1.89 percent—364,826 in 2006 compared to 371,850 the previous year. The decline marked the second consecutive year that baptisms fell below the prior year.

The 2006 baptism total eclipsed 2005 as the lowest annual total since 1993. The 2005 ACP reported a 4.15 percent drop in baptisms.

The baptism thrust was launched by the SBC's immediate past president, Bobby Welch, at the outset of his two years in office in June 2004.

Named the "Everyone Can' Kingdom Challenge," it targeted 2006 as the year for Southern Baptist

churches to reach the 1 million milestone in baptisms.

SBC President Frank Page, pastor of First Baptist Church of Taylors, S.C., noted, "To hear news of a continued decline in baptisms is discouraging. However, Dr. Bobby Welch's emphasis upon evangelism and soul-winning is nothing but an echo from God's heart. Therefore, his pleas are biblically based and God-inspired. However, our obedience continues to lack both substance and passion."

Welch, the SBC Executive Committee's newly named strategist for global evangelical relations, affirmed the positive results of the campaign and voiced concern about what the baptism decline means for Southern Baptists in a column released by Baptist Press. (See column on page 4.)

The Everyone Can initiative

sought to "challenge everyone to do their very best," Welch noted. "It has done precisely what was hoped for by so many pastors and churches. A large number of our people made their very best efforts for Great Commission evangelism-discipleship."

"While many did their very best," he added, "many others did about the same or less than before," prompting him to underscore his belief that "a collective commitment" for evangelism-discipleship is needed among "a vast number of leaders at all levels of the SBC—national, state and association and especially the local church."

Despite the shortfall in baptisms, Southern Baptist churches increased by more than 500 in 2006 and receipts increased by more than \$650 million to more than \$11.3 billion, according to Thom Rainer, president of LifeWay Christian Resources.

"While it is certainly encouraging to see new Southern Baptist churches being birthed, our baptism totals once again show that we are not doing an effective job stepping up to the task of sharing the gospel with a lost and dying world," Rainer said.

The 2006 ACP statistics compiled by LifeWay show growth in several other key areas. Total membership of Southern Baptist churches increased slightly to reach 16,306,246 members. The net increase of 524 churches, more than double the net increase from 2005—for a total of 44,223—represents a 1.2 percent boost for 2006. In the 2005 ACP, there was a net increase of 234 churches.

Worship attendance rose to 6,138,776, reflecting a 1.4 percent

age growth. Church-type missions reflected the largest percentage increase in 2006, up 2.06 percent.

Rainer noted that numeric and percent changes for certain categories could not be accurately figured for the 2006 ACP because some state conventions or associations did not ask for some items to be reported, or asked in a way that gave results that were not comparable to totals reported in the 2005 ACP. Those categories and their 2006 totals include:

- Total receipts: \$11,372,608,393.
- Total tithes, offerings and special gifts: \$10,425,420,529.
- Undesignated receipts: \$8,293,404,321.
- Total mission expenditures: \$1,285,616,031.
- Sunday school enrollment: 7,931,753.
- Discipleship training enrollment: 1,503,826.
- Music ministry enrollment and participation: 1,466,124.
- Woman's Missionary Union enrollment: 811,139.
- Men/boys mission education enrollment: 376,379.

"Southern Baptists are a people committed to the gospel," Rainer said. "Missions and evangelism have always been our rallying cry. Churches should view this report as a commendation, but also as a sobering reminder that there is much more that we need to be doing."

"Our mandate to share the good news of Jesus Christ remains our focus," he added, "but as a convention we must renew our passion for reaching the burgeoning masses in our states, cities and neighborhoods."

SBC Annual Church Profile statistics

Category	2006	2005	+/-	% +/-
Churches	44,223	43,699	524	1.29%
Total membership	16,306,246	16,270,315	35,931	0.02%
Baptisms	364,826	371,850	-7,024	-1.9%
Worship attendance	6,138,776	6,052,321	86,455	1.4%
Sunday school enrollment	7,931,753	8,068,780	-137,027	-1.79%
Discipleship training	1,503,826	1,667,709	-163,883	-9.8%
Music ministry enrollment	1,466,124	1,577,364	-111,240	-7.02%
Woman's Missionary Union	811,139	804,983	6,156	0.76%
Men/boys mission education	376,379	388,264	-11,885	-3.1%
Total receipts	\$11,372,608,393	\$10,721,544,568	\$651,063,825	6.1%

Tour options available during SBC gathering in San Antonio

San Antonio (BP)—The Alamo and other historic and cultural sites around San Antonio will be featured on tours offered to messengers and their families in conjunction with the June 12-13 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The tours, by Daisy Tours of San Antonio, will be offered Sunday, June 10, and Wednesday, June 13, from 2-5 p.m.

In addition to the Alamo, featured sites will include Mission San Jose and other 18th-century missions in San Antonio; the San Fernando Cathedral; the 65,000-seat Alamodome; the 750-foot-tall Tower of the Americas; and the El Mercado Mexican market.

Three different tours are available: "Hello San Antonio," "Viva San Antonio" and "Missions of San Antonio."

For more information, visit www.sbc.net or contact Daisy Tours at (800) 285-8601.

According to convention manager Jack Wilkerson, "Planning for the SBC annual meeting has been deliberate in our efforts to include activities for the entire family, in addition to new efforts to facilitate attendees with special needs."

For those planning to drive, he noted that downtown parking may be limited, pushing parking rates for most hotels to \$10-\$20 per day and public parking to \$6-\$10. Most hotels

in the airport area offer free parking to guests of the hotel, he added.

Shuttles will be available to and from most San Antonio hotels for the SBC sessions and the Sunday-Monday Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference in the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center and the Woman's Mission Union missions celebration in the Marriott Rivercenter Hotel.

Hotel shuttle tickets will be available at the convention center information desk for \$10, with children age 12 and under riding free when accompanied by parents who purchase tickets.

Childcare (birth-3 years) and children's conferences (ages 4-12) have been planned for the San Antonio meeting, with registration information available at www.sbc.net.

Online registration for churches sending messengers to the annual meeting opened March 1 and can be accessed at www.sbcannualmeeting.net. Last year, the fourth year for online service, 80 percent of the messengers to the annual meeting in Greensboro, N.C., registered online, a slight increase from 79 percent for the 2005 meeting in Nashville.

The traditional registration method also is available for those churches that are unable or choose not to access the online registration. Registration cards are available from state convention offices.

Mohler: Enrollment at Southern sets record, doubles 1995 total

Louisville (BP)—Southern Baptist Theological Seminary has reached an all-time high in enrollment and is continuing to draw scores of ministers desiring to prepare for ministry in the local church, President Al Mohler told trustees at the annual spring meeting April 17.

Seminary enrollment this semester grew to more than 4,200 students, Mohler said, noting that a large majority are preparing to serve as pastors of local Southern Baptist churches. Enrollment has doubled since 1995.

Mohler said the increased enrollment has come because the seminary has sought to attract students during a time when many theological institutions in North America are turning out "professional ministers" and not pastor-theologians.

"When you look where the bulk of the enrollment is right now in the theological seminaries of North America, much of it is in what you might call the 'helping' professions rather than in the pulpit ministry," he said.

Mohler called Southern a "contrarian institution" whose primary focus is raising up God-centered pastors who are faithful expositors of Scripture.

"We are about training pastors," Mohler said. "We understand this not because we understand that pastors are professionals and the world needs professionals, but because we understand the church of the Lord Jesus Christ is visible in local congregations who need pastors, preachers and teachers unreservedly preaching the full counsel of God. We understand that our mission as an institution before anything else is to train pastors."

In other business, trustees:

■ Approved a budget of nearly \$33.7 million, a 6.5 percent increase from last year.

■ Promoted and extended tenure to four current faculty members: T.J. Betts to assistant professor of Old Testament interpretation; Greg Bruton, associate professor of church music; Mark Copping, professor of Christian apologetics; and Randy Stinson, assistant professor of leadership and Christian ministry.

■ Promoted three other faculty members: Ken Fentress to associate professor of Old Testament interpretation; Ken Magnuson to professor of Christian ethics; and Robert Plummer to associate professor of New Testament interpretation.

Page urges Baptist pastors to model biblical stewardship

By Trennis Henderson
Editor

Louisville—Declaring that pastors can be either the key or the lock for “whether people see victory in their lives in the area of stewardship,” Southern Baptist Convention President Frank Page was the keynote speaker for the Kentucky Baptist Convention’s first Stewardship Summit April 17 at the Baptist Building in Louisville.

Page, pastor of First Baptist Church of Taylors, S.C., took part in the summit as part of a three-day visit to Kentucky last week that included speaking at an emerging leaders dinner April 16 and at Campbellsville University’s Ransdell Chapel dedication April 18. (See related article below.)

Citing the importance of being an example, encouraging others, explaining the vision and establishing ownership in the area of biblical stewardship, Page told conference participants, “It’s extremely important as a pastor or minister that you example biblical stewardship.”

Concerning the area of encouragement, Page added, “The greatest way to encourage people in the area of financial stewardship is through sharing Scripture.”

He said his congregation’s worship services include sharing a stewardship Scripture each Sunday morning before the offering is taken. “Fifty-two weeks a year, people hear the Word of God as it relates to

Scriptural stewardship.”

Emphasizing the importance of casting a ministry vision, Page said, “I believe with all my heart that money follows vision.”

Rather than presenting an annual church budget, Page said his congregation adopts a three-year vision plan that “gets people excited to see what can happen.”

Page, whose election as SBC president was partially due to his church’s strong Cooperative Program giving record of more than 12 percent of undesignated receipts per year, said his church’s overall offerings have increased 58 percent over the past two years.

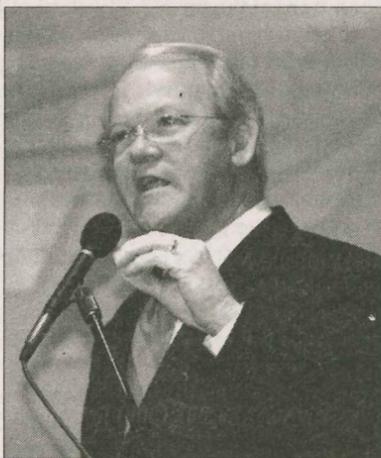
Concerning ownership, Page noted, “The tithe belongs to the Lord. It is not yours to dictate or to use as a weapon.”

“I bring the tithe to the storehouse and that’s the local church, in my estimation,” he added.

