



WESTERN RECORDER

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FOR THE RECORD

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VBS continues as Southern Baptists' top evangelism tool

Nashville (BP)—More than a quarter of baptisms reported by Southern Baptist churches are a direct result of Vacation Bible School, according to statistics released by LifeWay Christian Resources.

The latest findings continue a 10-year trend of VBS having the single greatest evangelistic impact in Southern Baptist congregations.

Jerry Wooley, LifeWay's VBS ministry specialist, said the 2006 statistics are based on information provided to LifeWay by churches submitting a VBS report and/or information submitted on the SBC's Annual Church Profile. Among the latest VBS statistics:

- Percentage of total SBC baptisms resulting from VBS: 26 percent.

- Number of Southern Baptist congregations reporting VBS: 26,502.

- Total VBS enrollment: 2,962,457.

- Public decisions to accept Jesus Christ as Savior: 94,980.

- Public decisions for church-related ministry: 3,022.

- Total number of Sunday school prospects discovered: 280,693.

- Prospects enrolled in Sunday school: 39,218.

"These are great numbers," Wooley declared. "Vacation Bible School stands alone in its evangelism and outreach."

One thing gleaned from the report, he added, is that the number of churches hosting nighttime VBS continues to grow, with 66 percent being conducted in the evening.

This year's VBS resources available from LifeWay are "Game Day Central: Where Heroes Are Made" and "Club VBS: Jungle Jaunt."

'I have a story to tell'



Above: Eric Rawlings of Victory Baptist Church in Shepherdsville displays a storycloth while telling the story of creation to his peers at a recent Children in Action meeting. **Inset:** Using the storycloth, Terry Stamps, CiA leader at Victory Baptist, introduces a new Bible story to boys and girls. Southern Baptist international missionaries to Africa, Asia and South America use the same method to share the Bible among people groups who do not have a written language or those with few people who can read or write. Stamps and her CiA co-leader Stephanie Woods said using the storycloth has helped students retain more of the narrative. **Story and more photos on page 3.** (Photos by Dannah Prather)

Support groups help pastors cope with stress, ministry challenges

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

Lexington—Pastors need support groups to help overcome their tendency to hide personal problems behind religious clichés, according to Richard Blackaby.

At the Kentucky Baptist Convention's recent "Next Level" training conference at Broadway Baptist Church in Lexington, the president of Blackaby Ministries International recalled the time he asked a pastor whose church was "hemorrhaging" members how he was doing.

When the pastor responded, "God is good all the time," Blackaby replied, "I know God is doing good. How are you doing?"

"One reason more of our churches aren't growing is pastors refuse to be honest and say, 'I need help,'" Blackaby noted.

As the host for several years of a monthly pastors' meeting, Blackaby recalled the time he suggested par-

ticipants go around the room and talk about how each person was doing.

After prodding, one pastor admitted he was concerned about problems with his teenage daughter, which touched off deep discussion.

"We got real and we started growing," Blackaby said. "The deeper I go, the more capacity I have for God to use me."

A number of Kentucky Baptist pastors already have gotten that message, including at least one who attended the conference.

Richard Gaines, pastor of Consolidated Baptist Church in Lexington, is one of six pastors who meet together for two hours each Wednesday morning.

Although it takes him away from the office, Gaines said Consolidated's members appreciate his accountability group involvement.

When he tells them they need to be accountable to each other, he not-

ed that they know he speaks from experience.

"In a true sense, it provides accountability," Gaines said. "It provides a safe environment where I can pour out my heart ... and feel safe."

"These are guys who will put their arm around you and tell you what you need to hear, whether you want to hear it or not," Gaines added. "They discuss plans and ask you the next week, 'Did you implement them?'"

Other Kentucky pastors agree that such groups provide feedback and a sympathetic ear for the pressures they face.

"To authentically minister, I have to authentically reflect on who I am," said Don Rogers, pastor of Buechel Park Baptist Church in Louisville.

"You have to understand who you are in ministry and who you minister with," Rogers added. "Without one, you either become isolated,

or the other extreme is inappropriate self-elevation—feeling like you don't need anybody else."

Wade Rowatt, director of the counseling center at St. Matthews Baptist Church and leader of Rogers' group, said participants discuss a wide range of issues such as stressful church situations, problems with children or other conflicts.

The group in Lexington grew out of an interdenominational prayer group organized to support the Franklin Graham Festival in 2000.

It is both interdenominational and inter-racial, noted Steve Pearson, pastor of the nondenominational Church of the Savior. Both aspects promote broader understanding and build bridges of reconciliation, he added.

"We are brothers," Pearson said. "We look out for each other. When you get guys away from their cell phones and families, you can really

☐ See Support groups help ... *Page 6*

Religious leaders reflect on Jerry Falwell's life & legacy

"Jerry Falwell was a close personal friend. ... We did not always agree on everything, but I knew him to be a man of God."

Evangelist Billy Graham

Lynchburg, Va.—Religious leaders from evangelist Billy Graham to Jewish rabbi Daniel Lapin reflected on the life and legacy of Jerry Falwell following his unexpected death May 15 at age 73.

Falwell was perhaps the most widely known Southern Baptist pastor, but early in his ministry he was an independent Baptist. Starting with 35 people meeting in a Lynchburg elementary school in 1956, Falwell built Thomas Road Baptist Church into one of the nation's largest congregations. He and the church also founded Liberty University, a prominent evangelical Christian university, in 1971.

Although as recently as the 1960s Falwell criticized more moderate and liberal ministers for getting involved in the civil rights movement and other contemporary political debates, he had changed his mind by the 1970s. In 1979, he founded the Moral Majority—widely credited with helping elect Ronald Reagan to his first term as president, and for the first time, organizing conservative evangelical voters nationally.

Even though the group disbanded in 1989, Falwell continued to exert influence among conservative Christians and in the Republican Party. In the 1990s he led his church to affiliate with the Southern Baptist Convention through the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia.

Among religious leaders who reflected on Falwell's life and ministry are:

Evangelist Billy Graham: "Jerry Falwell was a close personal friend for many years. We did not always agree on everything, but I knew him to be a man of God. His accomplishments went beyond most clergy of his generation. ... He leaves a gigantic vacuum in the evangelical world. I am praying for his family, and especially the university that



Jerry Falwell

he headed."

Rabbi Daniel Lapin, president of Toward Tradition, the American Alliance of Jews and Christians: "Like Noah, Jerry Falwell walked with God and found grace in His eyes. He was a friend to all Americans, he was a friend to the biblical values that he believed America needed, and he was a wonderful friend to me. Of his gigantic accomplishments in making a place at the political table for Bible-believing Americans, little needs to be said. ... However, one needed to know him personally to marvel at his humility and graciousness in everyday encounters, whether momentous or minor."

Southern Baptist Convention President Frank Page: "His ministry must be seen from the perspective of being a pastor. Dr. Falwell never aspired to be anything other than a pastor who spoke prophetically the Word of God. Not everyone agreed with his stances, but all should admire his passion and commitment to the cause of Christ to the end. He desperately wanted our culture to understand God and to understand where obedience and disobedience lead."

Morris Chapman, president of the SBC Executive Committee: "Jerry Falwell leaves a spiritual legacy that is lasting. During a tumultuous time in our culture, he took a stand on the Word of God that emboldened evangelicals to come to-

gether to speak in a common voice for the protection of our country's moral and spiritual values. He will be known not only for his leadership on issues debated in the public square, but also for his tireless work to establish ministries to the hurting and those in need."

Rick Warren, pastor of Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, Calif.: "Jerry Falwell was one of the giant figures who towered over the 20th century American church. While most people knew him as the founder of the Moral Majority, the face of the Religious Right, and by some of his more controversial statements, many saw only his opponents' caricature of the real man. The story was never told about his compassionate heart, his gentle spirit, his enormous sense of humor, and the millions he invested in helping the underprivileged. I believe Jerry Falwell's primary legacy will not be his political leadership, but the church he pastored for 50 years; the university he founded that has produced two generations of leaders; the millions who heard him preach the good news; the innovations in ministry he introduced; and the thousands of young pastors, like myself, whom he constantly encouraged, even when we did it differently."

D. James Kennedy, pastor of Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.: "For more than 50 years, Dr. Falwell has been an uncompromising ambassador for the gospel in the community of Lynchburg, nationally via the broadcast airwaves, and in American public life. He leaves an enduring legacy of leadership for the gospel, Christian education and Christian moral engagement in American public life."

Pat Robertson, founder of the Christian Broadcasting Network: "Jerry has been a tower of strength on many of the moral issues which

have confronted our nation. Liberty University is a magnificent accomplishment and will prove a lasting legacy. Jerry's courage and strength of convictions will be sadly missed in this time of increasing moral relativism."

Bob Edgar, general secretary of the National Council of Churches: "Some media pundits tended to think of Falwell as representative of American Christianity, but most church leaders, while claiming him as a 'brother in Christ,' strongly differed with many of his outspoken views. ... He did perform the valuable contribution of taking stands that forced mainstream Christians to re-examine their positions and test their convictions."

Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission: "A true giant of the faith has gone on to his heavenly reward. Our grief at our loss of his witness, energy and giftedness for the Kingdom is mitigated by the fact that he is now with his Savior for eternity. Dr. Falwell's home-going leaves an enormous gap in the leadership ranks of evangelical Christianity in America and around the world. He will be greatly missed."

Geoff Hammond, president of the SBC North American Mission Board: "Jerry Falwell's death is a huge loss for Southern Baptists, evangelical Christians and for our nation. His death is also a very personal loss for me and my family since our son, Timothy, attends Liberty University. I, along with the staff and missionaries at the North American Mission Board, want to extend our deepest condolences and sympathy to Jerry's wife, Macel, his children, Jerry, Jr., Jonathan and Jeannie, and all those who loved Jerry so dearly."

Compiled from reporting by Associated Baptist Press, Baptist Press and Religion News Service

Republicans join Carter for 2008 gathering

Atlanta (ABP)—Organizers for next January's New Baptist Covenant gathering have announced the speakers for the three-day meeting—with former President Jimmy Carter fulfilling a pledge to enlist prominent Republican Baptists for the event.

Republican Senators Lindsay Graham (S.C.) and Charles Grassley (Iowa) join Republican presidential candidate Mike Huckabee as recently named participants for the Jan. 30-Feb. 1 New Baptist Covenant Celebration in Atlanta.

Carter already has enlisted Democratic former President Bill Clinton and former Vice President Al Gore as well as former presidential adviser Bill Moyers, now a journalist and author.

Although the meeting will occur in the heat of the presidential nomination season, Carter eschewed any political intention for the gathering. Clinton's involvement sparked criticism that the event would become a campaign rally for his wife, Hillary, the Democratic presidential frontrunner. But the only presidential candidate on the program is Republican Huckabee, a former Baptist pastor and governor of Arkansas.

Carter acknowledged his effort was slowed initially by criticism that the group was dominated by Democrats.

"It may have been a mistake to single out me and Bill Clinton as two politicians," he said. But the group's effort to enlist Republican speakers was "completely successful," Carter said. "Ev-

ery Republican we have invited has agreed to come."

Six of the 13 speakers announced May 17 are politicians. Three are pastors or preachers, including one woman—Julie Pennington-Russell, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Waco, Texas.

Two of the pastors are African-Americans—Charles Adams, pastor of Hartford Baptist Church in Detroit and past president of the Progressive National Baptist Convention, and William Shaw, pastor of White Rock Baptist Church in Philadelphia and president of the National Baptist Convention USA Inc.

Also included is Joel Gregory, preaching professor at Truett Theological Seminary at Baylor University and former pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas.

