

PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

WESTERN RECORDER

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FOR THE RECORD

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Witt remembered for stands against alcohol, gambling

Louisville—Claude Witt, retired executive director of the Temperance League of Kentucky, died July 31 at age 74.

Witt, who retired in 2002 after 15 years as executive director, served nearly three decades in temperance ministry and advocacy in Kentucky and Wisconsin.

The Temperance League, now called the Kentucky League on Alcohol and Gambling Problems, is an interdenominational organization supported by the Kentucky Baptist Convention. It provides lobbying and education on the issues of alcohol and gambling on behalf of more than 3,000 congregations throughout the commonwealth.

When he retired in 2002, Witt was presented with resolutions adopted by the Kentucky House of Representatives and Senate. The proclamations honored him "for his outstanding service in ministering to the citizens of the Commonwealth of Kentucky" and for being "an inspiration to all the lives he has touched."

Witt, a former KBC second vice president, also served as a trustee of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission and was a member of the Kentucky Attorney General's Task Force on Alcohol Problems. He also was chairman of the American Council on Alcohol Problems and was named the outstanding temperance worker in the nation.

ERLC President Richard Land presented Witt with that organization's inaugural distinguished service award in 2003, describing him as "a tireless advocate for personal holiness and purity."

Witt is survived by his wife, Marcella, four children and six grandchildren. His funeral service was held Aug. 3 in Louisville.

Memorial gifts may be made to the Dot Garr Scholarship Fund at Farmdale Baptist Church in Louisville.

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, Aug. 15.

Focused on the goal



Above: Campers from Lifesong Church's Cross Extreme sports camp get their stretches in before playing soccer at Central Park in Ashland. Dozens of children participated in the four-day camp, July 23-26. Right: A sign featuring the verse from the Gospel of Matthew welcomes worshippers in to Lifesong. (Photos by Drew Nichter)

Son's accident sets pastor on path to launch high impact church

By Drew Nichter
News Director

Ashland—It is a hot, muggy July day and Ashland's Central Park is crawling with kids. From the amphitheater to the edge of the park, kids are everywhere, playing a variety of sports.

At one end, a group of children plays basketball. At the other end, a crowd of boys and girls learns the

fundamentals of football. In between, there is soccer, volleyball and cheerleading.

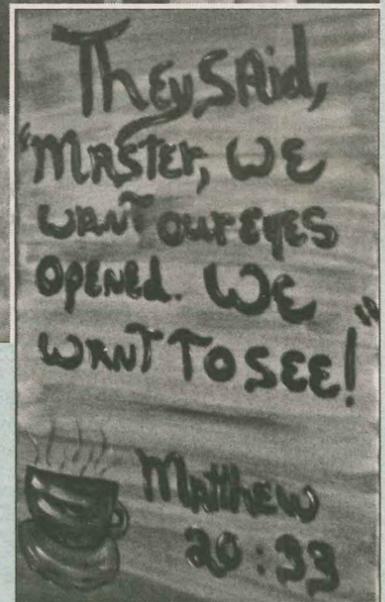
Welcome to Cross Extreme, the first ever sports camp hosted by Lifesong Church, a Kentucky Baptist Convention high impact church. The camp is a huge undertaking for the 10-month-old church and its pastor, Keith Menshouse.

Launched in October 2006, Life-

song came out of the gate quickly, reaching out to the unchurched in the Ashland area. Unchurched at the church has "probably been 210 to 220," said Menshouse who has been a pastor for 25 years.

Back at the park, about 50 kids are participating in day two of Cross Extreme. On the team handball field, Menshouse, 48, waits in

See Lifesong Church ... Page 6



Study examines reasons young people choose to leave church

Nashville (BP)—More than two-thirds of young adults who attend a Protestant church for at least a year in high school will stop attending church regularly for at least a year between the ages of 18 and 22. That's according to a new study from LifeWay Research.

More than 1,000 adults ages 18-30 were surveyed and each one indicated that they had attended a Protestant church regularly for at least a year in high school.

In most cases, the decision to leave was not planned far in advance. Only 20 percent of "church dropouts" agree that while they were attending church regularly in

high school they "planned on taking a break from church once (they) finished high school."

Among those who predetermined to leave church, few told anyone about their desire. One reflected, "I just told my parents I didn't like it," rather than sharing an intention to actually leave. Another said, "I kept my feelings secret for fear of losing my friends."