During a question-and-answer session after his presentation, Page responded to a question about potential issues at this year’s SBC annual meeting.

Acknowledging that “I cannot control what people bring up,” Page said, “To me, right now the only battles worth fighting are missions and evangelism. ... I want us to focus on missions and evangelism and the Cooperative Program that underlies those two great, godly issues.”

Concerning a North American missions strategy, Page noted, “If you



SBC President Frank Page

lose the base, you lose the whole battle. If we don’t take this continent for Christ, there will be no international missions support. ... If we do not win this continent for Christ, it’s all over.”

In addition to Page, other Stewardship Summit speakers included:

Barry Allen, president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation. Addressing “The Meaning of Money in Our Lives,” Allen said, “The tithe should be the floor, not the ceiling of our giving. ... We must shift our priorities to enable God, not money or anything else to be the one and only God in our lives.”

Urging Christians to “leave a legacy of their love for Christ,” Allen added, “We live in a world of give and take. Unfortunately, there aren’t

enough people who want to give what it takes.”

Darren Gaddis, president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention and pastor of Central Baptist Church in Corbin. Lamenting a trend of many churches’ declining percentage giving through the Cooperative Program, Gaddis cautioned that “we’ve lost sight of what the Cooperative Program is all about.”

“More importantly,” he added, “we’ve lost our passion for it.” He described CP giving as “a unique tool that has been given to us to do the impossible, to help us reach to the ends of the earth with the gospel of Christ.”

Distributing small pieces of rope, Gaddis pointed out that the pieces are made of hundreds of smaller strands. Comparing that to thousands of churches cooperating together through CP giving, he added, “Now we have not just a rope, but a lifeline that can stretch to over 10,000 missionaries around the world. ... Be a part of the rope.”

Steve Rice, director of the KBC’s discipleship and assimilation department. Highlighting the relationship between discipleship and stewardship, Rice said, “What we do with money is one of the strongest indicators of our level of discipleship.”

“The bottom line is it all boils down to lordship,” he noted. “God just will not accept it when we make anything or anyone lord instead of Him.”

Clear Creek trustees elect alum Donnie Fox as college president

Continued from page 1

fulfilling many responsibilities identical to those of his father nearly 40 years earlier.

Prior to his current position, Fox served as the college’s director of admissions. His wife, Penny, is executive assistant to the dean of administrative affairs. They have two children, Aaron, 23, and Andrea, 18.

“God has allowed me to work in every phase of the college,” Fox noted. “What I have done over the years is to try to prepare myself, make myself available to God’s call.”

“I have total confidence in him,” said retiring Clear Creek President Bill Whittaker. “I’m especially grateful that a graduate of the school will become president. That speaks for the maturity of the institution and the quality of our graduates.”

Fox said he focused on Jeremiah 29:11 throughout the trustees’ presidential search process. God’s words: “I know the plans I have for you,” Fox said, reminded him to be open to God’s leading but never to get ahead of Him.

Upon Whittaker’s retirement announcement last fall, the trustees’ presidential search committee asked Fox about his interest in the job. “It was not me trying to do anything,” Fox added.

Whittaker’s final duty as Clear Creek president will be to preside over graduation May 4. Southern Baptist Convention President Frank Page is this year’s commencement speaker.

The ceremony “will be very special,” Whittaker predicted. “It will

mark 604 students who have gone through the line” during his tenure.

Whittaker, pastor of Glasgow Baptist Church, announced his resignation as Clear Cree president last October. He has served since 1988.

The work of Whittaker and the three other previous presidents is a legacy Fox says he will be privileged to build upon when he assumes the presidency early next month. But he said the school’s identity and mission will remain unchanged.

“We’re not just a college, we’re God’s institution,” Fox said. “We are unique in that we are not a liberal arts college, we are strictly a ministry-training college.”

Approximately 200 students currently are enrolled at Clear Creek, Fox said. The average age of the student body is 32; 10 percent of students are under 21.

Kentucky Baptists and other donors are the main financial supporters of Clear Creek, Fox noted, adding that he wants to “enhance bridge-building” through his role as president.

“I want to build bridges ... so people will continue to support us by sending students,” he explained.

Building relationships with alumni, donors and potential donors has been the focus of Fox’s role as dean of institutional advancement. He said that focus will remain a priority for him as president. “Part of the vision and challenge is still being able to get out there on a regular basis and make sure people know about Clear Creek and invite them to partner with us in this ministry effort.”

Campbellsville dedicates Ransdell Chapel

By Trennis Henderson
Editor

Campbellsville—Culminating a longtime dream of Campbellsville University President Michael Carter, university officials and guests dedicated the school’s \$4.9 million Ransdell Chapel April 18.

The facility’s 900-seat chapel attracted a standing-room-only crowd for the dedication service. The chapel is named in honor of Campbellsville trustee George Ransdell and his wife, Marie, who donated \$2 million toward the project. Carter noted that nearly 400 donors have combined to contribute more than \$4.4 million for the chapel’s construction.

In addition to the main chapel, the facility includes the offices of the Baptist Campus Ministry as well as a small chapel, multimedia room and kitchen.

After pausing for a moment of silent prayer on behalf of shooting victims’ family and friends at Virginia Tech, Carter opened the service by affirming that “this campus needed a place where God’s still small voice could be heard.”

Noting that the chapel dedication is a key part of the Kentucky Baptist school’s centennial celebration, Carter added, “Our history of 100 years is a rich history of people responding to God’s call.”

Kentucky Baptist Convention Executive Director Bill Mackey was among speakers who shared brief words of reflection about Campbellsville’s accomplishment.

Offering “congratulations on the fulfillment of this magnificent vision,” Mackey said, “We know this is a place where students will respond to God’s call upon their lives.”

Sharing his vision for Campbellsville, Carter told the dedication service crowd, “If education is to be full and complete, ... Jesus has got to be in that picture.”

Citing Campbellsville’s “common mission with other Christian universities and colleges,”

Carter said, “We’ve got to respond in a way that truly ensures the next generation will know and love the mission of the church.”

Emphasizing that the new chapel “stands as a powerful symbol to remind us why we are here,” Carter added, “Let us commit anew to the vision that Campbellsville University in the next 100 years of service will be a university where Jesus is talked about frequently (and) where lives are changed.”

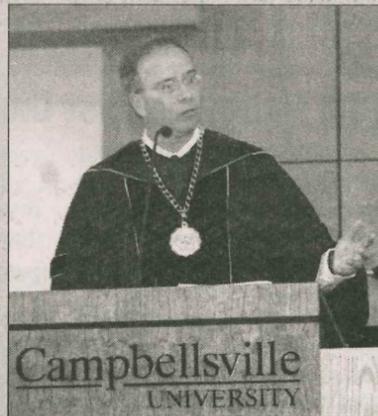
Southern Baptist Convention President Frank Page, pastor of First Baptist Church of Taylors, S.C., was the keynote speaker for the chapel dedication.

“What a glorious day it is,” he declared. “God bless you and congratulations.”

Referencing the “great cloud of witnesses” described in Hebrews 12, Page noted that Campbellsville “stands on 100 years of heritage and there is a great cloud of witnesses that has gone before.”

“For the next 100 years, may this university run the race set for it,” he added. “Understand that Scripture is clear where that race should lead—looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.”

“Campbellsville, remember Who you belong to,” Page urged the university community. “Remember Who needs to receive the honor and glory for this day.”



Campbellsville President Michael Carter

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

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Handwriting on the wall

By Bobby Welch

San Antonio (BP)—As I emphasized last year, the 1 million emphasis on baptisms by churches in the Southern Baptist Convention was to be the target that would challenge everyone to do their very best. Like the bar for high jumpers, the goal of 1 million baptisms was and is to draw the very best effort from us as the "jumpers."

It has done precisely what was hoped for by so many pastors and churches. A large number of our people made their very best efforts for Great Commission evangelism-discipleship. Many broke their recent history records in baptisms and more set new benchmarks in evangelism-discipleship and baptisms.

For these people, it has been life-changing, world-changing and eternity-changing. They will never settle for low bar jumping again.

The 2006 decline in baptisms in SBC churches likely will disclose that while many did their very best, many others did about the same or less than before. This, of course, amplifies the point that has not yet been seized—the critical importance

of a convention-wide unified effort for a unified purpose.

Such a synergy cannot be accomplished by one person over one or two years. It demands a collective commitment by a vast number of leaders at all levels of the SBC—national, state and association and especially the local church. It absolutely can be done, should be done and must be done soon. Any and all distractions that take us off this course now are forcing the SBC beyond the point from which there is no return.

Someone said to me, "I shudder to think where we would be this year in baptisms if we had not had such an all-out 'sounding of the alarm' as the 'Everyone Can' initiative over the last year did." While that initiative did encourage a lot of people to do their best, it was still only an alarm. There must be a unified acceleration for Great Commission evangelism-discipleship convention-wide. We must be honest and realistic—we are not waiting on God, God is waiting on us.

One of the little-recognized deterrents to many people's earnest hard

work in evangelism has to do with the last decade of poor seed sowing. It is impossible to reap much or anything where little or no seed has been sown, watered and cultivated. We are now all faced with vast wastelands of seedless soil in North America.

Even though most local churches do not do enough going to share the gospel, they do, on average, have a heart and desire to reach the world and their family and friends around them. Given leadership and training in that area, they do very well. I see it all the time. This week in a neighborhood church of around 100 attendees in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, in one and a half hours "ordinary" church people helped more than 20 people pray to receive Christ and are hot into the follow-up.

This year's report of a decline in baptisms in the face of an all-out effort by so many people sounds the most urgent cry Southern Baptists will ever hear, and it comes from the handwriting that is now on our wall—and it is this: Back to the fields!

Bobby Welch, immediate past president of the Southern Baptist Convention, is the SBC Executive Committee's strategist for global evangelical relations

FIRST PERSON

We need God's Spirit

The devil has never dried one tear, comforted a mourning heart, nor has he ever offered love and comfort to one hurting soul. God does this all the time, especially when the hater of our souls destroys lives in a senseless massacre.

The hate that inspired Cho Seung-Hui to commit such horrible acts resurfaces throughout history: the slaughter of the innocents, the Civil War, the Holocaust, 9/11, and now, in a university community we know as Virginia Tech.

To a degree Nikki Giovanni was right in rallying the human spir-

it to triumph with her words, "We are the Hokies." Perhaps later. We have been laid waste, decimated, if you will. Right now, we don't need the human spirit—we need the Holy Spirit.