Two social activists will address the gathering—Marian Wright Edelman, civil rights veteran and founder of the Children's Defense Fund in Washington, D.C., and Tony Campolo, professor emeritus at Eastern University, an American Baptist school, and founder of the Evangelical Association for the Promotion of Education.

So far, 40 Baptist organizations in the U.S. and Canada have indicated a willingness to participate in the January event. The organizations, which include most of the Baptist denominations in North America except the Southern Baptist Convention, encompass about 20 million Baptists.

NAMB President Geoff Hammond: Entity facing 'historic moment'

Alpharetta, Ga. (BP)—In his first official appearance as the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board's new president, Geoff Hammond told trustees he believes the board stands at an historic moment and that "God has shown favor on us."

Hammond delivered opening remarks at the board's May 9 meeting, using 1 Samuel 14—the story of how Saul was outnumbered by the Philistines and how his son, Jonathan, defeated the Philistines.

"You know what God does in impossible situations, He calls leaders to step up, step out and lead," Hammond said. "God is calling us at the North American Mission Board to step up and step out and lead."

Hammond encouraged the trustees to challenge NAMB officers and staff to take risks. "When you see divine moments of opportunity, we need you to help us to step out in faith and punch some holes in the darkness."

In one of his first actions as NAMB president, Hammond appointed Roy Fish—the board's interim president for the past year—as "ambassador-at-large." Hammond said Fish will

speak in churches and at NAMB events representing the president's office.

Fish was "a strong voice of stability and credibility at NAMB" as interim president, Hammond added.

Fish, a longtime evangelism professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, had Hammond as one of his students.

In other business, board members heard reports that:

■ A total of 3,019 churches have committed to NAMB's Acts 1:8 initiative.

■ More than 111,000 Southern Baptists have attended Global Impact Celebrations and nearly 23,000 have attended On Mission Celebrations at 327 churches so far in 2007.

■ WorldChangers registration is up 7 percent, with more than 22,500 registered, and PowerPlant registration is up 19 percent to 1,900.

■ Approximately 74,000 Southern Baptists have been trained as disaster relief volunteers.

■ Applications for student missionary positions are up 26 percent this year, with placement up almost 18 percent.

Nichter named Western Recorder news director

Louisville—Drew Nichter has been named Western Recorder news director effective May 16.

Nichter, 30, succeeds David Winfrey, who resigned last fall.



Drew Nichter

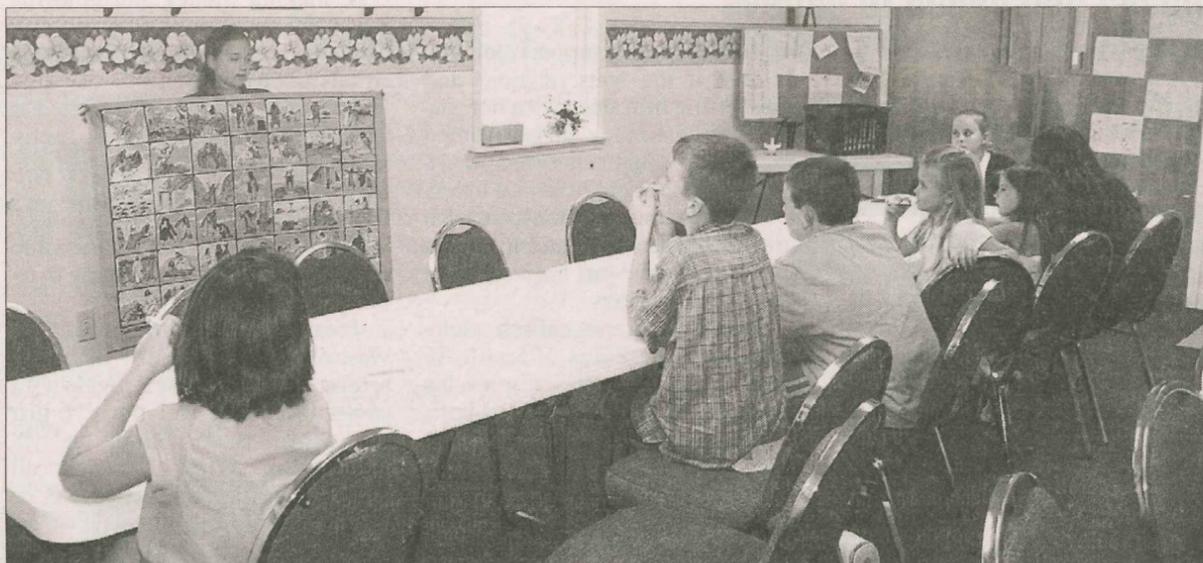
Nichter had served since 2004 as an associate director and news producer of WAVE 3 TV in Louisville. He previously was an operations specialist for University Physicians' Associates in Louisville.

A graduate of Indiana University Southeast with a bachelor of arts degree in journalism, Nichter was assistant editor of the university's campus newspaper. He was named the school's "Outstanding Journalism Student" and earned the top sports writing award in the 2005 Indiana Collegiate Press Association competition. He also attended the University of the Cumberlands.

"I am pleased to have someone with Drew's ability and creativity to join the Western Recorder staff," noted editor Trennis Henderson. "I look forward to his fresh perspective and insights."

"I can't begin to tell you how excited I am to be a part of the Western Recorder staff," Nichter said. "My primary goal as news director is to maintain the solid reputation of the Western Recorder as an instrument of advancing God's Kingdom here on earth."

Nichter and his wife, Sarah, are members of Crestwood Baptist Church in Oldham County. They are the parents of an 8-month-old daughter, Caroline.



QUIZ VOLUNTEER Members of Victory Baptist Church's Children in Action listen carefully to Haley Ploetner (standing) tell the story of creation using a storycloth. Each narrative begins when the storyteller says: "I have a story to tell." Boys and girls who accept the challenge are critiqued on how thoroughly they share the narrative. Participants also are quizzed on the location of the story in the Bible. On this evening, Ploetner was named the winner of the challenge. (Photos by Dannah Prather)

Kids use storycloth to learn Bible, missions

By Dannah Prather
Partnerships Editor

Shepherdsville—In a culture where literacy is considered almost as necessary as oxygen, it might seem odd to teach U.S. children the Bible using a method designed for nearly illiterate cultures half a world away.

Members of Victory Baptist Church in Shepherdsville, however, say the approach is helping children retain more truths from Scripture.

Each week, Victory Baptist Church's Children in Action, a missions education group for boys and girls, learn missions and the Bible using a storycloth, a piece of fabric with 42 biblical "scenes" designed in squares similar to a quilt.

"It makes the Bible not so scary," said Terry Stamps, CiA co-leader and wife of Victory Baptist's pastor, Tony Stamps.

Depicting scenes from Genesis to Revelation, the teaching tool highlights humanity's need for Christ, and the responsibility believers have to share the gospel with the world.

This method of evangelism is ideal in countries where many peo-

ple do not read or write, or perhaps where no written language exists.

"What the missionaries are doing in other countries, our kids are doing here," Terry Stamps explained.

The storycloth does not replace the Bible, she said. CiAs find the scriptural reference for each narrative. Memorizing its location in the Bible is part of the storytelling process.

Stamps said she is pleased with the children's progress in Bible learning since beginning to use the storycloth. "We are spending more time on fewer stories but with better retention," she noted.

Teaching at a slower pace and asking children to re-tell stories rather than read them from a text allows Stamps and co-leader Stephanie Woods to identify and address errors more easily during class.

"Some people are visual learners," said Eric Rawlings, 10, a member of the CiA group. "We spent about a month on creation and now most everyone in the class has it memorized." He added that us-

ing the storycloth makes lessons more interesting than reading from a quarterly.

Another bonus: "You get to tell the story," he said.

Woods said the boys and girls have become more confident in their knowledge of the Bible. "For some reason, they're getting it more," she said. "I've never known them to be able to tell stories before."

Victory Baptist CiAs will have a new audience for their Bible stories later this year as they travel to McCreary County for a "Back to School Bash" benefiting needy children in the area.

The church began the weekend ministry last year after collecting school supplies for needy families in the southern Kentucky county.

In addition to the school supply giveaway, Victory Baptist members offer children a weekend backyard Bible club complete with recreation, crafts, and of course, a Bible lesson.

Last year the adults led the lesson, but Stamps said because of the storycloth, "this year, our children are going to be the storytellers."



COMING ATTRACTIONS

Terry Stamps points out future stories Children in Action will learn using the storycloth.

CORRECTION: An article in last week's Western Recorder about Kentucky Baptist Convention Mission Board action on participation in the Church Retirement Plan through GuideStone Financial Resources needs clarification, according to Don Spencer, leader of the KBC's church financial benefits department.

Any employee of a cooperating church can participate in the plan regardless of the church's Cooperative Program giving. The minimum giving change from \$525 to \$1,000 relates only to eligibility for state convention matching funds in the plan.

Additionally, the \$1,000 contribution for matching eligibility applies to the church's qualified missions giving through the Cooperative Program or Restricted Kentucky Only giving. It does not require \$1,000 in contributions to one's retirement account.

For more information about Church Retirement Plan guidelines, contact Spencer at (502) 489-3384 or toll-free in Kentucky at (866) 489-3384.

'Experiencing God' volunteers help impact Austrian congregation

Louisville—A group of Baptist mission volunteers recently used "Experiencing God" to make an international spiritual impact.

While in France last fall on a partnership missions trip, George Chinn learned that International Baptist Church of Vienna, Austria, was in a season of transition and discouragement.

Chinn, partnership missions consultant for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, recognized a ministry opportunity for Kentucky Baptists and suggested an "Experiencing God Weekend" to the interim pastor.

Chinn's vision came to fruition recently as 15 other volunteers traveled with him to minister to members of International Baptist Church.

"The weekend truly came at the most opportune time," Chinn noted. "The people were discouraged and needed help focusing on their mission. God used this trip significantly in the lives of the church members and also in the lives of everyone on our team."

The team included 12 volunteers from Kentucky, two from Louisiana

and two from Georgia. Many had previously served as Experiencing God Weekend facilitators in churches across Kentucky and other states.

"What a privilege it was to see God at work in an international setting," said Marilyn Johnson, a KBC ministry assistant who works primarily with children during Experiencing God Weekends. "It's incredible to see that even children experience God, whether we're in Kentucky or in Austria."

At least 24 nationalities are represented at International Baptist Church, which currently has about 150 members. Though many are from Vienna, the English-speaking church largely attracts international believers who have come to Vienna for work-related reasons.

Chinn noted that the church's recent struggles have resulted from a lack of stable leadership and difficulty unifying the various cultures.

Chinn said he designed the trip as an Experiencing God Weekend because he believes the study is "a great tool for helping people deepen their relationship with God. It

works well because it fits easily in the church schedule and can be finished in one weekend."

Experiencing God Weekends are based on the popular "Experiencing God" study by Henry Blackaby and Claude King. Many Kentucky Baptist churches have found the weekend study to be instrumental to spiritual growth in their churches, Chinn said.

In Vienna, team members taught the study, shared personal testimonies, led praise and worship, and facilitated small group discussions.

"As the sessions progressed, church members became more aware of God's call on their lives, the sacrifices that must be made, and the need to obey God's call if they were going to experience God," Chinn said. "By the time for Sunday morning worship, many in the church had committed a renewed desire to fulfill God's purpose for them and their church."

"In many ways, the trip exceeded everything we thought was possible. One of our favorite memories is of the time a Filipino lady said to

us, 'You have saved our church.' That spoke volumes to me about how God had used this weekend."

The Vienna weekend was the third overseas Experiencing God Weekend organized by the KBC. Churches in the Netherlands and the United Arab Emirates also have hosted events. Opportunities for additional trips are a direct result of the team's work in Vienna, Chinn added.