"Lots of alarming numbers have been tossed around regarding church dropouts," said Ed Stetzer, director of LifeWay Research. "We wanted to get at the real situation with clear research—and there is some bad news here, no question.

But, there also are some important solutions to be found in the research. When we know why people drop out, we can address how to help better connect them."

Reasons they leave

Ninety-seven percent of church dropouts listed a so-called life change or life situation as the reason for leaving. Among the reasons listed by those who dropped out:

- "I simply wanted a break from church" (27 percent).
- "I moved to college and stopped attending church" (25 percent).
- "Work responsibilities prevented me from attending" (23 percent).

■ "I moved too far away from the church to continue attending" (22 percent).

"A move beyond your local community breaks the existing ties to a local church," said Scott McConnell, associate director of LifeWay Research. "It requires intentional effort to search for a new church home that may not occur immediately, even for those interested in church."

How young people use their time and the relationships they choose can also lead them away from church. Twenty-two percent "became too busy, though still wanted

See Young people offer ... Page 9

NAMB plans sale of FamilyNet to In Touch

By Mickey Noah
Baptist Press

Alpharetta, Ga. (BP)—Following a unanimous vote by FamilyNet's board of trustees Aug. 7, trustees of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board voted unanimously Aug. 8 to accept a letter of intent from Charles Stanley's In Touch Ministries outlining the ministry's intention to purchase NAMB's FamilyNet television network.

Under terms of the letter, NAMB and In Touch Ministries will work together to evaluate and negotiate the planned sale and purchase of FamilyNet, and finalize details for the sale by Oct. 31.

NAMB trustee chairman Bill Curtis, pastor of Cornerstone Baptist Church in Florence, S.C., said the sale "will result in two very significant Kingdom events."

"First," he said, "it will enable NAMB to focus on its primary tasks as the North American missions arm of the Southern Baptist Convention. Second, it will enable FamilyNet to become the network Southern Baptists always dreamed it could be."

NAMB focuses on core ministry

Curtis said the sale to In Touch Ministries enables FamilyNet to grow while NAMB can focus energies and resources on its core ministry tasks.

"Throughout the years, Southern Baptists have used media to impact our nation with the gospel," Curtis said. "For more than 50 years, the Radio & Television Commission, and later the North American Mission Board, has attempted to do this through the development of the Acts and then FamilyNet television networks."

After more than 50 years in ministry, Stanley, founder and chairman of In Touch Ministries, said he

is excited about a new opportunity to reach millions of people around the world, while also continuing the mutual goal of NAMB to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ.

"I am grateful to the people at NAMB for laying the groundwork at FamilyNet which has made this extraordinary and exciting opportunity possible," Stanley said in a statement. "We, at In Touch Ministries, look forward to continuing FamilyNet's tradition of creating and providing excellent, inspiring, family-friendly programming for cable providers, network affiliates and viewers."

Under the agreement, a NAMB representative would hold a chair on FamilyNet's board of directors, and NAMB would receive weekly program time on both the television and radio arms of the network. Although not part of the agreement, In Touch has also indicated NAMB will have access to its state-of-the-art studio facilities and other communications technology resources.

Tim Patterson, vice chairman of NAMB's trustee board and senior pastor of Hillcrest Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Fla., chaired a task force, established in February, to examine future strategies for FamilyNet, which contained many options, including the sale of the network.

"One of our concerns, in the event that we would consider selling FamilyNet, was that the purchaser would agree with us philosophically and doctrinally and would have had the same heart as Southern Baptists," Patterson said. "When we were approached by In Touch and Dr. Stanley, we were grateful that a ministry like this would be interested."

Patterson said it was important to trustees that FamilyNet continue to have Southern Baptist ties and maintain a strong evangelistic element in

FamilyNet's programming.

"Dr. Stanley has assured us that this will become one of the strongest evangelical, conservative Christian networks in America today and beyond," Patterson said.

NAMB's FamilyNet task force started its process before Geoff Hammond became president of NAMB this past May, but Hammond said the agency will continue to use media to help spread the gospel across North America.