As a parent and grandparent, I am stricken with sadness, unable to conceive the enormity of grief through which many are going. Hate has taken their loved ones from them. Christians, pour your hearts out to God in prayer for the fallen victims' families.

No doubt, some will blame God. Others will blame poor legislation of gun control. Still others might place blame on the university and its gov-

erning policies. I believe the blame should go to demon-possessed hate and the evil it inspires.

God is never responsible for the evil humankind commits. Hate is big business to the devil.

We must run to God the Father, and affirm his Son, Jesus, as the great Lover of our souls. The greatest act of hate was levied against Him at the cross. And when He rose again and ascended into heaven, He and the Father sent us the Holy Spirit. He is the One we need right now—not hate, not blame, not the human spirit, but the Holy Spirit.

Come, please come, Holy Spirit of the Living God, and comfort this nation, starting in Blacksburg, Va.

Robert P. Tipton

Severns Valley Baptist Church relocation

On a recent Sunday, Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown recognized those who had chaired various building committees and representatives of the construction companies that built the church's beautiful new facilities. The church has just relocated its campus to a 70-acre site at the corner of Ring Road and Rineyville Road.

Sunday school and worship attendance has been up 20 percent since the church moved to the new site, with 320 visitors during the first three Sundays. Pastor Billy Compton said the church has been following up with all visitors but acknowledged that doing so has been a challenge.

With dual worship services and Sunday schools at 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m., parking is already a problem. Plans have been made to expand the parking area.

The first worship service each Sunday is more praise and celebration and the second worship service is more traditional in music style. The same message is preached at

each service.

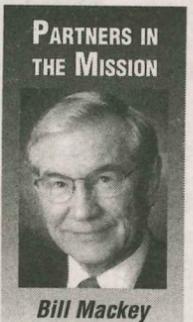
The first-phase multipurpose room is larger than two full-size gyms, with a spacious platform area.

The seating capacity with additional chairs is approximately 1,400. This multipurpose room is used for worship and as a family life center during the week for outreach and ministry.

The worship area is separated from the educational gathering area. This atrium is composed of circular stairways to the first floor and a large area with tables and chairs overlooking a lake.

At the lower level the stairways open near the media center, which has glass walls. Beyond the media center, folding doors provide classrooms, or open space, with a view of the lake. A number of the Sunday school areas are flexible in order to accommodate either small groups or large gatherings.

The youth area, which has its own outside entrance, has a gathering place with a stage, lights and sound system for study and worship



STEWARDSHIP

Beware of today's
online financial
fraud techniques

By Don Spencer

Being "ripped off" financially is nothing new. However, the techniques used continue to change and in today's environment the use of technology plays a key role for those who want to commit fraud. This is especially true for those buying or selling an item on the Internet.

The FBI recently released a list of several fraud alert indicators. If you can answer "yes" to any of the following questions, you could be involved in a fraud or about to be scammed:

■ Did you sell something on the Internet and get a check for more than the item's selling price?

■ Did you sell something on the Internet and receive the check by an overnight delivery service?

■ Did you receive a check connected in any way to communicating with someone by e-mail?

■ Did you receive a check drawn on a business or individual account that is different from the person buying your item?

■ Have you been informed that you were the winner of a lottery such as Canadian, Australian, El Gordo or El Mundo, that you did not enter?

■ Have you been instructed to "wire," "send" or "ship" money, as soon as possible, to a large U.S. city or to another country, such as Canada, England or Nigeria?

■ Have you been asked to pay money to receive a deposit from another country such as Canada, England or Nigeria?

■ Are you receiving pay or a commission for facilitating money transfers through your account?

■ Have you responded to an e-mail requesting you to confirm, update or provide your account information? Legitimate companies almost never use this approach. If you receive one of these e-mails, call the company to verify the source of the e-mail.

Remember, all it takes is answering "yes" to one of these and you may be the subject of a scam. You cannot be too careful with Internet transactions. Don't get ripped off!

Don Spencer is a certified financial planner and directs the Kentucky Baptist Convention's church financial benefits department



As graduation nears, parents face empty nest syndrome

Q: Can you offer any suggestions to help a couple dealing with empty nest syndrome?

Empty nest syndrome, commonly understood as the time that the last child leaves home, can be seen as a crisis, an opportunity or most often as a bittersweet middle ground between those two extremes.

MARRIAGE

Feelings may swing in a variety of directions. Some people may experience sadness, even depression, about the daily loss they are experiencing. Others may be elated that the house is cleaner and quieter, the grocery bills are lower, and the family schedule is much less crowded. Some may lament that the years went by too quickly as they find themselves with regrets about parenting and family life. Spouses who have focused much of their energy on the children may feel anxious, even awkward about being face to face with each other again.

Here are a few tips to help couples and single parents deal with the empty nest years:

Experience your grief as a normal part of living.

Make it your goal to seek out God's new directions for your life.

Prioritize your time with your spouse and be creative.

Take opportunities to travel and invest in hobbies.

Yearn daily for God's presence through prayer and Scripture.

Note friends in which you can reinvest time and energy.

Engage in new forms of service to Christ and the church.

Stay connected to your child through regular communication.

Take inventory of the possibilities this new stage of life offers.

David and Claudia Arp have written an excellent resource for married couples titled "The Second Half of Marriage." While you never stop being a parent, learn to accept the new opportunities before you. You will do well to focus more on what is in front of you and dwell less on what is behind.—Scott Wigginton

Q: What is the fourth grade slump? Is it something we should be concerned about as parents?

Newsweek magazine recently reported that 40 percent of kids ages 5 to 8 read every day. By fourth grade, the percentage drops to 29 percent. The trend reflects what principals and teachers around the country are beginning to refer to as "the fourth grade slump." For some kids, the declining interest in reading reflects an overall declining interest in school. The National Assessment of Education Progress, also known as the Nation's Report Card, supports these findings.

PARENTING

One reading expert believes part of the problem has to do with why children read. Younger children are simply learning to read. However, as kids grow older, they begin to have to read in order to learn. The material also becomes more difficult. The reading fourth graders have to do requires them to think more in order to understand and grasp the content. That can make a difference in attitude as well as in the degree to which children apply themselves. (Most adults know the feeling of reading something you have to as opposed to reading something you want to.)

Some educators blame standardized tests for the trend. Pressure to perform well forces preparation that burns kids out on reading and on school. Others point to video games, organized sports and other extracurricular activities as the culprit. School interferes with these and many times ends up taking a back seat.

Parents can help counter the fourth grade slump to some extent by helping their children learn to love to read and by encouraging them to develop and maintain good reading habits.—David Garrard

Family Forum writers are:

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Facing tragedy: From numbness to action

Paducah. Jonesboro. Columbine. West Nickel Mines. And now Virginia Tech.

"Numb" is the overriding feeling that surfaces as I ponder the mass killings last week in Blacksburg, Va. Yes, shock, grief and anger also are part of the painful emotional mix, especially for those most directly affected by the nation's latest shooting rampage.

But for those of us who gaze in disbelief from a distance, there's a sense of numbness that 32 innocent victims were gunned down by a troubled killer who also took his own life. It's hard to grasp the magnitude of dozens of grieving families and thousands of devastated friends, neighbors and co-workers seeking to come to terms with the senseless slaughter of bright, enthusiastic students and faculty members.

Of course, we all remember the sense of national shock and outrage that accompanied the notorious Columbine mass murders. Most of us likely sat glued to our TVs for hours, trying to absorb every little detail and make some sense of it all.

But as the list of school shootings has grown, shock has given way to a weary sense of resignation. Remember Bethel, Alaska; Pearl, Miss.; Springfield, Ore.; Savannah, Ga.; Santee, Calif.; or Red Lake, Minn.? Those are the sites of half a dozen deadly school shootings in recent years that left 18 people dead and more than 40 others wounded. Yet the reports all begin to run together after a while. Numbness.

As I struggled to put the latest tragedy into perspective, I looked back on past editorials about similar events. A couple of those reflections include:

April 29, 1999: "Late last month, people throughout Jonesboro and Arkansas paused to solemnly observe the first anniversary of the Westside Middle School massacre. Amid the lingering grief, one glimmer of hope was that other communities could be spared such a senseless attack. ...

"It seems almost beyond belief that another mur-

derous rampage has been unleashed at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colo. Like similar tragedies in Kentucky, Mississippi and elsewhere, one troubling question remains: Why? ...

"As Americans struggle through the aftermath of another national nightmare, Psalm 34:14 counsels readers to 'seek peace and pursue it.' Peace is more than the absence of violence; it is the active pursuit of justice and goodwill.

"May true peace come soon to our families, schools and nation. And may we never again need to say, 'Never again.'"

Sept. 21, 1999: "Tragedy struck—again. Just 12 hours after students concluded their prayers at 'See You at the Pole,' a gunman interrupted a post-pole rally at Wedgwood Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas. Within minutes, four teenagers, two seminary students, a seminary graduate and the gunman were dead. ...

"This wasn't supposed to happen again—not in a church, not at an event related to 'See You at the Pole,' not anywhere. But it did.

"And the same questions come rushing back. And the same fears erupt. And the same futile attempts at answers fall far short.

"We continue to live in an age of rage. We long to protect our children. Yet we also pray for them to take authentic stands for Christ.

"That leaves only one clear answer for Christians seeking to stand firm amid a world of chaos: 'On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand; all other ground is sinking sand.'"

Pray fervently for the grieving families and friends struggling to cope with the Virginia Tech tragedy. We must continue to say never again—again and again. We must not settle for numbness.

The memory of those who were brutally murdered last week deserves our shock and grief and outrage—and a fresh determination to make a positive spiritual impact in the lives of those around us.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

More than a tragedy—the evil in Blacksburg

By David Gushee

Jackson, Tenn. (ABP)—The grotesquely evil act that occurred last week at Virginia Tech challenges the imagination's capacity to respond. I cannot say that I have some kind of comprehensive analysis to offer. I would like to say a few things, though, from my perspective as a college professor.

Let's begin by naming this as an act, and not just a "tragedy." It was a product of a young adult's human choices, an act of will, a decision involving premeditation, planning and determination. It was not like a tornado or a hurricane. A human being decided to conduct a massacre, and he did so.

This act of human will should be described as wicked. It involved the descent of a person into evil. Murder is objectively evil. Whatever we might say about the psychological wellsprings of this action, it was wicked. It was sin, on the grossest scale.