"Several of the internationals who participated are encouraging churches in their home countries to host an Experiencing God Weekend because of the impact it had on them," he noted. "Already, there are possibilities for trips to Peru, India and Slovakia."

For more information about overseas missions opportunities, contact the KBC partnership missions department at (502) 489-3529 or toll-free in Kentucky at (866) 489-3529. For information about hosting an Experiencing God Weekend in Kentucky, contact the KBC Baptist Men on Mission department at (502) 489-3527 or (866) 489-3527.

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

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Almost persuaded to believe

By **Erich Bridges**

Richmond, Va. (BP)—You've been sharing the gospel with your father for years, but he has yet to trust Jesus as his personal Savior.

Your daughter says she believes in Christ, but she doesn't live for Him when others pressure her to live like the world.

The friend you faithfully taught and disciplined seems to have abandoned his walk with God.

"Almost persuaded" goes the old hymn. "Almost persuaded now to believe, almost persuaded Christ to receive."

Almost persuaded, like King Agrippa after listening to the Apostle Paul's powerful testimony (Acts 26:28). Almost persuaded to believe, to follow, to obey.

Almost—but not quite.

You continue to love and share and pray. One day, you hope, the people you care about so deeply will follow the Lord with all their hearts.

Pray for true repentance

As you pray for the ones close to you, however, add a word for "Aw-wab," a Muslim-background follower of Jesus in South Asia. He served for more than a year on a Christian ministry team reaching out to other Muslims, but fell back into his old life of drugs and drug dealing. He wants to break free once and for all of the lies, the misery and the crime, but he needs to display true repentance. Pray that his hunger for God will outweigh all other desires, and that the team will know when and how to offer him a second chance.

Lift a prayer for "Maria," a 27-year-old mother of five who lives in a one-room wooden shanty on the Caribbean island nation of St. Lucia. She sells eggs and produce to feed her children, but it's not enough. She wants desperately to live for God, to sense His love and forgiveness, but her boyfriend threatens to cut

off his minimal support for the children if she "gets religion" and stops letting him sleep with her. Maria represents many Lucian women

caught between trusting in Christ and in tenuous relationships with others, between faith and fear. Pray that she will step out for Jesus—and lead others to follow.

"David," a house church member among the Zulus of South Africa, also feels caught—between his growing faith in Jesus and his wife, a "sangoma" or witchdoctor. She's angry about his involvement in the church. Pray that she will see beyond Satan's lies and embrace the truth of the gospel. Pray that David will remain steadfast in his commitment to Jesus and lead his wife to saving faith.

Intercede for "Jacob," a Jewish man in full religious dress who recently approached a female Christian worker on an ancient street in Jerusalem. She was amazed, since Orthodox Jewish men in Israel seldom speak to non-Jewish women.

"I know you don't know me, but I have seen you for years here, and I know you are a believer in Yeshua (Jesus)," he quietly told her. Then he took something out of his wallet: the fish sign early followers of Jesus used to identify themselves and greet one another. He has been a believer for years. Jacob's late father followed Jesus, too, but he suffered harassment for his faith and saw his store burned down. So Jacob decided long ago to worship in secret to protect his family and livelihood. Pray that one day he will declare his faith openly and without fear.

"Zoya," a high-caste Hindu in urban India, is a powerful businesswoman who spends most of her days taking calls on her mobile phone, meeting clients and supervising work in her manufacturing centers. She admits getting her greatest satisfaction from achieving suc-

cess, making money and enjoying her many possessions. She also continues to perform traditional Hindu rituals and prayers.

Recently, however, Zoya told a Christian friend that she was "praising God" after attending a worship time centered on Jesus. Pray that she will see that life is more than collecting things, that it is a relationship with the God who is beginning to reveal Himself to her.

Pray for the Muslim villagers in West Africa who recently prayed to receive Christ but now struggle with persecution and isolation. "I just can't leave" Islam, admits one village woman. "When the prayer call sounds, I just have to bow down, or I shake. No one will help us if we become believers in Jesus. We'll be all alone"—a fate worse than death in her culture.

Pray for the three Palestinian Muslim students who were out "cruising" one recent Sunday and offered some Christian friends a ride to church. When they reached the church, the friends invited them in. Two of the students nervously accepted. Within minutes, they were singing and clapping along with the worship choruses and listening intently to a message about God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Now they're asking questions about "the three gods." Pray that they will comprehend the one God—and how much He wants to enter into a relationship with them.

Decisions have eternal impact

Across the world, people are struggling to understand who God is, to give their lives to Him fully, to declare His love to their families and villages and cities. Their ultimate decisions will change history—their own and their cultures—for eternity.

Almost persuaded. Lift them up, so that "almost" will become "yes." Completely persuaded.

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

Directors of missions fill vital roles

The recent Associational Emphasis Week on May 13-20 provided an ideal time for me to focus on the vital work of Baptist associations, which were first started in North America 300 years ago in Philadelphia.

The handful of churches that formed the first association adopted a confessional statement, supported the education of ministers and engaged in cooperative missions with other churches and, eventually, other associations.

Baptist associations later began in the South in Charleston, S.C., and Sandy Creek, N.C. Those early associations were the forerunners of the Southern Baptist Convention, established in 1845.

Today, the Southern Baptist Convention's Fellowship of Directors of Missions is made up of representatives from 1,192 Baptist associations, representing more than 44,000 cooperating Southern Baptist churches. We are pleased to celebrate this special anniversary year with the 73 associations in Kentucky.

There are many ministry expectations for the associational director

of missions these days. In addition to carrying a concern for the spiritual vitality of every church, the DOM has responsibilities in administration, equipping, missions and ministries, strengthening the churches, evangelistic outreach, promoting events, building relationships to ministers and churches, mentoring new ministers and more.

Administrative duties typically include supervising an office and personnel, managing a budget and facilities, organizing the churches for effective missions, conducting numerous training events and providing leadership for the association. The DOM also is often responsible for taking the lead in developing the strategic plan for the association.

I am excited about a new diagnostic and assessment process developed by the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, working hand-in-hand with associations, to help strengthen churches. It is a great process that receives input from interviews with pastors. The results are tabulated and resources are

PARTNERS IN THE MISSION



Bill Mackey

STEWARDSHIP

Income insurance can help protect earning power

By **Don Spencer**

Almost everyone reading this



probably has medical insurance, automobile insurance and home owners insurance. If you have a family, you probably

have life insurance. Too often, folks tend to forget to insure one of their most valuable earthly assets—their earning power.

For a young adult, the odds are much higher of having a period of disability before age 65 than of dying before age 65. Death of a family's primary "bread winner" can be tragic. In death, the family can deal with their grief and then, with God's help, move on with their lives.

If the primary wage earner should suffer an extended period of disability, it can sometimes be financially devastating for the family. The least that person can do is protect (insure) his or her earning power.

We call it "disability insurance" but it is really "income insurance" since it insures a certain level of income if one becomes disabled. In shopping for disability (income) insurance, there are several key factors to consider:

- How is disability defined—your own occupation or any occupation?
- Will benefits be paid for partial disability or must it be total?
- Is the benefit affected by Social Security or worker's compensation benefits?
- Is there a waiver of premium when one is disabled?
- Are there any exclusions?
- Is there a difference in determining disability due to illness vs. injury?
- Are there rehabilitation benefits?
- How long is the waiting period before benefits begin?
- How long will disability payments continue?
- Does coverage extend beyond age 65?
- Is there an adjustment in coverage due to cost of living?
- How does the policy treat two periods of disability for the same illness or injury?
- How do costs compare?
- What is the company's record of service to its customers?

There are numerous variations in plans available. As always, be a smart shopper. Compare several plans before making a decision. Above all, don't delay or overlook acquiring disability insurance. Make sure you protect your earning power.

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

provided by the association and the Kentucky Baptist Convention staff to address the needs of each church.

Directors of missions also serve as missions educators and leaders. They lead church members to engage in partnership missions, church planting, disaster relief and more.

They also help promote mission offerings and other good causes. We are grateful for the Eliza Broadus Offering for State Missions, which provides about \$255,000 to enable 20 associational DOMs to be full-time.

Because they work closely with churches and lay leaders as well as with pastors, DOMs are well informed about the needs and ministries of the churches. Most associations have a pastors' conference for sharing and fellowship. DOMs are excellent mentors to new pastors in the association because they understand the local culture.

DOMs also work closely with the KBC's leadership development team leader, Karl Babb, in assisting minister search committees and providing emergency financial help.

I thank God for effective Kingdom advance due to the wonderful partnership between KBC staff and local associations!

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

Immaturity is root cause for many couples' marital woes

Q: I am growing weary of my wife's demands. I cannot live up to her expectations. My marriage is becoming unbearable to me, and I don't want to be miserable the rest of my life. Why can't we just get along and be happy? What is the problem?

One of the biggest problems with many marriages today is immaturity. We want what we want and what we think we deserve now—and we don't want to experience unhappiness while we are waiting for it.

MARRIAGE

Henry Cloud and John Townsend offer some practical approaches in their book "21 Days to a Great Marriage: A Grownup Approach to Couplehood." They suggest happiness is not a good goal for marriage. A better goal is growth. Happiness is more a byproduct of growth. The book lays out 21 areas for a growth focus. The first five days address:

- Grow your marriage to greatness.
- Accept each other, no matter what.
- Focus on changing yourself, not your mate.
- Set self aside.
- Grow out of your immaturity.

Day one calls married couples to get a vision. Day three reiterates the point that the only person one can change is self. Day four presents a challenge similar to the one presented in Philippians 2:4-7. Christ chose to empty Himself of His divine privileges to become a servant.

Our culture tends to focus on the self to the exclusion of others. It becomes a challenge to even hear what our partner is saying because self gets in the way.

If you are looking for a resource that is focused, substantial and to the point, this might work for you. It could be used as an intentional marriage-building exercise with one session a day or a week. The topics are meant to challenge and call for self-reflection and action.—Valerie Vincent

Q: What influence do the "new atheists" have on children?

While the debate continues over whether or not there is a conspiracy at work to drive religion out of public life, one thing has become obvious: Atheists and other non-believers have become much more vocal in speaking out against religious belief.

The past year brought a slew of books attacking religion, including "The God Delusion" (Richard Dawkins), "Breaking the Spell" (Daniel Dennett) and "The End of Faith" (Sam Harris). These books reflect the much more aggressive stance being taken by a group of scientists, philosophers and educators known as "the new atheists."

Sam Schulman, publishing director of The American magazine, says, "Today's atheists are particularly disgusted by the religious training of young people—which Dr. Dawkins calls 'a form of child abuse.' He even floats the idea that the state should intervene to protect children from their parents' religious beliefs."

That likely will never happen. However, our children are going to grow up in a society where a growing number of people will work to characterize belief in God as not just misguided, but contemptible. How should Christian parents respond?

First, understand that the ideas of the new atheists are not new. Remember that great minds have long wrestled with questions of creation, morality and truth, and many have come down on the side of faith.

Secondly, teach your children well. Build within them a faith that sees God as the Author of all truth and science as an ally, not an enemy. Teach your children not to be afraid to ask questions, but to do so trusting God to provide answers.

Finally, be responsible in your reading and interpretation of Scripture, and in your application of Christian principles to current issues. Do not allow others to misrepresent or mischaracterize Christianity.—David Garrard

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'Free Baptist press' remains major priority

The Western Recorder staff seldom spends much time tooting our own horn in the pages of the state Baptist paper. In fact, much of our coverage focuses on highlighting the work of other Baptist entities and their ministry efforts.