Hammond: Media strategy remains

"The North American Mission Board still resources and encourages Southern Baptists through many forms of media," Hammond said. "The strategy to use media as one of the many tools to help us share Christ, start churches and send missionaries has not changed. We are also ready, in this digital age, to investigate new and innovative ways to get our messages out while continuing to use the access we have to radio and television through ITM."

Based in Alpharetta, Ga., NAMB assists Southern Baptists in their task of fulfilling the Great Commission. NAMB supports the work of missionaries, chaplains and mission volunteers who serve throughout the United States, Canada and their territories. NAMB's work is done in cooperation with state and local partners and is supported through gifts to the Cooperative Program and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions.

Stanley, a former Southern Baptist Convention president, has served as senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Atlanta since 1971. He is also the founder and president of In Touch Ministries, whose "In Touch" radio and television program has been translated into more than 100 languages.

Wells to supervise LifeWay's African-American ministry

Nashville (BP)—LifeWay Christian Resources has named Jay Wells, a pastoral ministries veteran of more than seven years, to direct its newly expanded African-American ministry.

Wells, 61, will seek to lead LifeWay in better serving African-American churches, in part by strengthening longstanding relationships with pastors and church staff members and by developing ties to new church leadership. Currently, there are 3,700 predominantly African-American churches in the Southern Baptist Convention

"Our ultimate goal is to see African-American churches reach people for Christ," said Wells, who joined LifeWay in 1989 and served most recently as pastoral ministry specialist.

"We are seeing more African-American churches turn to LifeWay for resources in Christian education," he said. "I think there is a growing recognition of the quality of LifeWay training and resources that is prompting this to happen."

The new African-American ministry team of three, headed by Wells, will be part of LifeWay's church relations and consulting ministry under director Ralph Hodge.

"LifeWay has had an intentional ministry to African-American churches since 1985," Hodge said. "The work has continued to grow over the years with the increased number of churches joining the SBC. Jay has been an integral part of this ministry and I believe is uniquely gifted by the Lord to lead LifeWay to an even more effective level of service."

LifeWay is expanding its ministry, Hodge said, in response to growing requests for resources that meet the unique cultural needs of the African-American community.

LifeWay has produced training resources and sponsored training events specifically for African-Americans since the mid 1980s, Wells said. In July, LifeWay launched a new Web site (www.lifeway.com/blackchurchlife) to speak more effectively to the issues and needs of the African-American community.

Wells holds a bachelor's degree from Tuskegee (Ala.) University and a master of divinity degree from Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife Carolyn have three adult children: Warrick, Denise and Craig. Wells previously served as minister of education and associate pastor at Emmanuel Baptist Church in San Jose, Calif., and on the staff of the California Southern Baptist Convention.



Jay Wells

"The strategy to use media as one of the many tools to help us share Christ, start churches and send missionaries has not changed."

NAMB President
Geoff Hammond

BAPTIST DIGEST

Wiggins, retired president of Campbell University, dies. Norman Wiggins, president of Campbell University in Winston-Salem, N.C., for 36 years before his retirement, died Aug. 1 at 83. Wiggins, Campbell's chancellor after his retirement in 2003, led the school to become the second largest Baptist university in the world. He was also a former president of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. Wiggins, a 1948 graduate of Campbell, also held degrees from Wake Forest University and Columbia School of Law. He returned to Wake Forest in 1956 as professor of law. Frank Bonner, president of Gardner-Webb University, said Wiggins "was a giant in Christian higher education."

First Baptist, Dallas, calls Jeffress as pastor. Robert Jeffress, pastor of First Baptist Church of Wichita Falls, Texas, was named pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas Aug. 12. He succeeds Mac Brunson, who left First Baptist, Dallas, to become pastor of First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Fla., in February 2006. The pastor search committee looked at more than 100 candidates before recommending Jeffress, according to a news release from First Baptist, Dallas. Jeffress, pastor in Wichita Falls since 1992, previously was pastor of First Baptist Church of Eastland, Texas. He is a graduate of Baylor University, Dallas Theological Seminary and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Cole to join Burleson's church staff. Benjamin Cole, an outspoken Southern Baptist blogger, has announced his resignation as pastor of Parkview Baptist Church in Arlington, Texas, to join the church staff of fellow blogger Wade Burleson. Cole will join the pastoral staff of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Enid, Okla., effective Sept. 2. As the church's associate pastor for discipleship and media, Cole will work with small-group formation and media ministries.