This is not to say that we should dismiss evidence of Cho Seung-Hui's psychological maladies. Nor does it mean that pity toward a sick young man is inappropriate. Whatever diagnostic category one might employ, Cho clearly was not well. But we give away too much ground morally when we treat evil acts as entirely the product of psychosis or mental illness.

The Christian tradition has ancient language available that is at

least as compelling as any psychological diagnosis. That is the language of the demonic, of dark supernatural forces that purpose to seduce people away from goodness and God and toward moral and spiritual darkness. I wonder if one

can really improve on the explanation the church would once have offered: Cho gave himself over to Satan and to evil.

The pictures of Cho in his sick Captain Commando get-up remind us that however psychotic or demonic, no one gets their scripts for doing evil out of nowhere. Cho's writings indicate his sympathy for the Columbine killers. His tough-guy, two-gun, ammo-toting persona seems drawn either from Columbine or from some of the kinds of movies that inspired Columbine killers Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold.

One really doesn't have to go very far into the "weekend" section of the newspaper to find plenty of material that someone like Cho could find inspiring. Are we really surprised that a certain tiny slice of the population goes into buildings armed to the teeth and ready to kill people when our own entertainment choices depict people doing exactly the same thing?

Then of course there is the issue of America's inability or unwillingness to arrive at laws that would prevent people like Cho from walking into a gun shop and walking out a short while later with the guns and

ammunition he needed to conduct a campus massacre.

The weaknesses that were revealed about Virginia Tech were not unique. Campuses are open spaces with endless buildings, open doors and young faces milling about. American universities reflect the openness of our society. At least, they did until last week.

The fact that Cho was not removed from school despite the manifest warning signs point to huge but familiar problems. Confidentiality requirements often keep a university and its employees from having and sharing the full range of information about their own students. (Plus, parents are kept out of the loop.) Psychological services on most college campuses are pretty thin. Health coverage for psychological needs is spotty all across our nation. Lawsuit threats discourage active intervention with troubled students unless absolutely necessary.

Colleges—large ones, especially—are vast repositories of young, volatile human beings. As it seems that nearly everyone goes to college these days, these schools are just a cross-section of the population at any given time. Young people need identity, self-esteem, community and meaning. I would say that they, and all of us, need God. Cho lacked any of these. And so he bought his guns and strapped on his vest and went to work on killing people last week in Blacksburg.

David Gushee is a professor of moral philosophy at Union University in Jackson, Tenn.

COMMENTARY

Evangelical leaders ponder root of campus shootings

Washington (RNS)—Several prominent evangelical leaders conducted some public soul-searching April 18 as they searched for answers to last week's mass killing of 32 students and faculty members at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Va.

"The Bible says 'mourn with those who mourn' and thus we do," said Richard Cizik, the National Association of Evangelicals' vice president for governmental affairs. "We don't understand. Indeed, we ask why. But we know that evil is. And we understand free will, even if, on this April morning, we curse free will."

"One of the tragedies in our culture is that people try to deny evil," said Janice Shaw Crouse of Concerned Women for America. "They think there's a human solution to any problem. Scripture teaches us that there is an evil one and he does have power."

Cizik said many Americans seeking to make sense of the shootings will look to psychology or sociology for answers. "We as Christians say that tragedies happen when sin reigns," Cizik said.

Other speakers said Christians, and evangelicals in particular, are partially to blame for failing to reach young Americans. Bishop Harry Jackson, a Maryland megachurch pastor, said, "The evangelical Christian movement has been guilty in recent years of telling everybody what we're against so that we've failed to present the hope of the gospel."

"We're expecting (young people) to adjust to us when often they have no context for that," said Barrett Duke, the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission's vice president for public policy. "The church should stop telling teenagers" to come to them and start "to get to where the kids are."

Campus ministers aid Va. Tech students in wake of shootings

Continued from page 1
center in search of solace.

Area pastors were on the scene too, bringing a sense of calm to a chaotic time. Tommy McDearis, pastor of Blacksburg Baptist Church, who is also chaplain of the local police force, spent much of the day at the hospital. The church is located directly across the street from the Tech campus, and has served as the church home for generations of Hokie students, faculty members and administrators.

When it was time for the prayer service to begin, students began to drift in, in groups of twos and threes. The first question on nearly everyone's lips was "Is anybody missing?"

Most of the students had spent a large part of the day tracking down friends and acquaintances making sure they were all right. Some students spoke of how difficult it will be to return to class and how their sense of security has been destroyed.

Students, faculty and their families gathered on the campus of Virginia Tech the next day for a public convocation.

President Bush and his wife, Laura, attended the convocation at Cassell Coliseum "with hearts full of sorrow" on "a day of sadness for our entire nation."

"Across the town of Blacksburg and in towns all across America, houses of worship from every faith have opened their doors and have lifted you up in prayer," Bush said. "People who have never met you are praying for you; they're praying for your friends who have fallen and who are injured. There's a power in these prayers, real power."

"In times like this, we can find comfort in the grace and guidance of a loving God," Bush added. "As the Scriptures tell us, 'Don't be over-

come by evil, but overcome evil with good."

The Virginia Tech family also heard from Gov. Tim Kaine, university President Charles Steger and representatives from the Muslim, Buddhist, Jewish and Christian communities on campus. The thousands in attendance at the coliseum and in overflow seating at the football stadium recited the Lord's Prayer and closed with emotional chants of the school cheer "Let's go, Hokies."

In an e-mail circulated to Southern Baptist collegiate ministers April 17, Cook wrote, "We have been overwhelmed by the support and prayers of our campus ministry family around the nation. ... We are doing all we can here to help students walk through the first steps of grief."

Frank Page, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, expressed his "deepest concern and prayer support for the students and faculty of Virginia Tech as well as for the townspeople."

Three days after the shootings, Appleton issued a call for Southern Baptists across the country to keep up their prayer efforts for those affected by the tragedy even as the intense concern for the victims starts to subside.

"This is going to be a long-term thing," he said. "People are getting over the initial shock, but there's some stuff that's going to be dealt with for a long time here."

"Students are going to have to start going back to class, and that's going to feel a lot different," Appleton added. "The whole atmosphere in this town feels different. That's hard to describe to people. That's going to take some healing, and the opportunity for ministry is going to be great."

Compiled from reporting by Associated Baptist Press and Baptist Press

At least six students with Baptist ties among 32 shooting victims

Richmond, Va. (ABP)—At least six of the students killed in the April 16 massacre at Virginia Tech, including one former Kentuckian, had ties to Baptist churches.

Among the shooting victims: **Brian Bluhm**, 25, a graduate of duPont Manual High School in Louisville, was active in Baptist campus ministry at Virginia Tech and attended Blacksburg Baptist Church, adjacent to the campus. Bluhm, who received an undergraduate degree in civil engineering, was weeks away from earning his master's degree.

Bluhm's close friend, Michael Marshall, said it was Bluhm's faith and work with the Baptist college ministry that Bluhm loved most. "Brian was a Christian," Marshall said, "and first and foremost that's what he would want to be remembered as."

Austin Cloyd, 18, was a freshman majoring in international studies and French. Cloyd, who attended Blacksburg Baptist Church, moved with her family from Champaign, Ill., to Blacksburg in 2005.

Terry Harter, Cloyd's former pastor, said she was so inspired by an Appalachian service project to help rehabilitate homes that she and her mother started a similar program in Illinois.

Caitlin Hammaren, 19, also attended Blacksburg Baptist Church.

She was a sophomore majoring in international studies and French.

"She was just one of the most outstanding young individuals that I've had the privilege of working with in my 31 years as an educator," said John Latini, principal of Minisink Valley High School, where she graduated in 2005.

Rachael Hill, 18, of Richmond, Va., was a freshman studying biology. She graduated from Grove Avenue Christian School, which is affiliated with Grove Avenue Baptist Church in Richmond.

"Rachael was a very bright, articulate, intelligent, beautiful, confident, poised young woman," said Clay Fogler, administrator for the Grove Avenue school.

Jarrett Lane, 22, from Narrows, Va., was a senior majoring in civil engineering. He was a member of First Baptist Church of Narrows, Va.

Lane's brother-in-law, Daniel Farrell, said Lane "had a caring heart and was a friend to everyone he met. We are leaning on God's grace in these trying hours."

Nicole White, 20, of Carrollton, Va., was a junior majoring in international studies and German. She was a member of Nansemond River Baptist Church in Suffolk, Va.

Laurie Guiffre noted that she had grown up with White, remembering her as a person of great character.



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IN RECOGNITION

of Deceased Kentucky Baptist Leaders

The 2007 KBC Obituaries Report will include information on deceased persons who have served our Lord and Kentucky Baptists in a noteworthy manner. We are including persons who died during the convention year, September 1, 2006 through August 31, 2007.

These persons would be Kentucky Baptist ministers, missionaries, educators, laypersons, institutional leaders and staff and others whose Christian service has significantly benefited our state convention fellowship and mission programs.

We Need Your Help To Gather the Following Information:

- Full name of deceased
- Date of birth
- Date of death
- Active or retired status in last position held in city, state where located
- Name of church where member, association, state where located
- Service or ministry worthy of recognition (briefly stated)

Please forward this information before August 31 to:



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Seminary steeple is testimony to city's post-Katrina recovery

By Gary Myers
Baptist Press

New Orleans (BP)—The steeple that served as a beacon of hope in the city of New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina once again graces the top of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary's Leavell Chapel.

Workers from Kentucky-based Campbellsville Industries completed the installation of the new steeple on March 29, 19 months to the day after Hurricane Katrina. The three-day installation process culminated with the placement of the 46-foot spire, and a small crowd of seminary students, professors and staff members cheered as the crane operator gently eased the last section into place.

In the days after Hurricane Katrina, seminary officials worked diligently to restore power and illuminate the steeple. Their desire was to offer a symbol of hope in a hurting city. In October 2005, the illuminated steeple provided the lone point of light in a sea of darkness—the only light for miles.

While the aluminum-clad steeple suffered only minor external damage, Katrina weakened the internal steel structure. Last July, seminary officials opted to remove the steeple and replace it with a new one.

"During the darkest hours in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the steeple shining in the night was a beacon of hope, a reminder that God had a future for us," seminary President Chuck Kelley said. "To have that steeple back in place shining in the night once again is a reaffirmation that that future has started."

Stretching 170 feet above the New Orleans Seminary campus and visible from points throughout the city, the steeple gives testimony that the city is slowly recovering.