In the past few weeks, for example, Western Recorder subscribers have read about the Kentucky Baptist Convention Mission Board approving a new missions partnership with the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware, Richard Blackaby's "Next Level" conference in Lexington, a North American Mission Board "Families on Mission" emphasis in Lynch and elsewhere across the nation, Kentucky Baptist disaster relief efforts following flooding in Floyd County, Campbellsville University's dedication of Ransdell Chapel, Donnie Fox's election as president of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College and the list goes on and on.

One exception to that general rule is the Recorder's annual coverage of national awards earned by our staff. Earlier this month, we reported that the Western Recorder earned first place among state Baptist papers in Baptist Communicators Association's print media and design division. That makes more than 20 national BCA awards the Recorder staff has received since 2000, including three first-place awards in that category. Our staff also has earned awards in news writing, featuring writing, editorial writing, first-person articles and interpretive reporting.

As I shared recently at the KBC Mission Board meeting, we don't highlight such honors for honors' sake, but as a reminder of our staff's commitment to seek to produce the best quality state Baptist paper possible for the benefit of our readers.

As our covenant agreement with the KBC declares, "In keeping with the historic Baptist principle of a free Baptist press, the purpose of the Western Recorder is to further the cause of Christ; to inform Baptists of Kentucky about matters of general interest to the churches;

and to describe, interpret, promote and cooperate with the program and ministries of the Kentucky Baptist Convention." Our staff remains committed to preserving the Recorder's rich ministry legacy which dates back more than 180 years.

Why bring all that up at this point? In addition to our recent peer recognitions, Kentucky Baptist Foundation President Barry Allen spotlighted the Western Recorder's ongoing ministry efforts in his column published in last week's Recorder.

"Where do you get your Baptist news and views?" Allen asked in his column. "I read weekly the Western Recorder, our official Kentucky Baptist news journal, because I believe it is the most complete, reliable and readily available source for staying informed about key issues in Kentucky Baptist life and beyond."

Emphasizing that the Western Recorder is "an essential component in our cooperative missions enterprise and worthy of enhancing and preserving in perpetuity," Allen added, "Let me encourage you prayerfully to consider supporting this ministry now and/or in the future by contributing to an existing endowment or establishing your own endowment."

Thank you, Barry, for those encouraging words. Even better than tooting our own horn is the blessing of a respected Kentucky Baptist colleague sounding a clear call on our behalf.

In the midst of rising postage and production costs, now is an ideal time for supporters of a strong, faithful state Baptist paper to help undergird our ministry both for today and future generations.

If you would like more information about how you can help the Western Recorder maintain and enhance "the historic Baptist principle of a free Baptist press" for the benefit of all Kentucky Baptists, call Foundation President Barry Allen toll-free at (866) 489-3533 or Western Recorder Marketing and Business Manager Tom Townsend at (866) 489-3535.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

The closest thing to heaven

By Bob Terry

"Marriage can be the closest thing to heaven that one can experience on earth if God is at the center of the relationship."

For centuries, pastors have shared that

observation with couples contemplating marriage. But before a pastor ever voiced this reflection, God led the Apostle Paul to emphasize that truth through Holy Scripture. In Ephesians 5:25, Paul commanded that husbands and wives love each other "as Christ loved the church."

The Bible uses marriage as an illustration of God's love for the church as God invites the church to be His bride and commands that God's love for the church is to be the model for the love between spouses.

The Bible is replete with affirmations that God loves us. John 3:16 declares that "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son." In Ephesians 5:2, one reads that "Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us."

Love between a husband and wife is to be the same kind of love. It is self-giving love, not self-serving love. God's love for us cost Him His Son. Too often, human love is equated with passion, but passion is about desire and demand. It seeks to fulfill itself. At its core, passion is selfish.

Self-giving love is not only costly—one gives one's self away—but it also seeks the welfare of another.

John 3:16 describes another trait of God's love. It has to be received to be effective. God "gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in

Him should not perish." To be saved, one must "believe in Him." While God's love is offered to all, the object of that love must be willing to receive it.

FIRST PERSON

In the same way, love between spouses must be freely received. God does not violate the human will and force someone to believe on the Lord Jesus. Neither can a human being's love for another override the decision of the object of one's desires.

Those who stoop to coercion and manipulation to gain acceptance of their affections reveal only their own baseness. Their goal is compliance and control, not the welfare of another. The model for human love between spouses is love freely offered and love freely received.

Unfortunately, human circumstances sometimes cause individuals to respond to a God-like love with less than full acceptance. One could be attracted to the idea of marriage rather than in love with the person offering marriage. One could recognize opportunities for personal advantage rather than be willing to give one's self to another in true love. For whatever reason, people sometimes respond to one another for selfish motives rather than in self-giving love.

Unless a couple has fallen in love—true self-giving love—with each other, it has something less than a love that models Christ's love for the church. For this couple, marriage can become more like an endurance contest than a source of strength and fulfillment.

True love, for God or for a spouse, must also be returned. Genesis 6:3 teaches that God's Spirit will not always strive with man. Salvation is God's initiative and one must respond when God invites.

Psychologists talk about "love that dies." That is a love that is rejected and spurned. In time, it gives up and withers like an unplucked grape left on the vine to bake in the sun. Like God's Spirit, a human spirit cannot always "strive" with another. Returning love is essential for love to flourish.

1 John 4:19 teaches that "we love Him, because He first loved us." God's love for us opens the door of relationship. The result of accepting God's self-giving love through faith in Jesus is an eternal relationship with God.

Imagine the unspeakable joy of knowing the one you love with self-giving love not only accepts your love but also returns to you the same kind of self-giving love. That is what God does for the believer. That is the model for Christian marriage. A husband and wife give themselves completely to the other in self-giving love. And just as a Christian grows in the likeness of the Savior, the husband and wife grow together at their deepest levels as "the two become one."

What a marvelous picture: a marriage bound together by a love as strong as God's love for the church. It is no wonder that pastors point out that a self-giving, God-like love between husband and wife can make marriage the closest thing to heaven one can experience on earth.

Bob Terry is editor of the Alabama Baptist

Involvement in support group can lengthen pastoral tenure

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

Richmond, Va.—While there aren't definitive statistics available on how many pastors participate in support groups, they likely are a small minority, according to Charles Chandler, executive director of the Ministering to Ministers Foundation.

"Some of George Barna's research shows 70 percent of ministers had no close friends they could talk to," Chandler noted. "I would assume if they have no friends, they're not in a support group."

Chandler, a former pastor, wrote a book several years ago for the former Baptist Sunday School Board (now LifeWay Christian Resources) on support groups.

The book was based on his support group experience as a pastor in Illinois. A professor at the University of Illinois who attended the group subsequently conducted research on the issue.

The professor discovered that people who suffered from depression or other problems found the best help came from peers going through similar experiences, Chandler noted.

He said another strength of support groups is how they help pastors overcome a sense of isolation, often a problem in forced terminations.

"Especially if you have church conflict, one part of the church is already cut off from the pastor," Chandler said. "Others in the congregation will tell you what you want to hear; only a few will tell you what you need to hear."

It is a mistake for pastors to air their frustrations in front of members, he added. Instead, Chandler said, they need to find an impartial audience outside the church, which a support group can provide.

Chandler recommends six to eight members to avoid extremes such as solely affirming each other

if the group is too small, or too many confrontations if the group gets too large and loses an intimate atmosphere.

"If all they do is agree with each other it can become a sick group," Chandler emphasized. "If all they ever do is confront each other, the group will never last."

In addition to healthy affirmation and confrontation, Chandler said support groups can provide such positives as:

- Developing friendships and a sense of community, which he said can only come through sharing time and experiences.

- Producing a sense of belonging, which is especially important for pastors who move frequently.

- Providing differing perspectives, which are valuable when pastors are involved in congregational conflicts.

- Helping participants get in touch with their feelings.

- Helping reduce competition between ministers and developing closer bonds between them.

- Encouraging longer pastoral tenures.

On the last point, Chandler conducted research over two separate decade-long spans of time.

He discovered pastors involved in support groups were three times as likely to remain at the same church for long periods as those who weren't part of one.

Chandler said one reason some small groups don't last is that participants don't invest enough time to form meaningful relationships.

He said that means spending at least 50 hours a year together, whether that involves one hour a week or two hours twice a month.

"It's the telling of stories and spending time together," Chandler said. "You can't have *koinonia* without sharing time and experiences."

Support groups help pastors cope with stress, ministry challenges

Continued from page 1

connect with God and each other. I never want to be without that for the rest of my life."

In addition to strengthening pastoral fellowship by helping them solicit feedback on various issues and relieving stress, it promotes longevity, Pearson said.

Many pastors "don't stay in a church long because the stress gets to them," he noted. "To have this outlet breeds a lot of health."

As the father of an adolescent son, Gaines said he appreciates the guidance pastors with older children can provide, as well as the wisdom of those with longer tenures in the pulpit.

He said it also has helped him appreciate his limitations, such as when to admit he isn't able to handle a counseling situation and refer the case to a professional.

"If we can be challenged by somebody who will hold us to biblical authority, we have a better chance of not falling to our failures," Gaines emphasized.

Sometimes groups formed for educational or spiritual growth also become support groups, according to retired pastor Jerry Martin of Henderson. He leads a monthly session at Third Baptist Church in Owensboro.

Although it started nearly two years ago as a way of promoting professional growth, Martin said members have become a sounding board for each other.

He recalled that a pastor who

was changing the nature of his church's ministry and preparing to lead a new mission sponsored by his church was able to review those plans in that setting.

"We ask things be kept in confidence," noted Martin, a former Army chaplain. "Other than that, it's wide open. Sometimes the ideas of what we believe that we discuss in the group don't jibe with where our churches are, so we try to keep that among ourselves."

An overriding pressure on pastors is the expectation that they be "on call" round the clock, leaving them feeling that the congregation owns their time, Martin pointed out.

"Sometimes it's more than a pastor can manage," said Martin, who attends Community Baptist Church in Henderson. "A pastor has to confront that (expectation) sometimes."

As for pastors who might be interested in joining, or starting, a support group, Martin said some Baptist associations can offer guidelines.

Rowatt said another possibility is asking an existing group if they will consider admitting a new member.

Gaines said a primary attraction of his group is not the issues it resolves, but the things that never occur because of the group's collective wisdom. "It's helped all of us to keep from making some bad choices," he reflected.

Campbellsville to host annual Baptist history society event

Campbellsville—The Baptist History & Heritage Society will hold its annual meeting June 7-9 at Campbellsville University.

John Chowning, Campbellsville's vice president for church and external relations, said school officials are pleased that the history society "chose to hold its annual meeting here as the final event in our centennial celebration."

Chowning noted that "the theme of the meeting, 'African Americans in Baptist History,' is very relevant to what we are seeking to do at CU."

Campbellsville marked its centennial with special outreach to African American churches by adding new minority scholarships and by having covenant partnerships in place with Simmons College of Kentucky and the General Association of Baptists in Kentucky.

Charles Deweese, the society's executive director, said the annual meeting "will feature excellent devotionals and addresses, key awards and wonderful opportunities for fellowship. Everyone is invited."

The keynote speaker is Quinton Dixie, assistant professor of philosophy and Religious Studies Program coordinator at Indiana University-Purdue University in Fort Wayne.

Among other speakers are Kevin Cosby, president of Simmons College and pastor of St. Stephen Baptist Church in Louisville, and James Porch, executive director of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

For more information about the event, call (270) 789-5520 or e-mail jchowning@campbellsville.edu.