GuideStone upgrades assistance for seminary students, retirees

San Diego (BP)—A new insurance benefit for seminary students and added assistance for needy retirees were cited by GuideStone Financial Resources President O.S. Hawkins as enhancements that have been added to the Southern Baptist entity's long-range ministry.

In an effort to reach out to seminarians, all full-time students at the six Southern Baptist seminaries will receive a free \$10,000 life benefit beginning this fall, Hawkins told trustees during their recent meeting in San Diego.

"We want to begin a lifelong partnership with seminary students," Hawkins said. "Many of these students are unable to afford even basic protection for their family. This is just one way we can begin to enhance their financial security."

Describing new provisions in GuideStone's financial assistance ministry, Hawkins said, "We have recently approved expanded guidelines that will enable more of our retired pastors or their widows to qualify for financial assistance. Additionally, as of Jan. 1, 2008, we will double the amount of monthly assistance to our most needy recipients. In some cases, this will amount to as much

as \$530 per month."

Such changes are part of GuideStone 90, the first step in the long-range GuideStone 100 plan to guide the organization's work through 2018, its centennial year.

GuideStone's financial assistance area has experienced good progress during the first half of 2007, trustees were told, with more than 240 new donors joining thousands of others in providing resources for GuideStone to undergird more than 2,000 retired pastors or their widows who have significant financial needs. Expanded guidelines approved earlier this year have enabled the financial assistance staff to launch a discovery project that will identify others who need assistance.

In the insurance area, GuideStone's Chief Operating Officer John Jones highlighted success in growing the medical plans' participant base—up more than 15 percent over the past three years.

After three consecutive years of rate stability for personal medical plan participants, the trustee insurance committee reported that it will be necessary to pass along a rate increase to participants in some medical plans for 2008.

Pair of Ky. churches celebrate debt retirement campaigns

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

Somerset—After collectively raising more than \$1 million to pay off building debt, two Kentucky Baptist congregations are rejoicing and praying to see where God leads them next.

First Baptist Church of Somerset raised more than \$900,000 on July 22, capping a "Seize the Day" campaign that paid off \$738,000 in debt remaining on a \$3.5 million multi-purpose addition.

"It's unique," said Cy Waddle, who chaired the Somerset church's campaign. "It's the most joyous occasion I've experienced."

Meanwhile, Twelve Oaks Baptist Church in Paducah took a "Chest of Joash" offering July 8 that generated cash and pledges of nearly \$142,000.

More money has come in, too: In the following month members gave an additional \$3,372.

The one-day total was about \$5,500 more than the \$136,500 owed on the congregation's three-year-old, \$1.2 million facility.

The debt isn't quite paid off, since a \$25,000 pledge isn't expected until December. But Marshall Davis, Twelve Oaks' deacon chairman, said he hopes the last \$10,000 can be paid by late September, when the church commemorates its 100th anniversary.

"There's a lot to celebrate this year," Davis said. "I think the people just responded to God's call to

be good stewards and to be generous with His money. They love the Lord and love their church."

First Baptist, Somerset's campaign retired the debt on a 39,000-square-foot building and paid about \$20,000 for materials currently being used to build a house for a needy couple in the area.

By early August the congregation had deposited \$902,000 from "Seize the Day," with close to \$8,000 more in pledges.

The decision of what to do with the surplus will come at an Aug. 19 business meeting, according to Waddle, a long-time deacon.

"The campaign was for a specific purpose and it seems only reasonable the excess funds will be used for those purposes," Waddle said. "It's nice to have some money if you have to put on a roof sometime."

"Seize the Day"

One impressive aspect of the drive was that it came while First Baptist is without a pastor or other professional staff members.

Interim Pastor French Harmon, leader of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's church development team, suggested "Seize the Day"—one of several fund-raising initiatives offered by his team.

Although Harmon's team didn't participate in the Paducah campaign, he said both offerings are significant for Kentucky Baptists.

"It's exciting to see money giv-

en for debt retirement, missions or whatever," Harmon said. "There's a spirit among the people of revival."

The church development leader said he observed a unity within the congregation in Somerset that he thinks fueled their generosity.

Harmon noted that retiring debt requires a congregational-wide vision, not just that of a few people.

Waddle agreed, saying the spiritual impact of togetherness is what enabled the congregation to raise so much money in one day.