The new steeple is an exact visual replica of the original steeple which was patterned after the steeple of the first Baptist church in America, First Baptist Church of Providence, R.I. The internal design, however, is much stronger than the original. It features an improved structure which meets Louisiana's post-Katrina wind load standards.

Workers also repaired the steeple's broken clock, which stopped working years ago, and replaced the broken carillon.

Before the spire was added atop the other steeple sections, Kelley inscribed the interior with a short note that described the steeple's increased significance.

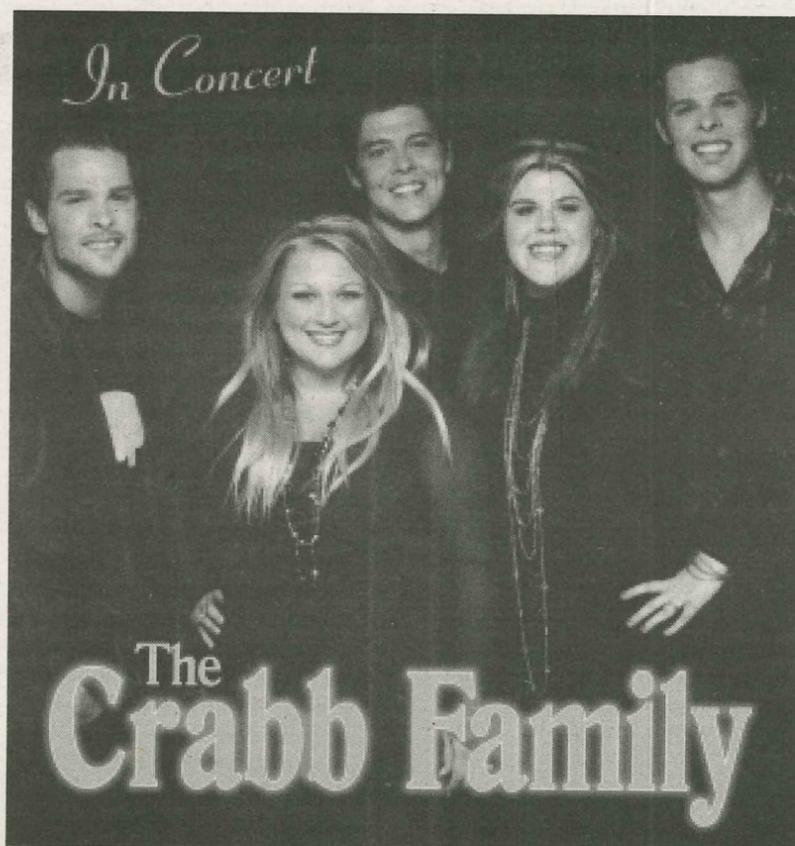
"After Katrina, the only light between downtown N.O. and Slidell was this steeple," Kelley wrote. "May it ever be a beacon of hope! Jeremiah 29:11."

The steeple's return marked a symbolic conclusion to the seminary's reconstruction efforts since Katrina. The campus is once again full of life and most of the restoration projects are complete or nearing completion. In most cases, seminary officials chose to make significant upgrades on campus.

"The reconstruction process has just been a miracle of God," Kelley said. "We have been able not simply to repair what was broken, but to improve the entire campus along the way."



NEW STEEPLE Workers lower the first section of a new, stronger steeple into place at New Orleans Seminary's Leavell Chapel, replacing the original one that was weakened during Hurricane Katrina. (BP photo by Boyd Guy)



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FAREWELL TOUR

Meet the class of 2007, part 5

Friends, honeybuns & extra work hours all part of Mindy's Oneida experience

"Disrespectful, talks back, aggravates her brother, and she does not want to come to Oneida, but the choice is not up to her."

This is some of what the mother of a future Oneida student—who for the purposes of this article we'll call "Mindy"—told us during a phone interview in 2002.

Eighth-grader Mindy and her mother were not getting along. Even though Mindy's mom said Mindy did not have a choice about attending Oneida, we explained our policy never to enroll a child unless he or she agrees. Two weeks later, a second phone call came informing us that Mindy had changed her mind and now wanted to come. During my interview with Mindy, I asked her if she did, in fact, want to come or if her mother was forcing her. Mindy replied that on a scale of 1 to 10—10 indicating she really wanted to be here—her desire was at a 9.

Here is part of Mindy's "My Oneida Experience" senior essay:

"Before I came to Oneida, the relationship my mom and I had wasn't exactly what you would call 'perfect.' We were totally different and we never saw eye-to-eye. We could not agree on anything. Most of my friends were bad news, but me being a stubborn teenager, I didn't realize that. ... The reason I came to Oneida was because of my attitude. I didn't grow up with a dad, and they say that dads are the ones who discipline the most.

"I thought I was a perfect little angel and I couldn't do anything wrong, but little did I know how wrong I was. ... I'll never forget the night before I came here. I had never cried so hard in my

life. When the next morning came, I realized no matter how much crying I did, nothing was going to change. ... I was definitely not used to the dorm environment, but after a few months, I started to get used to it. As bad as it sounds, when I went home for the breaks, I missed this place. It was becoming my home more and more every day. After my first two years, my mom told me I could stay home if I wanted to. But I thought if I stayed at Oneida the relationship between my mother

and me would be fine, and continue to get better, which is why I am still here today. ... I had Mr. Kendrick for almost three years. ... He is the most patient teacher I have ever had. He taught me more than just pre-algebra, he taught me that kindness and patience are the keys to success. He just stands out among all my other teachers. ... Being in chapel every school day and having Mr. Spencer's Bible class have opened up new things to me. I learned things about God I had never known before. ... I believe in God and His word. I am not perfect, but Jesus was. There is still a lot I need to change and I'm working on it.

"All of us graduating are going to cry. ... I know we will miss our friends." Mindy wrote that she even would miss the extra hours of work she occasionally received as punishment, and the constant diet of honeybuns on campus.

"What is the most important thing I think I have learned here? Responsibility and respect! You have to be responsible, no matter where you go and respect is a major factor in life. I just can't believe we've made it and we're graduating."

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

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

Our new president

Donnie Fox elected new president of Clear Creek

On April 17, Clear Creek trustees unanimously elected Donnie Fox, dean of institutional advancement, as the new president.

Like his father, Donnie is a Clear Creek graduate. His dad served many years as assistant to former president Dennis Aldridge. This legacy has helped create strong ties for Donnie with fellow alumni. In his current role in resource development, he has demonstrated the commitment and hard work needed to move the college forward.

"The trustees are confident that Donnie Fox will perform the duties as the next president of Clear Creek and will do so in an exemplary manner as he assumes the helm of the college during the new days," said trustee chair Tim Langford.

"It is truly an honor to follow God's call to lead His college," Donnie said. "I look forward to following God's leadership and build upon the legacy that others have left over the last 80 years."

Donnie's brother, Jack, is a trustee from St. Matthews Baptist in Louisville. Jack excused himself from the board discussion but after the vote added a family memo-

ry. "I brought Donnie to campus at age three; our parents had already moved from St. Louis," Jack said. "Donnie came with a black and swollen eye, where he had stuck an arrow during play. Over the years he's had his eyes opened; I'm thankful for God's working."

In addition to the election, trustees approved changes in the bylaws regarding board membership. "The board shall have 32 members; of these, 24 must be Kentucky members, and up to eight may be out-of-state." In recent years the board has had fewer than eight out-of-state members, but could not add additional Kentucky members.

The 2007-08 budget totaling \$3,216,404 was approved, reflecting a 4 percent increase over last year, but is lower than 2005-06. No increase was made in rent or tuition; the plan includes a 3.5 percent cost-of-living increase for faculty and staff. The budget provides for an additional faculty member.

Your prayers and support are needed for president-elect Fox and the bright days ahead for Clear Creek Baptist Bible College.

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

Partial-birth abortion ban

Supreme Court votes 5-4 to uphold law restricting late-term abortion procedure

By Tom Strode
Baptist Press

Washington (BP)—The U.S. Supreme Court narrowly upheld a federal ban on partial-birth abortion April 18, delivering an important victory for pro-life supporters.

The high court's 5-4 decision reversed rulings by two federal appeals courts and affirmed the Partial-birth Abortion Ban Act, marking the first judicially approved restriction on a specific procedure since the justices legalized abortion in 1973.

Chief Justice John Roberts joined Associate Justices Antonin Scalia, Anthony Kennedy, Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito in the majority. Kennedy, who affirmed the court's 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision in a crucial 1992 ruling, wrote in the majority opinion that the ban does not infringe on the right to abortion declared previously by the high court, meaning *Roe* remains in effect. He said the ban is not vague and does not impose "an undue burden on a woman's right to abortion."

Associate Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg sharply disagreed in her dissent, calling the decision a retreat from previous rulings. She said the opinion was "alarming," and she described as "irrational" the idea the law advanced a "legitimate governmental interest." Associate Justices John Paul Stevens, David Souter and Stephen Breyer joined Ginsburg in the minority.

Bush affirms court ruling

President Bush, who nominated Roberts and Alito to the high court, said he was pleased with the ruling, calling it an "affirmation of the progress we have made over the past six years in protecting human dignity and upholding the sanctity of life. We will continue to work for the day when every child is welcomed in life and protected in law."

The stark contrasts on the court were mirrored in the reactions of pro-life and pro-choice advocates.

"This is a great day for justice. This is a great day for the unborn. And this is a great day for America," said Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

The Southern Baptist Convention adopted resolutions condemning the partial-birth procedure in both

1996 and 2002.

The Susan B. Anthony List, which seeks to help elect pro-life women to Congress, called the ruling a "watershed moment for the pro-life movement." The organization's statement said the decision "will likely inspire increased support for more common-sense restrictions on abortion across the country."

Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J., a congressional pro-life leader, said, "Finally, the high court has found its voice and used its authority to defend helpless children and their vulnerable mothers from the violence of abortion. Scrutiny must be brought to bear on the methods of abortion. The discussion of partial-birth abortion begins that process."

Meanwhile, abortion-rights organizations criticized the decision.