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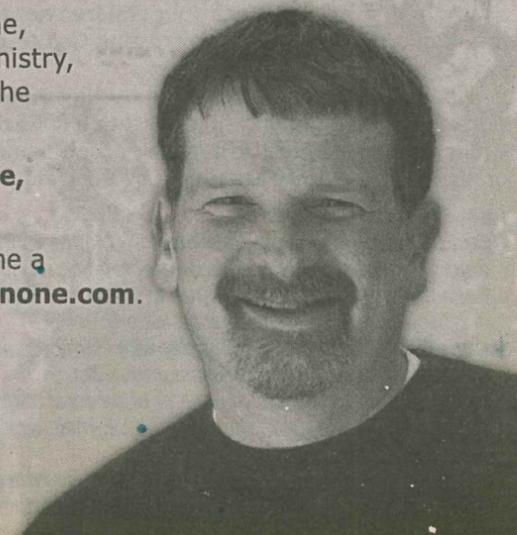
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Unlike some people, Joe actually appreciates your comments.

On May 22nd we'll launch *Despising None*, a new podcast for and about student ministry, hosted by Joe Ball, youth strategist for the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Comment on the first podcast episode, and you could win an iPod shuffle!

You can comment on this podcast, become a subscriber and more at www.despisingnone.com.



Celebrating camp's transformation

Board meeting spotlights Jonathan Creek ministry

A longtime tradition recently was changed just for this year. The recent Kentucky Baptist Convention Mission Board meeting was held May 7-8 at Jonathan Creek rather than Cedarmore. It was followed by the annual director of missions meeting.

Nearly two years ago, we started the discussions that as Kentucky Baptist Assemblies we would love to host the event at Jonathan Creek since few board members likely had been there in recent years. For decades, the May meeting always had been held at Cedarmore and I really desired our state convention leadership to see what has taken place at Jonathan Creek.

At the beginning of the meeting, KBC President Darren Gaddis invited board members to "please raise you hand if this is your first time to Jonathan Creek." To my amazement, I would estimate that 60 to 70 percent raised their hands. Unbelievable! It often has been said that Jonathan Creek is the best kept secret in the state when it comes to camps; perhaps there's a little truth to that old saying.

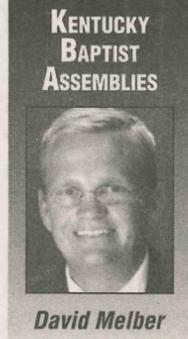
While our facility setup primar-

ily is geared toward youth camp, board member after board member commented that they were quite surprised and pleased with the facilities and service. During the past five years, we have been blessed to add new conference space, a 625-person capacity worship center, three new lodges, a new dining hall, a new swimming pool, renovations to the Gray Motel, Lassiter Conference Center, Waller Dorm, Shoemake Chapel and an all-new JC Café.

As I shared with our institutions and agencies committee, my hope was that people would not just focus on the buildings, but that God would allow them to realize the life change that takes place in the camp setting. I truly believe that in our technological age, camp is more important now than ever before.

In seeing this God-caused and God-enabled transformation, I hope everyone was encouraged that amazing events are still taking place through camps at Jonathan Creek and Cedarmore. Continue to pray as we expect more than 14,000 in total attendance during our summer camp season!

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



KENTUCKY BAPTIST ASSEMBLIES

David Melber



Committed

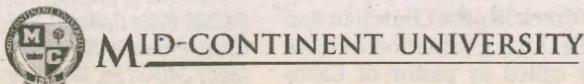
Devoted

Christ-Centered

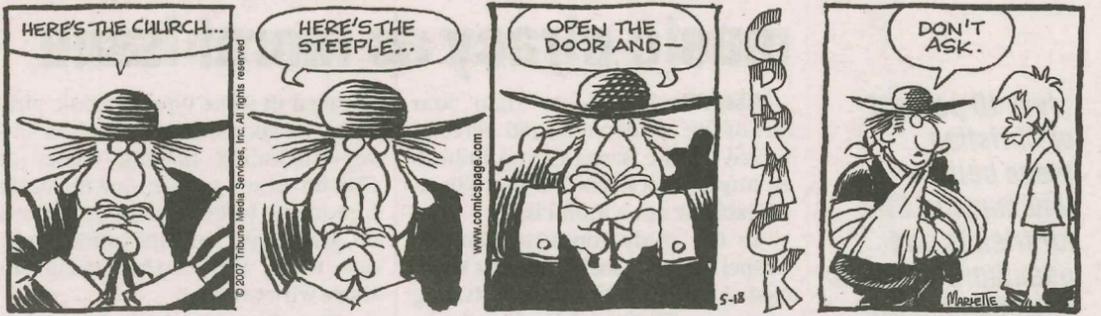


James Noland says his success in the Associate Program has given him a great deal of confidence, and he is looking forward to building on that with the classes he will be taking to earn a Bachelor Degree.

He went on to say, "I always thought of graduating from college when I was growing up, but after high school I enlisted in the military. After 3½ years in the military and serving in Desert Storm, I got married, started my family, and couldn't see a way to go to college. I knew something was missing because a college education was something I always wanted. I found out about the Advantage Program at my workplace, Johnson Controls. I came home and talked to my wife ... and the rest is history. I've enjoyed it. I feel great about my accomplishment. My 4th grade daughter came to my graduation. I was so gratified when she said, 'I want to walk across the stage to get my degree just like you did.' It proved to me that my goal of being a good role model was paying off." In reflecting on the past two years, James Noland commented, "When we first started, we grew together as a group, and it's almost like a relationship that you would have with your siblings. We are very united."



Kudzu



Doug Marlette

For Heaven's Sake



Mike Morgan

Bible Crosswords

By Mary Louise DeMott

Across

- 1 God sent this man a dream of a ladder with angels ascending and descending on it (Genesis 28:12-16)
- 6 God called this man from a burning bush (Exodus 3:1-12)
- 11 Full of cheerful good humor
- 12 Jesus called this man to follow Him (John 1:43)
- 14 Osmium, chem. symbol
- 15 Delirium tremens, abbr.
- 17 Manganese, chem. symbol
- 18 Maine, abbr.
- 19 Not existing before, recently made or invented
- 21 Belonging to the church's first missionary (Acts 9:15-16; 13:1-2)
- 24 Suitable or quick at learning
- 25 Tailless monkeys, or large uncouth men
- 27 Unwell
- 28 Without payment, costing nothing
- 29 His Highness, abbr.
- 30 Lanthanum, chem. symbol
- 32 Milliliter, abbr.
- 33 Rural route, abbr.
- 34 Jesus called this man to follow Him (John 1:44-51)
- 35 Society of Jesus, abbr.
- 37 Physical Education, abbr.
- 38 In the matter of, about, concerning, abbr.
- 39 Printer's unit of measure
- 41 Electrically charged particles
- 43 Fodder
- 45 A narrative or story
- 47 Life-support system, abbr.
- 48 Carried
- 50 Central Intelligence Agency, abbr.
- 51 Exclamation of satisfaction

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51			52					53	54		55	
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								62				

- 52 Laughter sound
- 53 Eastern Time, abbr.
- 55 Rue, Amer. abbr.
- 56 Excellent, most impressive or splendid
- 59 Person who worked iron
- 61 God called this man to become Israel's first High Priest (Leviticus 8:2)
- 62 God called this man to marry a harlot (Hosea 1:1-4)

- 20 Us
- 22 Artificial Intelligence, abbr.
- 23 Lines, abbr.
- 24 Argon, chem. symbol
- 26 Strikes with open hand
- 28 Moving swiftly, nimble
- 31 Consumed
- 32 To damage, to spoil
- 35 This man was called to help Paul (Acts 15:40)
- 36 God called this man to lead Israel into Canaan (Joshua 1:1-9)
- 39 God called this man to be the successor to Elijah (1 Kings 19:16-17)
- 40 Flethy or full of subject matter
- 42 Not specified, abbr.
- 43 "____, every one that thirsteth" (Isaiah 55:1).
- 44 KJV you
- 46 Actinium, chem. symbol
- 48 Tropical plant with a tuberous root used for food
- 49 Item used for demonstration
- 52 Opposite of him
- 54 It is, poetic contraction
- 57 Ma's mate
- 58 Battalion, abbr.
- 59 Hush!
- 60 Tellurium, chem. symbol

Down

- 1 Sold into slavery by his brothers (Genesis 37:27-28)
- 2 Authorized Version of the Bible, abbr.
- 3 Criminal Investigation Department of Scotland Yard, abbr.
- 4 Hardy cereal plants grown in cool climates
- 5 Barrel, abbr.
- 6 Military Policeman, abbr.
- 7 Units of electrical resistance
- 8 Breaking of religious or moral law
- 9 Elevated railway
- 10 An affected smile
- 11 God called this man to warn Nineveh about coming judgment (Jonah 1:1-2)
- 13 Jesus called this fisherman to follow Him (Matthew 4:18-20)
- 16 The territory of a sultan

Last week's solution

1	S	A	L	V	A	T	I	O	N	8	P	10	
11	A	M		I	D	A		P	U	C	K	E	R
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Barna: Most teens don't view music piracy as moral issue

"Just 10 percent of Christian teens believe that copying CDs for friends and unauthorized music downloading are morally wrong."

Barna study conducted for the Gospel Music Association

Nashville (BP)—More than four out of five of teenagers (86 percent) polled by The Barna Group indicated music piracy is either morally acceptable or not a moral issue.

In the study conducted for the Gospel Music Association, just 8 percent said such activities—including copying a CD for a friend or downloading non-promotional music online for free—were immoral.

This is an "incredibly serious problem," said Brian Mayes, president of Nashville Publicity Group. "I don't think people outside of the music industry realize what goes into making an album, how many people are actually affected and receive their income through the sale of a record," he said in an interview.

Mayes said he has heard people argue that artists, who are "worth millions of dollars," can afford some consumers getting their music without paying for it.

People "counting on that sale"

"It's the mix engineer, the background vocalists, the studio players, the marketing guy at the label, the distributor and the guy who boxed the CD to send it to the stores—there are a lot of people involved who are counting on that sale," Mayes explained.

Global music sales have fallen 16 percent in five years, "to a large extent because of the proliferation of free unauthorized music," according to the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry.

According to the Barna study, four out of five teenagers surveyed

engaged in some type of music piracy in the six months before the survey—including making copies of CDs for other people, downloading free music (other than promotions or giveaways), or uploading their own music files to the Internet to share with others.

"It is changing the industry and the way we work," Mayes said. "The drop in music sales, therefore revenue, at least partly explained by piracy, is prompting some recording companies to trim their marketing budget and stick to proven artists."

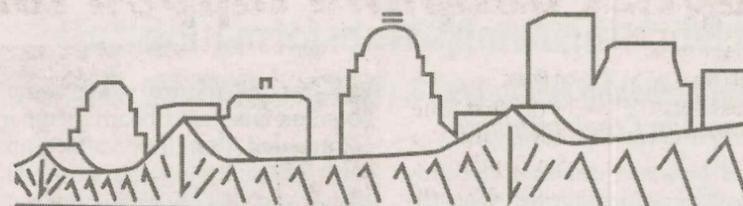
The study found that the majority of teens who identify themselves as born-again Christians behave no differently than non-Christian teens when it comes to sharing and downloading music illegally.

"Just 10 percent of Christian teens believe that copying CDs for friends and unauthorized music downloading are morally wrong, compared to 6 percent" of their non-Christian peers, Barna reported.

Just because a teen is using the Internet to get music doesn't mean he or she is breaking the law, Mayes noted.

Music is legally available online, from sources as diverse as iTunes and walmart.com. In fact, the IFPI report revealed 420 million single tracks were downloaded legally from the Internet in 2005. That's 20 times more than two years earlier, according to the report.

"The concept of downloading, being able to get your music instantly, is a great thing," Mayes said, "but you need to pay for it."



Greater Louisville

CHRISTIAN RECONCILIATION MINISTRIES

Be Reconciled to God

7th Annual Reconciliation Celebration!