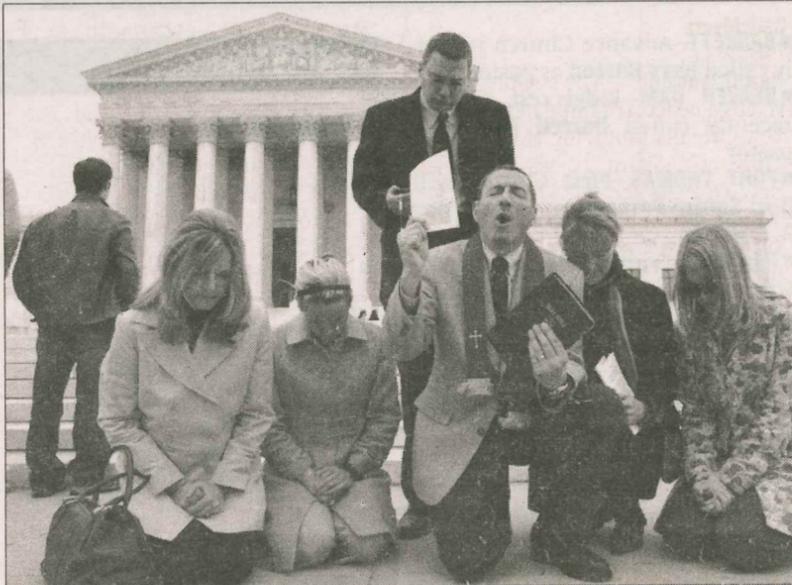
Americans "should be absolutely outraged by this unprecedented and dangerous intrusion into the private relationship between a woman and her doctor," said Joan Malin, president of Planned Parenthood of New York City. "Planned Parenthood will comply with the law. But our doors are not closed."

Leaders on both sides of the issue agreed the decision demonstrated one thing—elections have consequences. Bush's re-election in 2004 enabled him to nominate Roberts to replace the late Chief Justice William Rehnquist and Alito to take the seat of Associate Justice Sandra Day O'Connor upon her retirement, both in 2005. Alito's presence on the court made the difference in the ruling, since O'Connor had voted to strike down a similar state law in a 5-4 decision in 2000.

"Today's decision shows Bush's appointees have moved the court in a direction that could further undermine *Roe v. Wade* and protections for women's health," said Nancy Keenan, president of NARAL Pro-choice America. "We need to elect more pro-choice members of Congress and a president who will stand up for—not attack—our fundamental values of freedom and privacy."

Land said, "Thank God for President Bush, and thank God for Chief Justice John Roberts and Associate Justice Samuel Alito."

"If Al Gore or John Kerry ... had made the nominations to replace the late Chief Justice William



RULING RESPONSE Pro-life supporters pray in front of the U.S. Supreme Court after the court voted 5-4 to uphold the Partial-birth Abortion Ban Act April 18. (RNS/Reuters photo by Jim Young)

Rehnquist and retired Associate Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, then this monstrous partial-birth abortion procedure would have likely been upheld by the highest court as constitutional in the land in a 6-3 vote, rather than being struck down 5-4," Land added.

Congress approved the Partial-birth Abortion Ban Act in 2003 with a 64-34 vote in the Senate and a 281-142 vote in the House of Representatives. Congress had twice adopted partial-birth abortion bans in the 1990s only to have President Clinton veto them. In both 1996 and 1998, the House achieved the two-thirds majorities necessary to override vetoes, but the Senate fell short.

After Bush signed the bill into law in November 2003, abortion rights organizations quickly challenged it in three courts and blocked its enforcement.

Opinion cites government interest

In his opinion, Kennedy said the high court had previously found that the government has an interest in protecting unborn life. He also said there are other abortion methods doctors can use instead of the partial-birth procedure.

It is clear that a primary assumption in the 1992 *Casey v. Planned Parenthood* decision—"that the government has a legitimate and substantial interest in preserving and promoting fetal life—would be repudiated were the Court now to affirm the judgments of the Courts of Ap-

peals," Kennedy wrote. The *Casey* opinion reasserted the *Roe* opinion legalizing abortion while upholding a state's authority to enact some restrictions.

"Where it has a rational basis to act, and it does not impose an undue burden, the State may use its regulatory power to bar certain procedures and substitute others, all in furtherance of its legitimate interests in regulating the medical profession in order to promote respect for life, including life of the unborn," he wrote.

Ginsburg acknowledged that the decision "does not go so far as to discard *Roe* or *Casey*," but it is "hardly faithful" to principles spelled out by the high court in the past. "Congress imposed a ban despite our clear prior holdings that the State cannot proscribe an abortion procedure when its use is necessary to protect a woman's health," she wrote.

"In candor, the Act, and the Court's defense of it, cannot be understood as anything other than an effort to chip away at a right declared again and again by this Court—and with increasing comprehension of its centrality to women's lives," Ginsburg added.

In addition to joining the majority opinion, Thomas and Scalia agreed on a brief concurring opinion. Thomas said he wrote the concurrence "to reiterate my view that the Court's abortion jurisprudence, including (*Roe* and *Casey*), has no basis in the Constitution."

Three Christian workers murdered in Turkey by group of Muslim extremists

Istanbul (BP)—In a gruesome assault against Turkey's tiny Christian community, five young Muslim Turks entered a Christian publishing office in the southeastern province of Malatya April 18 and slit the throats of three Protestant Christians.

Two of the victims, Necati Aydin, 36, and Ugur Yuksel, 32, were Turkish converts from Islam. The third man, Tilmann Geske, 46, was a German citizen.

The Turkish press reported that four of the five young men, all 19 to 20 years of age, admitted during initial interrogations that they were motivated by both "nationalist and religious feelings."

"We did this for our country," an identical note in the pockets of all five young men read, Channel D television station reported. "They are attacking our religion."

In a demonstration against the Zirve Publishing office in Malatya two years ago, local protestors had claimed its publishing and distribution activities constituted "proselytism" among Muslims and should be closed down. Turkish law, however, guarantees the right to engage in religious evangelism if it does not contain proven political motives.

Turkish government leaders were quick to denounce the murders and promise a full investigation.

According to Zirve Publishing's general manager, Hamza Ozant, the company's Malatya staff had received death threats in recent months. All three of the men worked in the office and attended the local 30-member Kurtulus Protestant Church that Aydin served as pastor.

Aydin is survived by his wife, Semse, and a son and daughter, both preschool age. Geske and his wife, Susanne, had two sons and a daughter, ages 8 to 13. Yuksel was engaged to be married.

In a bold initiative, Pastor Ihsan Ozbek, chairman of the Alliance of Protestant Churches in Turkey, led a press conference broadcast live from Malatya and

shown simultaneously on several TV channels. Flanked by the churches' legal representative, Orhan Kemal Cengiz, and Istanbul pastor Bedri Peker, Ihsan distributed a press release to the Turkish media headlined, "A Horrible Brutality, But Not a Surprise."

"Yesterday, Turkey was buried in the darkness of the Middle Ages," Ozbek declared. "We know this will not be the last (martyr). But with all our hearts we wish it would be the last."

The deadly attack was the first known martyrdom of Turkish converts from Islam since the founding of the Turkish Republic in 1923.

PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following Kentucky Baptist ministries and missionaries:

"Minute Men" ministry of Trammel Fork Baptist Church in Scottsville. Pastor Jim Gifford shares that the church has a "Minute Men" ministry that helps single mothers and elderly in the community with light bulb or furnace filter replacement, basic maintenance and home emergencies. Their name comes from the fact that they are ready in a "minute's notice" to help meet needs and share Christ. Pray that more men will assist in the ministry. Pray that the community will recognize faith that is acted out and become more aware of the church's desire to minister to their needs.

Church and Community Missionary Pam Pyle of Lexington. Pyle ministers to low-income families at the Irishtown Baptist Mission. She shares Christ through worship services, children's church, Feed the Hungry ministry, a clothes closet, youth and adult Bible studies, GED classes and the Read to Succeed program. Pray that Pyle and the volunteers who assist her will reach families with the gospel and effectively disciple new Christians. Pray also that Pyle will have wisdom to deal with the behavior and discipline problems of students the ministry seeks to serve.

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

Spotlight on ...

Providence



First Church and Corinth Church will co-host revival services May 6-9 with **Joe McKeever**, director of missions for the Baptist Association of Greater New Orleans, as evangelist. Services will be May 6, 11 a.m., at Corinth Church and May 6, 6 p.m., and May 7-9, 7 p.m., at First Church. Activities will include a noon luncheon May 7 in which McKeever will discuss post-Katrina recovery efforts in New Orleans.

with **Wayne Kuhner** as evangelist. **Mark Lilly** is pastor.

■ **PADUCAH**—Lone Oak First Church recently called **Mark Swadley** as minister of music. **Dan Summerlin** is pastor.

■ **RICHMOND**—Red House Church has called **James "Butch" Tanner** as senior pastor effective April 22. He previously was pastor of Calvary Church in Greenwood, Ind.

■ **VERSAILLES**—**Rick Ralston** recently resigned as associate pastor of New Hope Church. **Wesley Noss** is pastor.

■ **BASKETT**—Advance Church recently called **Jerry Barron** as pastor.

■ **BEAVER DAM**—Ridgecrest Church recently called **Darrell Moran** as pastor.

■ **FORT THOMAS**—First Church will host **Squire Parsons** in concert May 3, 6:30 p.m.

■ **FRANKLIN**—Sulphur Spring Church will host the Southern gospel quartet, **Grace Abound**, April 29, 11 a.m. The church also will hold revival services April 29-May 2 with **Jeff LaBorg**, pastor of College Heights Church in Gallatin, Tenn., as evangelist. **Matthew Sickling** is pastor.

■ **HARTFORD**—Concord Church recently called **Eddie Harpole** as pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Bethany Church ordained **John Spencer** to the gospel ministry April 15. **Chuck Fuller** is pastor.

Hurstbourne Church's adult choir will present **Eyes of Faith** April 29, 6 p.m. **Mike O'Neal** is pastor.

Walnut Street Church will host the **Louisville Leopard Percussionists** performing with **The Percussionists of Walnut Street** April 29, 4 p.m. For more information, call (502) 589-5290. **Rusty Ellison** is pastor.

■ **MARION**—Marion Church called **Mike Jones** as pastor effective May 6. He previously was pastor of Oak Grove Church in Cadiz.

■ **OLIVE HILL**—First Church held its spring revival services April 15-18



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April

26 Senior Living Celebration, Central Baptist Church, Winchester.

27 Senior Living Celebration, Beacon Hill Baptist Church, Somerset.

27-29 All-State Children's Choir—West, Jonathan Creek.

27 Children's Bible Drill, Rose Hill Baptist Church, Ashland, and St. Matthews Baptist Church, Louisville.

27-28 Literacy Missions Conference, First Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

28 Children's Bible Drill, Calvary Baptist Church, Lexington.

May

4 Children's Bible Drill, Beacon Hill Baptist Church, Somerset, and Reidland Baptist Church, Paducah.

4-6 Equestrian Trail Ride, Mammoth Cave.