Sunday, June 24, 2007

Walnut Street Baptist Church, Louisville
1101 South 3rd Street
(corner of S. 3rd St. and St. Catherine)

A Special Gathering Celebrating the Unity of our Common Call in Crossing Racial & Denominational Lines



Dr. Lincoln Bingham
Founder & Co-Chairperson



Dr. Leslie Hollon
Founder & Co-Chairperson

Special Prayer Time	5:30 p.m.
Pre-Service Music	6:15 p.m.
Celebration Service	6:30 p.m.

Guest preachers will be Dr. Kendall Stubbs and Dr. Leslie Hollon

Plan now to be part of this city-wide event to celebrate our call to racial reconciliation and Christian unity in the Louisville area.

Reception & ministry displays following event!

A missions commitment to evangelism

Students sacrifice to support staff members on mission trip to Rwanda

By Michael Spencer, assistant to the president

As we ended another year of school, OBI's students and staff took time to pray for two of our staff going to Rwanda for two weeks to serve with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board. Jonathan and Michelle Barnes, teachers, coaches and parents, will leave in a few days for this ministry in Africa.

Although very special, this couple also is typical of OBI's young and idealistic staff. With two small children of their own, Jonathan and Michelle work during and after school. They coach basketball and cheerleading respectively. They are active in their local church and community. This couple is an example of the kind of people drawn to serve here in the Christian community of Oneida, a community that makes service, not programs, the focus of ministry.

It is never a surprise when OBI staff such as the Mike Contreras family or the late Tom Jenkyn go to the foreign mission field, nor is it a surprise when faculty such as Paul and Diane Davidson—former IMB missionaries to Africa—fit in well on the OBI staff.

Our students have a special interest in the Barneses' trip because they have invested in it. Through our campus ministry, a silent auction was held, raising \$2,225 for Samaritan's Purse and the Barneses.

Led by Franklin Graham, Samaritan's Purse provides relief services for people around the world affected by war, natural disasters and other catastrophes. Our students' funds will assist refugees in the African nations of Uganda, Liberia and

Sierra Leone.

Students sacrificed their own savings to purchase meals and desserts in the crazy atmosphere of a timed silent auction. Can you believe they paid almost \$300 for a Southern fried chicken dinner, or nearly \$200 for a "Death by Chocolate" dessert?

The first 10 percent of the money raised from the auction was given to Jonathan and Michelle to use in their ministry to the people of Rwanda.

Dollars students typically would spend on grill food, soft drinks and candy will help bring life and hope to Africans. Our students are excited.

Many OBI staffers come from the mission field, and they maintain a missions focus while they are here. Our circumstances are not as demanding as many church planters, but we know what it is to "do without" and to "make do."

Our salaries and support are generous but not at the level of many churches and denominational ministries. Our calling is to give, serve and model sacrifice and humility. The lives we live as a community of faith encourage those values.

OBI is surrounded by the world for which missions was created, whether it is Kentucky's "hollers" or people from other states, countries and cultures. OBI is one of the most diverse schools in the U.S., and the reason is a missions-style commitment to evangelism.

Help us continue and sharpen that focus by praying, visiting and giving, and encouraging others to do the same.

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

Good and faithful servants

Pryors followed God's call to Clear Creek & beyond

Clear Creek lost a longtime friend earlier this year in the homegoing of Pearl Pryor, a member of South Jefferson Baptist Church in Louisville.

Mrs. Pryor and her late husband, Bob, were active members of South Jefferson for many years when Bob experienced the call to ministry.

He already had a long career with CSX Railroad; Pearl operated her own businesses—a school bus and income tax preparation. They were parents to Roger and two adopted sons, Kirk and Johnny. Bob was a deacon, and also a member of the Louisville Laymen's Group which held weekend revivals in Kentucky, Indiana and Tennessee.

When Bob accepted God's call, the Pryors sold their possessions and moved to Clear Creek. Older than most of the students, they became role models, offering financial support to fellow students in need. They went so far as to provide an automobile for one student. In addition to his studies, Bob was pastor of Turkey Creek Baptist Church in Barbourville. After graduation in 1976, he was called as pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in West Irvine.

Almost three years later, the Pryors moved to Buck Grove Baptist Church in Meade County. The evening after preaching his first two sermons there, Bob had a heart attack and died. A friend described Bob as "a perfect specimen of physical strength and health." His death shocked everyone.

The Robert N. Pryor Scholarship was started at Clear Creek to help other students answering the call to Christian service.

Pearl moved to Louisville and served 10 years as secretary for South Jefferson Baptist. She helped start a mission at Stites Station. She taught women's Bible study for many years, and helped launch another mission in a growing part of Jefferson County. She died at home at age 81.

Friends at the church declare these words of Scripture are appropriate for Bob and Pearl Pryor: "Well done, good and faithful servant." The Clear Creek scholarship now bears both their names. These two faithful servants, "though dead, still speak" (Hebrews 11:4).

Donnie Fox is president of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, 300 Clear Creek Road, Pineville, KY 40977; toll-free: (866) 340-3196; Web site: www.ccbbc.edu; e-mail: dfox@ccbbc.edu

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Donnie Fox

Baptist chaplain tapped for Army's top chaplaincy post

By Mickey Noah

SBC North American Mission Board

Washington (BP)—For the first time since President Eisenhower and the Korean War, a Southern Baptist has been nominated to command the U.S. Army's 5,000 commissioned chaplains.

Based at the Pentagon, Chaplain Brigadier General Douglas Carver, 55, has been tapped as the Army's next Chief of Chaplains. If his nomination is confirmed by the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee and the full Senate as expected, Carver will be promoted to major general and awarded his second star during July ceremonies at Fort Belvoir in northern Virginia.

Carver, a native of Rome, Ga., is a graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

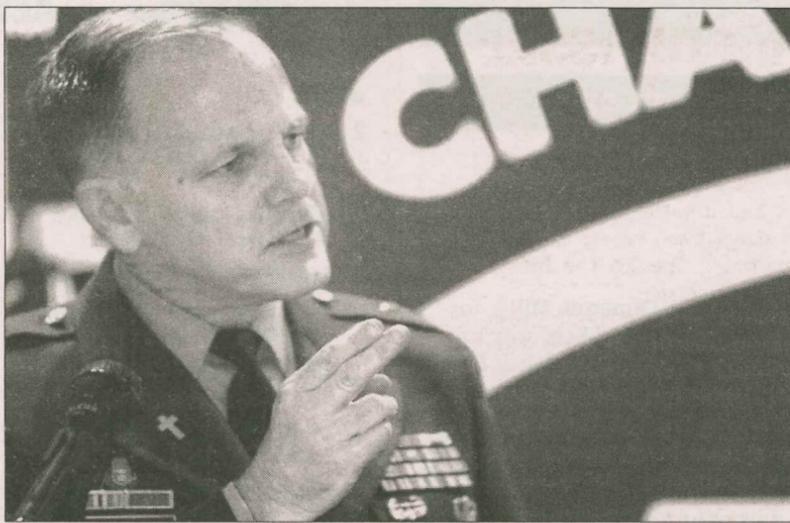
Carver began his work as a chaplain with the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell and was there as division chaplain when 248 soldiers were killed in the 1985 Gander plane crash while returning from a peace-keeping mission. "That was a major event in my life as far as ministering to mass casualties and tending to the long-term care of soldiers and families as they suffered loss," Carver recalled.

In 2005, Carver became the Army's 22nd deputy chief of chaplains and the first Southern Baptist chaplain to be promoted to the Chief of Chaplains office for active duty in more than 50 years. He also is the first Southern Baptist to hold the position of deputy chief of chaplains.

"For such a time as this"

"The Scripture talks about how God is the One who raises up leadership," Carver said in an interview. "For such a time as this, it has appeared that God has raised me up as a Southern Baptist chaplain to provide spiritual leadership for our chaplains in the Army."

With a force of 1 million men and



SBC LUNCHEON Brig. Gen. Douglas Carver speaks to Southern Baptist chaplains during a luncheon held in conjunction with last year's SBC annual meeting in Greensboro, N.C. (BP photo by Jonathan Blair)

women worldwide, the Army's goal is to have a chaplain deployed for every battalion of 500 to 700 soldiers. Most are stationed in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Balkans.

"Our ministry is basically the same whether in war or peace," Carver said. "But obviously, the challenges are much greater in times of war. We're there to sustain the living, care for the wounded and bring honor to those who have lost their lives in conflict."

"In time of war, these activities obviously increase. The desire for spiritual truth, the desire for hope in the midst of chaos and the desire for comfort in times of war's destruction are greatly heightened. Our soldiers are so desperate to reach out for faith, encouragement and hope in times of war."

Although the Army has chaplains in 120 to 130 nations, Carver is concerned about a current shortage of chaplains. In the active National Guard and Army Reserves, 500 chaplain vacancies exist. For the active regular military, he could use another 100 chaplains.

The soon-to-be two-star general said chaplains must have a ministry of presence with the soldiers and their family members. While not exactly a pastor of a church or an evangelist, they have pastoral and evangelistic roles. It's not an eight-hour-a-day job for the squeamish. It's a 24-hour-a-day job, always on call.

Chaplains offer peace, comfort

"We live with our flock. We go to war with them. We jump out of planes with them. We're there to help birth their children and to bury their loved ones. Everywhere soldiers go, a chaplain is nearby to give them peace and comfort and remind them that God is present, whether it's in Baghdad or back in their barracks."

Carver said wartime chaplains are advised to position themselves in combat zones where they can best minister to their soldiers. So when soldiers go out on reconnaissance along Iraq's roadsides often booby-trapped with bombs, a chaplain is there. When a patrol scales the treacherous mountains of Afghani-

stan, a chaplain is nearby. As 4,000 soldiers recently raked Baghdad's infamous "Triangle of Death" searching for three men thought to be captured by Al Qaida, several chaplains were there.

Miraculously, not one U.S. Army chaplain has been lost in Iraq or Afghanistan thus far, Carver said.

"I give God the glory that because of His marvelous grace, we have not had a chaplain killed in action since the war began," he noted. "We have one, a Catholic priest, who is recovering from severe wounds. We've had others wounded. In fact, numerous chaplains have received Purple Hearts. Some have received Bronze Stars."

Carver, who accepted Christ at age 11 at Dykes Creek Baptist Church in Rome, Ga., and was baptized, disciplined and licensed to preach in a Southern Baptist church, said he's thankful for his Baptist heritage.

"I have a dear relationship with my church. I was equipped to be a pastor and a chaplain as a result of the work of many godly Baptist Sunday school teachers, worship leaders, preachers and prayer warriors."

"I thank Southern Baptists for continuing to produce such outstanding young pastors, who are being called as chaplains to do such extraordinary ministry in such a difficult time in the history of our country."

Carver said there is a great hunger for spiritual truth among American soldiers, evidenced on this past Easter Sunday at an unnamed Army base where 400 soldiers accepted Christ during a large outdoor service.

"From generals to privates, we're seeing lives changed and transformed," he said.

Carver and Sunny, his wife of 35 years—who have moved 25 times during their marriage—have two grown daughters and two grandchildren with a third one on the way.

Carver challenges Baptist churches to support chaplains

Washington (BP)—Chaplain Brigadier General Douglas Carver, who has been nominated as the U.S. Army's next Chief of Chaplains, urges Southern Baptists and all churches to "take care of your chaplains."

"Please support them with prayer. Send them notes of encouragement," he suggested. "They need more than candy and cookies. Welcome them home and give them the opportunity to share their experiences and their stories of preaching Christ and ministering to soldiers."

"Reach out and minister to them, because their lives will never be the same as a result of their combat experience," he added. "They've seen a lot of grief and brokenness. They need time for healing and restoration. They paid a price when they went in harm's way to the deserts of the Middle East."

Pair of guilty pleas concludes Alabama church arson cases

Carrollton, Ala. (RNS)—Two men pleaded guilty May 16 to burning a church in Pickens County, Ala., a step that ends federal and state prosecution in a 2006 arson spree that targeted nine rural churches.

"As far as court goes, this is it," said Pickens County District Attorney Chris McCool. "The next step is that they go to federal prison."

Matthew Cloyd and Benjamin Moseley, both 21, pleaded guilty to arson and burglary charges, acknowledging they set fire to Dancy First Baptist Church, one of the nine churches burned in February 2006. A friend, Russell DeBusk, was involved in five of the fires and earlier pleaded guilty to his role.

Cloyd and Moseley will serve two-year state prison sentences that will run at the same time as prison sentences that were previously handed down in Bibb, Sumter and Greene counties.

The concurrent state sentences will begin once they complete an eight-year federal prison term ordered by U.S. District Judge David Proctor in February. DeBusk, 20, will serve a seven-year federal prison term followed by a two-year state sentence for the fires in Bibb County.

McCool said he did not seek any additional state prison time for Cloyd and Moseley at the request of Dancy's pastor, Walter Hawkins, and church members.

"It's a great testimony of the faith of this church," McCool said. "From the beginning, they were more concerned with these boys' souls than they have been with their own church."

tech CONNECT

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ON SANCTUARY SOUND

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Registration is \$50 per person and includes lunch.

PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following Kentucky Baptist ministries and missionaries:

Missionary Rick Brenny of Louisville. Brenny is director of Jefferson Street Baptist Center, a homeless mission in Louisville's inner city. The mission serves approximately 55,000 homeless people through its day shelter, transitional shelter and a permanent supportive housing program. Pray for the center's staff to daily put Christ first and not miss opportunities to share the gospel and minister to needs. Pray that the staff will see people and situations through the eyes of Christ. Pray also that God will lead more Christian workers to reach and disciple the homeless in Louisville.

Mission Service Corps Missionaries Mike and Michelle Gross of Fisherville. The Grosses serve as church strengtheners at Parkland Hills Baptist Church with responsibilities for community surveys, evangelistic visitation, children's ministries, administration and outreach. Pray that God will grant wisdom, guidance and additional volunteers as they seek to make an impact on families through outreach and developing relationships. Pray that people will respond positively to the gospel as a result of their witness and ministry.

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

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **BUFFALO**—Buffalo Church recently called **Josiah Martin** as minister of youth and children. **Rodney Troutman** is pastor.

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—**Wilma Forman**, wife of Kentucky Baptist minister **Ken Forman**, died May 11. She was 73. Mrs. Forman, who was a member of Campbellsville Church, had served as a Sunday school teacher, Woman's Missionary Union director, pianist and organist. In addition to her husband, she is survived by two sons, four daughters, 15 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

■ **CORBIN**—First Church has called **Jim Hunter** as pastor effective June 10.

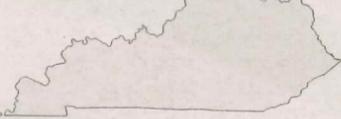
■ **GLENDALE**—New Horizon Fellowship recently held revival services with **Steve Ross** as evangelist. The church recorded more than 50 public decisions, including 20 professions of faith in Christ. **Steve Hill** is pastor.

■ **KEVIL**—Providence Church recently called **Marion Cornett** as pastor.

■ **MADISONVILLE**—Liberty Point Church held revival services May 13-16 with **Don Mathis** as evangelist.

Spotlight on ...

Union



Evangelist **Cameron Mills**, former University of Kentucky basketball player, will speak at Beaver Lick Church May 27, 11 a.m.

■ **MAYFIELD**—**Don Embry** has announced his retirement as pastor of High Point Church effective July 1.

■ **OWENSBORO**—Pleasant Grove Church will host its 5th annual "Mud Bowl" June 1, 6 p.m., featuring mud volleyball, mud tug-of-war and other activities. The event also will include a concert by **33 Miles**. For ticket information, call (270) 771-4150. **Kenneth Stone** is pastor.

■ **PHILPOT**—Dawson Church recently called **Neil Carter** as minister of youth and children/associate pastor. **Craig Bratcher** is pastor.

Sunrise dinner to honor Taylor

Somerset—Sunrise Children's Services will honor longtime Kentucky Baptist leader Eldred Taylor during a fund-raising dinner to benefit Sunrise's Eldred M. Taylor Ministry Support Center in Mount Washington.

The dinner and program will be held May 31 at 6:30 p.m. at Beacon Hill Baptist Church in Somerset.

Taylor, a former Kentucky Baptist Convention president, served as pastor of First Baptist Church of Somerset from 1958 to 1981. He also served as the KBC's director of missions and evangelism and as an evangelism professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's Boyce Bible College.

As executive director of the former Kentucky Baptist Homes for

Children from 1981 to 1988, Taylor led the Kentucky Baptist entity through many positive changes, according to Sunrise officials.

Sunrise's new ministry support center, named in honor of Taylor, marks the first time in nearly a decade that all of Sunrise's administrative staff is working in one facility with the ministry's adoption services and metro region foster care.

Sunrise Children's Services currently cares for more than 300 children who have been removed from their families because of abuse or neglect. Sunrise has six regions of foster care, seven residential treatment programs, counseling centers and adoption services.

For more information about the dinner, call (800) 456-1386.

KBC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June

- 2 Church Weekday Education Seminar Crestwood Baptist Church, Crestwood.
- 9 Technical Ministries Conference, Baptist Building, Louisville.
- 9-16 Kentucky Changers, Russellville.
- 11-15 Mission Adventure Camp for Girls, Cedar Crest.
- 15-16 Mother/Daughter Overnight, Cedar Crest.
- 17-24 All-State Youth Choir/Orchestra Tour, Campbellsville.
- 18-22 Mission Adventure Camp for Girls, Cedar Crest.
- 22-23 Acteens Splash, Girls in Action Overnight, Mother/Daughter Overnight, Jonathan Creek.
- 23-30 Kentucky Changers, Maysville.
- 25-29 Mission Adventure Camp for Girls, Cedar Crest.
- 29-30 Mother/Daughter Overnight, Cedar Crest.

30 Baptist Nursing Fellowship Summer Luncheon, Farmdale Baptist Church, Frankfort.

July

- 2-3 Mother/Daughter Overnight, Cedar Crest.
- 5-7 Express Mission Adventure Camp for Girls & Boys, Cedar Crest.
- 5-7 Pursuit Student Leadership Academy, Campbellsville University.
- 7-14 Kentucky Changers, Monticello.
- 9-13 Mission Adventure Camp for Girls, Cedar Crest.
- 19-20 Quarterly Prayer Meeting for Spiritual Awakening, Northside Baptist Church, Mount Vernon.
- 25-26 Kentucky Baptist Secretaries' Summer Conference, Baptist Building, Louisville.
- 27-28 World Missions Unlimited, Immanuel Baptist Church, Lexington.

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

NAMB to host PowerPlant in Louisville

Louisville—A team of approximately 50 students will travel to Louisville next month for "PowerPlant," a ministry initiative of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board.

Junior high and high school students, who will be involved in a week of community service projects, will be based at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary June 16-22.

Students will meet "for worship and training each morning and evening," noted local ministry coordinator Tim Overton, minister of students and administration at Bethany Baptist Church in Louisville. "Each afternoon they will help our local church planters

evangelize the lost of Louisville."

Jonathan Wilson, NAMB's student volunteer mobilization associate, said PowerPlant participants typically "have a radical transformation during the week."

"When we ask them to define the ideal church at the beginning of the week, the answers center on buildings and ministries," he added. "But by the end of the week when we ask the same question, the answer changes to 'people.'"

Students in Louisville will be working with Crossing Community Church, LifeSpring Church and Lighthouse Fellowship.

For more information about PowerPlant, visit www.powerplant.net.

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR RENT: Family reunion or wedding parties. Highway 30A, beachside, 75 yards to 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.

FOR SALE: 1993 Ford E350 Supreme 14-passenger bus. V8 w/cruise, AC front and back, rear luggage compartment, 67,000 miles. Used as church bus. \$12,500 Call (502) 608-9808

SEEKING: Part-time worship leader who can lead blended worship effectively for growing church in Woodford County. Send resumé to Glen's Creek Baptist Church, 4678 Steele Road, Versailles, KY 40383.

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: Full-time pastor. Send resumé to Hyattsville Baptist Church, 3245 Richmond Road, Lancaster, KY 40444, Attn: Cynthia Bourne; or e-mail: crbourne@windstream.net.

SEEKING: Lawrenceville First Baptist Church in Gwinnett County, Ga., is accepting resumé for a full-time senior pastor. Please mail a resumé, and a DVD, videotape or other media, to Pastor Search Committee, PO Box 228 Lawrenceville, GA 30046-0028.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor, First Baptist Church, Hodgenville, Ky. Send resumé to the Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 730 Tonieville Road, Hodgenville, KY 42748

SEEKING: Pastor for Munfordville Baptist Church in Munfordville, Ky. Interested parties should mail resumé to: MBC, PO Box 768, Munfordville, KY 42765.

SEEKING: Youth minister and music minister or combination—this could be full- or part-time. Submit resumé with letter of interest to: Silver Creek Baptist Church, PO Box 97, Berea, KY 40403.

SEEKING: Ministry assistant to youth and children's minister. Applicant should be proficient using Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Publisher. Individual must possess excellent people skills. Interested applicants may submit resumé to Personnel Committee, Shively Baptist Church, 1599 Sadie Lane, Louisville, KY 40216.

SEEKING: Music minister/director to lead the Sunday and Wednesday services and work with the choir and individuals in providing special music for small, rural church. Looking for a person with strong Christian morals who can work well with our pastor and set the tone for a Spirit-filled worship service. If interested, send resumé to Mt. Eden Baptist Church, PO Box 310, Hawesville, KY 42348. For more information, contact Alberta Morris at (270) 927-8755.

SEEKING: Minister of students/recreation (6th grade through college age). Accepting resumé until May 31. Send to: Red House Baptist Church, 2301 Red House Road, Richmond, KY 40475; or rhbc@redhousebc.com.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music for southeast Louisville church. Send resumé to Khil@universallinen.com; or call Jeff at (502) 263-4099.

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@voyageonline.net.

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.

'People of the woods'

Hope competing against joblessness, despair in Russia's Udmurt minority

By Erich Bridges
SBC International Mission Board

Izhevsk, Russia (BP)—No father should have to bury a son.

But the world can be a sad place—particularly the piece of it called Udmurtia (ood-MER-ti-yah) in the foothills of Russia's Ural Mountains.

On a spring day last year, Leonid touched his son Yevgeny's cold, pale cheek for the last time and wept as Yevgeny was lowered into the silent ground.

Yevgeny, 21, hanged himself after a drinking binge. It was the third suicide of the year in the tiny Udmurt (OOD-mert) village of 30 families.

"Young people want everything and they want it now," Leonid said, sitting at his kitchen table a few months later. "My son was that way. They watch TV and can't tell the difference between fantasy and reality. With no work, all they do is drink."

The gulf between soaring expectations and grim, jobless reality overwhelms some young Udmurts. They brood, drink, sniff glue, become depressed—and sometimes suicidal.

Leonid folds his burly arms and shakes his head. For a long moment, he looks out the window at the rolling hills that stretch to the forest. He pours more tea for his Christian guests. He uses homegrown herbs to brew his tea. "We Udmurts are famous for healing herbs," he said. "Yet we have the second-highest suicide rate in Russia. I don't understand it."

From tragedy to hope

In many ways, Leonid's personal tragedy symbolizes the struggle of the Udmurt people. In the same way, he also symbolizes hope; Leonid is a believer in Jesus Christ.