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

Training highlights social ministries

Crestwood—Leaders and volunteers involved in Christian social ministries can enhance their evangelistic ministry skills at an upcoming "Sharing Good News through Good Works" conference May 14-15 at Crestwood Baptist Church.

Sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, the event is designed to provide practical training and encouragement for those working to meet the physical and spiritual needs of hurting people.

"Sharing Good News through Good Works" offers resources and training for ministry volunteers of all levels.

Conference participants will select one of the 10 focus tracks, which include drug recovery programs,

pregnancy care center encouragement and training, health care ministries, identifying and ministering to abused women and children, restorative justice ministries, multi-housing ministries, strategic planning and grant writing, resort and leisure ministries, literacy ministries update and general ministry overview.

Charles Roesel, pastor emeritus of First Baptist Church of Leesburg, Fla., will speak during the Monday evening plenary session.

The cost to attend is \$20 by April 30, or \$30 after April 30 or at the door. Cost includes conference materials, Tuesday lunch and breaks. For more information, visit www.kybaptist.org/nmec or call (502) 489-3530 or toll-free in Kentucky at (866) 489-3530.

CLASSIFIED ADS

AVAILABLE: For supply, interim or bivocational pastorate—any place, anytime, any or no fees. Call Ben Render at (502) 368-3067.

FOR RENT: Family reunion or wedding parties. Highway 30A, beachside, 75 yards from the ocean; more than 5,000 square feet, eight bedrooms including five masters; full game room; large dining area; private heated pool. Call Suzannah at (800) 397-2708; www.reunionhouse.org.

FREE: Church organ. Gulbransen, 32-key, 15-pedal, 4'x4'. Perfect for small church/home. (502) 899-5353.

SEEKING: Piano player for Thursday evening and Sunday morning services for Calvary Road Baptist Church in Shepherdsville, Ky. If interested, call (502) 905-0902 or 905-3782.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of youth. Must have strong Bible belief and enthusiastic personality. Mail resumé to Ferguson Baptist Church, PO Box 247, Ferguson, KY 42533; or call (606) 679-1690.

SEEKING: Minister of youth (full- or part-time) for Dry Ridge Baptist Church. Prefer 2-4 years experience in youth ministry, but will consider any candidate with a heart and calling to serve youth. Current youth group consists of about 50 youth with most activities on Wednesday and Sunday nights. The group currently has several committed adult leaders willing to serve and take our youth to a higher spiritual plane. Reply by mail to: Youth Minister Search Committee, Dry Ridge Baptist Church, PO Box 14, Dry Ridge, KY 41035; or by e-mail: p.puraleski@insightbb.com.

SEEKING: Full-time director of missions for Ohio River Baptist Association, a 41-church association in western Kentucky. Resumés will be received through May 31, 2007. All responses will remain confidential. Please mail to: Search Committee, Ohio River Baptist Association, PO Box 9, Salem, KY 42078.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of music with seminary degree for conservative but progressive SBC church in southeast Kentucky. Must be energetic, Spirit-led individual with an ability to work with all age groups, blended as well as traditional worship services. Send resumé to: Music Search Team, First Baptist Church, 170 Madison Ave., Whitesburg, KY 41858.

SEEKING: Minister of education. Cross Lanes Baptist Church is a dynamic, growing (worship: 500; Sunday school: 350), conservative (BF&M 2000) SBC church in West Virginia. We seek qualified candidates for the full-time position responsible for the overall educational ministries of the church. To receive a job description and ministry questionnaire, and/or submit your resumé (deadline is May 31), e-mail pastorseth@crosslanesbaptist.org or mail to 102 Knollwood Drive, Cross Lanes, WV 25313. No calls to church office, please. www.crosslanesbaptist.org.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of youth and education at Harrodsburg Baptist Church, PO Box 286, Harrodsburg, KY 40330. Primary focus is youth, but education experience is important. For more church information, see www.harrodsburgbaptist.org.

SEEKING: Music director for Clayville Baptist Church in Shelbyville, Ky. Duties include adult choir rehearsal and Sunday morning worship. Experience helpful; modest stipend. Contact pastor at leebolton@bellsouth.net.

SEEKING: Part-time/bivocational minister of music (approx. 20 hours/week). Duties include leading Sunday morning worship and evening congregational singing in blended music style, plus leading adult choir, youth choir and children's choir. Send resumé to: Search Committee, McHenry Baptist Church, PO Box 154, McHenry, KY 42354; or e-mail mchenrybaptist@vonageonline.net.

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

SEEKING: Full-time senior pastor for Lawrenceville First Baptist Church, located in Gwinnett County, Ga. Please mail a resumé with DVD, VHS or other media, to: Pastor Search Committee, PO Box 228, Lawrenceville, GA 30046-0028.

SEEKING: Part-time youth minister with focus on discipleship for rural church in NKY. Also coordinate activities and outreach events. Send resumé to: Youth Search Committee, Knoxville Baptist Church, 110 E Fairview Road, Williamstown, KY 41097.

SEEKING: Part-time accompanist for Sunday and Wednesday worship and choir practices. Contact Green Acres Baptist Church, 5189 Poplar Level Road, Louisville, KY 40219; (502) 964-8165; e-mail: greenacresbaptist@bellsouth.net.

SEEKING: Full-time director of missions for Monroe Baptist Association. College and some seminary training desirable, as is associational experience. For more information, call Rev. Ty Clenney, (270) 618-4373. Send resumé: DOM Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 302 North Magnolia, Tompkinsville, KY 42167.

SEEKING: Community-minded senior pastor for a church with an existing community outreach presence. Morganfield First Baptist Church is located in a small, western Kentucky town, and has an average attendance of 200-250 in two Sunday morning services—one contemporary and one traditional. This is an awesome church with a strong potential for growth. Send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 200 North Morgan St., Morganfield, KY 42437.

SEEKING: Full-time senior pastor at Piner Baptist Church, a Southern Baptist church in northern Kentucky. We provide many ministries locally and internationally. Average attendance for Sunday services is 450. For more information, go to www.pinerbaptist.org. Resumés may be sent to Wayne Diehl, pastor of administration, 15044 Madison Pike, Morning View, KY 41063.

SEEKING: Minister of youth. Responsible for providing ministerial leadership and a comprehensive youth ministry that is consistent with the vision and mission of the church. Please send resumé to: Youth Minister Search Committee, First Baptist Church, PO Box 446, Taylorsville, KY 40071.

Southwestern team starts spiritual plowing in Uruguay

By Brent Thompson
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Montevideo, Uruguay (BP)—Farmers know it takes a lot of work and planning before a harvest can be gleaned from a piece of land, and that one of the first things to do even before seeds are planted is clear away rocks and brush.

In an evangelical sense, that is what a team of 10 Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary students, professors and their spouses did recently in the South American country of Uruguay.

“Uruguayans are an aggressively unchurched, secular people,” said Keith Eitel, who with his wife, Glenda, led the missions team. He directs the Baptist seminary’s World Mission Center.

According to Eitel, there are obstacles to the gospel in Uruguay that must be softened or removed so subsequent mission teams can “water” the spiritual seeds of the gospel.

The “aggressively unchurched” are people who are aware of Christianity but deliberately reject its message, Eitel explained.

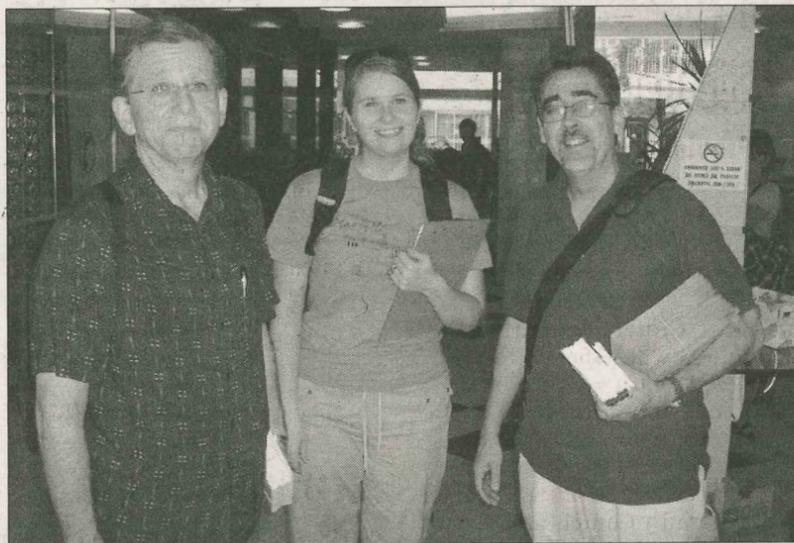
Uruguay borders Argentina and Brazil and has about 3.5 million people living in an area slightly smaller than the state of Washington. The city of Montevideo, where the Southwestern team took up their assignment among the Pocitos community, is the nation’s capital.

Most people identify themselves as Roman Catholic, but Eitel said there is widespread distaste for things associated with organized religion.

The Southwestern team served alongside Southern Baptist international missionaries Charles and Karen Clark and Paul and Pam Sheaffer.

The Clarks have been church planters in Uruguay for many years, and the Sheaffers for about a year.

First, the Southwestern mission team walked throughout the Pocitos community and prayed that God would open doors and provide



MARKETPLACE MISSION During a mission trip to Uruguay in March, Keith Eitel (left), Lucy Higgins and Southern Baptist International Mission Board strategy coordinator Rob Roy provided free copies of the Gospel of John to passers-by in the capital city of Montevideo. Eitel, director of the World Mission Center at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, led fellow faculty, students and spouses on the eight-day trip. (BP photo courtesy of Bobby Paul)

opportunities to get inside the guarded, gated apartment complexes where thousands of people live.

One of the group’s guides was a believer. He told them that it was difficult to distribute religious literature in the apartment buildings because guards controlled access to those residences.

“Of the many apartment complexes we targeted, the guards in all but two of them gave us access to put the leaflets in the apartment mailboxes,” said Art Savage, associate director of Southwestern Seminary’s World Missions Center. “One of our guides was amazed, and told us he was seeing an openness in his country he had never seen before.”

Team disciples new believers

Bill Goff, professor of Christian ethics at Southwestern, was part of the mission team. He is fluent in Spanish, having spent 27 years in service with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board before

joining the seminary in 1998.