He was led to faith by an Udmurt Baptist evangelist, Vasily Zagrebin (see related story), and Tim Wicker, a Southern Baptist missionary.

Leonid said he wants to help take the gospel from village to village, so other Udmurts might know hope, and escape the despair his son suffered.

The Udmurt people are the focus of this year's Day of Prayer and Fasting for World Evangelization, which Southern Baptists will observe May 27.

A people group of about 770,000, Udmurts are among the largest non-Muslim groups in Russia.

Udmurts are known as "people of the woods," revering land, sky, sun, water—and the spirits believed to inhabit the elements. They also worship their ancestors, a mythical creator named Inmar, and a host of lesser deities.

Historically, the Udmurts made sacrifices to their gods in forests and sacred barns, but they knew nothing of personal repentance or divine forgiveness. The offerings were barter in exchange for a good crop, fertility and prosperity.



DIVINE APPOINTMENT? A local evangelist invites Udmurt villagers to a screening of the "Jesus" film. Christians plan to show the film in every village in Russia's region of Udmurtia, the focus of the Day of Prayer and Fasting for World Evangelization May 27.

Most Udmurts live in small villages peopled by a few families. Years of economic chaos after the fall of communism hit Udmurtia hard. Decent jobs are difficult to find. Higher education is even harder to attain. Many Udmurts get by on family gardens.

The birthrate in the countryside is low; the mortality rate from alcoholism—particularly among men—is high. But there is hope, Wicker said. "I genuinely sense that God is working among them now." He cites:

- House churches and worship groups are springing up in Udmurt villages, thanks to the ministry of Udmurt evangelists.

- Young Baptists and other Christians in Udmurtia are reaching out to the lost of their generation—Udmurts and Russians. The Christian music/drama group Paradigma, for instance, tours villages and orphanages to share the love of Christ.

Reformed 'hooligan' determined to share Christ with others

By Erich Bridges
SBC International Mission Board

Izhevsk, Russia (BP)—Vasily Zagrebin sports the busted grin of a boxer who's gone too many rounds: crooked teeth, broken nose, bent eye socket.

He was beaten and left for dead during a drunken binge years ago. "Thank God I lived through it," Zagrebin said, but a life of drinking and carousing cost him everything else—his wife, his job and his health.

Now a Baptist evangelist in Udmurtia, Zagrebin walks or rides his bicycle from village to village to share Jesus.

He and his five brothers and sisters were baptized into the Russian Orthodox Church, but it didn't mean much, he said. "We didn't believe in God, but we believed in spirits in the woods—bad spirits," he explained.

Argumentative and combative, he beat up other kids, began smoking at age 7 and drinking in grammar school. He dropped out of school

- Some younger Russian Orthodox priests in Udmurt villages gladly accept Bibles to give to members of their flocks.

- Through a media campaign, Baptists and other evangelicals in Izhevsk publicize treatment options for people with addictions.

- In addition to a counseling hotline, Christian ministries operate the International Center for Hope, which serves addicts, orphans, abused children and other wounded people through Christian counseling and 12-step programs.

Day of prayer, fasting

Most of all, the Udmurts need prayer. "We've got to get people praying," Wicker said. "I'm so thrilled about the Day of Prayer and Fasting and how it's going to generate a spiritual force. We've got to get the gospel out there."

Specific concerns Southern Bap-

tists are asked to pray for include that God would:

- Call missionaries specifically to Udmurtia.

- Break down strongholds of paganism, alcoholism, depression and suicide.

- Propel the completion and wide distribution of the Udmurt translation of the Bible.

- Unite Udmurt and Russian Baptists and other believers to reach all of Udmurtia with the gospel.

- Multiply Udmurt churches into a sweeping church-planting movement.

- Guide the people who are developing a set of chronological Bible stories through which to communicate the gospel to non-readers.

- Open hundreds of Udmurt villages to showings of the "Jesus" film.

- Extend God's Spirit, mercy and grace throughout Udmurtia.

together in the eighth grade. "He was a hooligan," said Tim Wicker, a Southern Baptist missionary who serves among the Udmurts. "A rough character."

After his near-death experience, Zagrebin heard the simple gospel for the first time when Baptists visited his village. Self-conscious because of his disfigured face, he attended their small-group meetings under cover of night.

True to form, he argued with the Baptists and with God until he repented and gave his heart to Christ. He quit drinking. He also quit swearing: "I just couldn't speak those words anymore," he said. "I had to learn how to talk again."

Then he began the work of an evangelist. "I knew I must tell others how to be saved," he said.

Baptist leader Alexander Popov helped Zagrebin get reconstructive surgery for his ravaged face. It will never look "normal," but the joy of Jesus shines through.

Eight years later, Zagrebin, 36,

gladly will walk miles through snow to share Jesus with others. To speed up his travel time, visiting students from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, bought him a bicycle.

"Like the Apostle Paul, I was the chief of sinners," he said. "Now I want to be in the villages. I just have to tell. I want so much for others to know."



Udmurts' heritage includes nature worship, animism

Izhevsk, Russia (BP)—Southern Baptists are asked to intercede in prayer and fasting May 27 for the Udmurt people of the former Soviet Union.

Over the centuries, this rural group has been dominated by various peoples and empires, including Mongols, Russians and Soviets. Their communist-era Udmurt Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic became the democratic Republic of Udmurtia in 1990. Udmurtia remains in the current Russian Federation.

The Udmurts have been nominal adherents of the Russian Orthodox Church since the 1700s when they were converted, forcibly, by Russian monks and military commanders. Their skin-deep Christianity is mingled with older, deeper layers of animism—the belief that spirits inhabit objects—and nature worship. An estimated 2,000 Udmurts are evangelical followers of Christ.

A DVD from the Southern Baptist International Mission Board containing multiple resources for churches, small groups and individuals can be ordered online at ime.imb.org/dayofprayer or by calling (800) 999-3113. To learn more about how to reach the Udmurts—and other peoples of the former Soviet Union—visit hope4cee.org.

REDEEMED Beaten and left for dead during a drunken binge years ago, Vasily Zagrebin now lives for God. He walks or rides his bicycle from village to village to share Jesus with Russia's Udmurt people.

Missions '07

Alternative Spring Break

GEORGETOWN

C O L L E G E

Live. Learn. Believe.

Coordinated through Georgetown College's Campus Ministry, students, faculty and staff dedicated their 2007 spring break to serving those less fortunate. Mission trips serve as springboards for a cross section of students to develop their Christian leadership skills and integrate service into their lives. We are *proud* of these outreach efforts and the positive outcomes they produce.

Brazil

Alpha and Omega Children's Home

Jennifer Pratt '06 was so inspired by the work at Alpha and Omega Children's Home as an undergraduate that she chose to return to Garca, Brazil, to live and teach. This year, twenty-one current students, four staff members and two area high school students traveled to Garca to join with Jennifer in leading a kite festival and field day along with devotionals and creative ministries, and to assist in school activities and facility maintenance.

Florida

Beach Reach

Three students joined with the UK Baptist Campus Ministry and other college and university campuses across Kentucky and throughout the southeast to provide a variety of services and worship opportunities for fellow spring breakers in search of a relationship with Christ.

Louisiana

Habitat for Humanity/Faith Baptist New Orleans

Twelve students and Cynthia Insko, Georgetown College's campus minister, returned to New Orleans to clear lots and build homes for residents of the 9th Ward area so devastated by Hurricane Katrina. This was a second trip this year to the area, funded by Arms Wide Open, a GC student group founded in response to the Katrina disaster.

Virginia

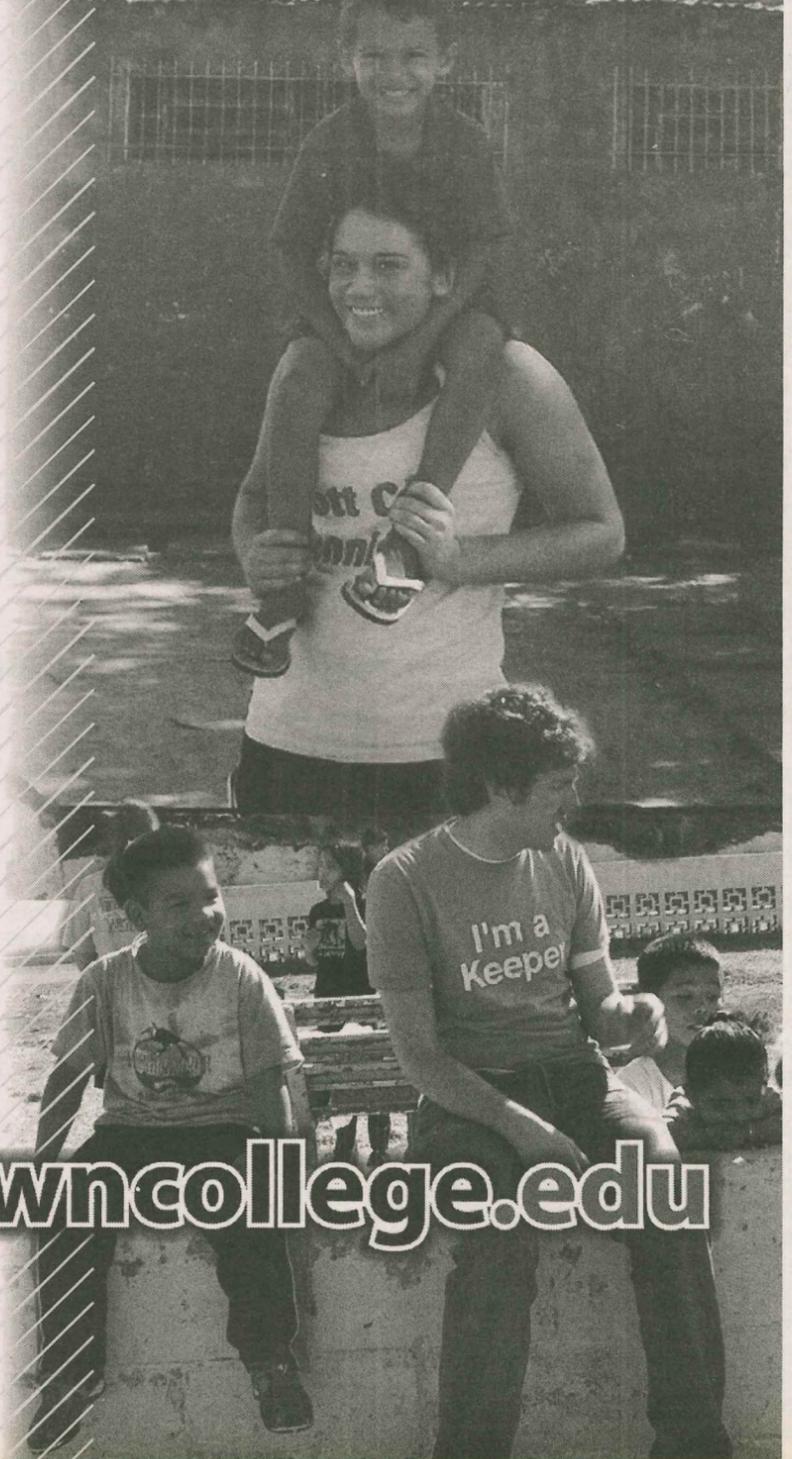
Mission Arlington

For the 4th straight year, Georgetown College students have worked with Mission Arlington in ministry to underprivileged children and the poor. Fifty-one students and three of our staff members spent the week providing backyard Bible school throughout various low income housing projects.

New Jersey

Urban Promise

A baker's dozen of our students and two staff members traveled to Camden, New Jersey for a third year to assist in a variety of after school programs offering poor and underprivileged kids encouragement and hope for a bright future.



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