Having traveled throughout Uruguay previously, Goff confirmed Eitel’s assessment of Uruguay as “perhaps the most secularized, unchurched country in South America.” He said he was delighted to see an emerging openness to the gospel among the people he met on the mission trip.

One evening, Goff gave a Spanish-language presentation on Christian character development to about 30 members of four Bible study/worship groups planted by the IMB missionaries.

“It was a discipling effort,” Goff said. “All but one of them had been saved for less than a year. These are highly educated and successful business people.”

The Southwestern team also went door-to-door, distributing copies of the Gospel of John. Despite some rejections, the team followed a carefully mapped strategy, giving away more than 3,800 copies of the

gospel.

They handed out gospel tracts in marketplaces and along the boardwalk, and invited passers-by to a free health fair.

Goff said to have a dozen people interested in the gospel is remarkable and a good indicator of the spiritual potential in the area.

On the final evening of the mission trip, the Southwestern group provided the free health fair. Curtis Bogard, team member and husband of Southwestern master’s student Patricia Bogard, is a dentist. He helped answer questions about dental care as his wife gave a seminar on dental hygiene. Team member Glenda Eitel is a nurse and lactation specialist at Southwestern, and provided information on breast-feeding.

A psychiatrist and a psychologist who are recent believers and attend the missionaries’ house church, gave seminars on depression and the importance of friends. Goff said a recent double-digit increase in suicides in Uruguay has made citizens “very quickened” to these kinds of presentations.

At the end of the health fair, Goff extended an invitation, in Spanish, for residents to attend the next set of presentations scheduled for this month.

Trip was part of ongoing effort

“It was a wonderful opportunity for the Southwesterners and local Christians to work together to build relationships and water seeds of the gospel that had been planted earlier,” Savage said.

This was the second consecutive trip to Uruguay by Southwestern students and faculty. Savage said he hopes a third will be scheduled for follow-up evangelism.

“Our students saw God knock down barriers in an area that was supposed to be hard to reach,” Savage said. “Everyone was amazed at how doors opened to share the gospel.”

Palau will launch resource using Holman translation

Nashville (BP)—The Luis Palau Association has selected the Holman Christian Standard Bible’s translation of the Gospel of John for its “Growing Faith” study book for new and recommitted Christians.

The new resource will be launched at the Luis Palau Nashville CityFest outreach May 19-20. LPA said it plans to use it in other events throughout 2008.

The Palau ministry will use more than 170,000 Holman CSB English copies plus 45,000 Spanish copies from La Biblia de las Américas, a contemporary Spanish translation of the Scriptures from the original languages. La Biblia de las Américas New Testament, Psalms and Proverbs will be available this summer through Holman Bible Outreach International.

The translation was released by LifeWay Christian Resources in 2001.

The Holman Baptist Mission Society

Lead to succeed program. Try that Pyle and the volunteers who assist her will be another with the goal and effectively.

the Holman Baptist Mission Society



Mandisa

Former ‘Idol’ finalist shines spotlight on Cooperative Program

By Art Toalston
Baptist Press

Nashville (BP)—Mandisa Hundley, one of last year’s “American Idol” finalists, doesn’t want any regrets.

And that includes missions.

Mandisa (who uses her first name in pursuing a music career) said she marvels at how missionaries “work day after day ... that the body of Christ can be built up.”

Such admiration compels her to

do “anything that I can do” for missions, she said, including hosting the most recent volume of “Missionary Moments Video Vignettes.”

The video series produced by the Southern Baptist Convention is in its sixth year. The three-minute segments highlight the work of 12 missionaries—six serving internationally and six in North America—supported by Southern Baptists’ gifts to the Cooperative Program.

The vignettes can be used to introduce general or special offerings, as sermon illustrations, for prayer meetings, and in Sunday school and other small-group settings.

Missions is not a new topic for Mandisa, but she said it wasn’t until she began working as a customer service representative for LifeWay Christian Resources that she began to understand the scope of global evangelistic efforts.

At LifeWay, “that’s when I heard about all these people either in short-term missions or giving their entire life going out to win people to the Lord,” said the graduate of Fisk University in Nashville. “I have nothing but respect for them.”

Mandisa moved from customer service, joining Bible teacher Beth Moore’s “Living Proof Live” special events ministry as a member of the worship team. Her respect for missions grew.

Moore “has such a heart for the lost. She always takes a moment to talk about missions in all the conferences I’ve seen her at,” Mandisa said. “She’s always wanted to make sure people know that there are

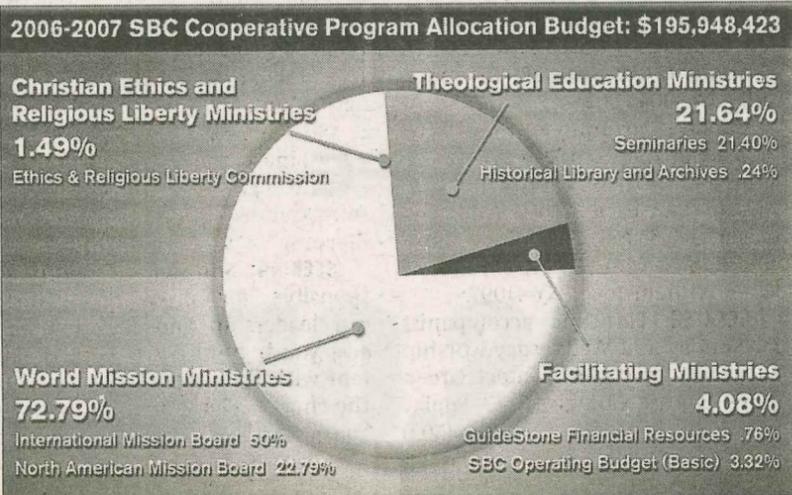
people out there who are doing this fulltime and are really giving their lives to it.”

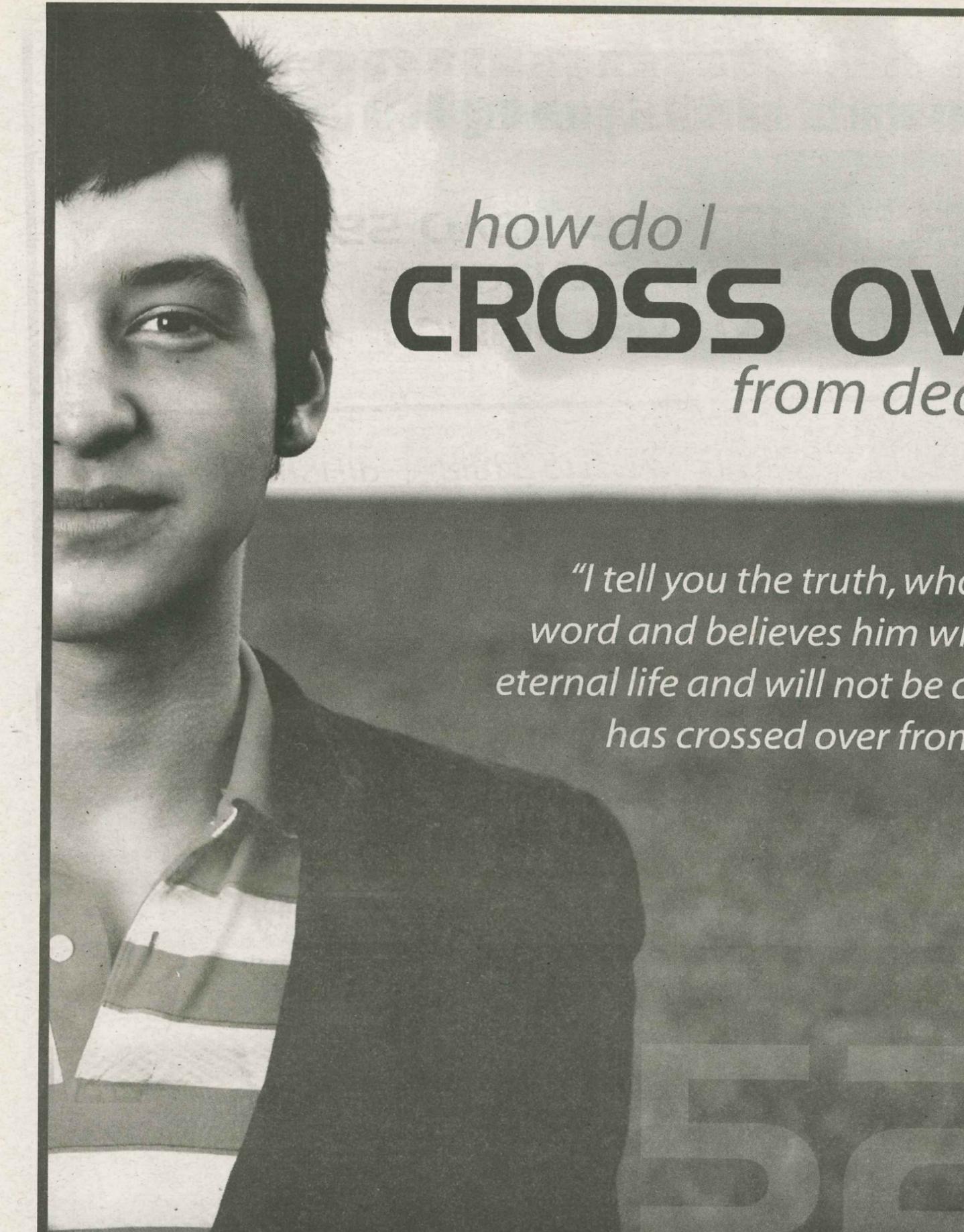
Missionary Moments Video Vignettes are available for \$6 via www.sbc.net/cp. A print edition of Missionary Moments also is available.

In 2006, Mandisa earned a spot among the 12 finalists on “American Idol.” Her time on the show ended just over a year ago. She said the spotlight has not changed her.

“I’m the same person. The only difference is that people can pronounce my name now. ... I still enjoy worshipping. I still enjoy spending time with my friends and going to church. None of that has changed.”

Her aversion to regrets carried her through the “American Idol” experience and continues to motivate her as she pursues a career in Christian music, she said. “I went into American Idol thinking I just never wanted to look back and wonder what would have happened if I hadn’t tried it. ... At the end of my life, I never want to say, ‘I could have worshipped harder’ or ‘I could have had a bigger effect on people.’”





how do I
CROSS OVER
from death to life?

"I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life."

John 5:24

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