"We designed a campaign for everyone to have a part in it, young and old," Waddle noted. "Personally, I learned that you can be a servant people and try to help them, and do it in a way that everyone feels a part of it."

Clyde Ping, a member for 76 years, said people wanted to overcome past differences and help lead First Baptist back to a strong position.

"To carry a debt like that, they felt it would be better to start with a clean slate," Ping said as the church seeks a new pastor. "It was an important thing that brought us closer together and made people willing to take a part."

Twelve Oaks Church, which is nearing its centennial, was known for most of its life as Twelfth Street Baptist Church, which identified its location in Paducah.

The church has since moved outside the city to New Holt Road, about a mile south of the Paducah Mall.

Blind man fulfills vision to reach others for Christ

By Shirley Cox
Kentucky Baptist Convention

Mount Vernon—With a grin, Mission Service Corps missionary Mike Gates said he wants the epitaph carved on his tombstone to read, "A Blind Man with Vision."

Blinded in a hunting accident in 1989, Gates has used his God-given vision to design and plan Christ's Outreach for the Blind, a camp in Mount Vernon for handicapped kids that is scheduled to open Sept. 1.

And despite his handicap, Gates has been actively involved in the camp's construction.

After he lost his sight, Gates prayed for a faith healing. Eventually, he realized that God sometimes answers "no." So he began crossing busy city streets, hoping to die.

"Instead, I got good at it," Gates said with a laugh.

One day, as Gates vented his frustrations, he said God spoke directly to him, telling him he could help others like himself.

In 1995, Gates and his wife, Lori, who is also an MSC missionary, purchased 900 acres of land in Mount Vernon. They began building the camp in October 1999, to offer a summer camping experience for handicapped kids.

"I am going to show the campers there is life after tragedy," Gates said. "Kids are not interested in rehabilitation until you get them interested in life again."

Under construction

With a skeleton crew of helpers, Gates, who had worked in construction before his accident, designed and built a barn facility, an outreach center, a greenhouse and even a wood fence that lines both sides of the property's entrance.

Later, Gates had more than 300 huge pine trees removed from the property to make way for a 16,000-square-foot horse barn. The building is home to horses and other animals, as well as an indoor archery

range, rock climbing wall and rappelling station.

Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore will furnish horses for the camp and send equestrian ministry students to work as summer interns. Equestrian Ministries International has even designated Christ's Outreach for the Blind as an international training center.

During the past four years, mission volunteers from 29 states have streamed to Mount Vernon to help with the camp's construction.

"People come from all over the country and do things they never did because it is like God's Holy Spirit surrounds this property," Gates declared.

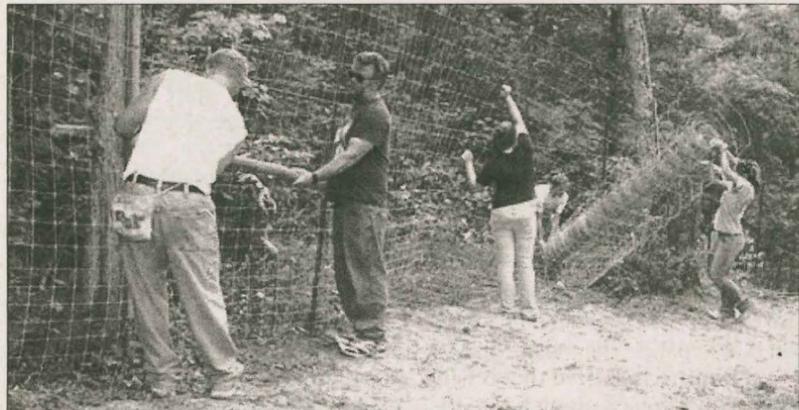
As of July, 548 volunteers from 11 states helped complete six miles of 10-foot-high fencing. Gates said there is a good reason for the project.

"We are fencing this property so it can be designated as a wild game preserve," he said. "Once that's done, these kids won't have to buy a hunting license and we can name our own seasons."

Even though the camp does not open for a couple of weeks, Gates has already "tested the waters," as he put it, taking several small groups hunting.

Not yet fully constructed, Christ's Outreach for the Blind has already had an impact for Christ. So far, 41 people, most of them missions volunteers, have accepted Christ.

"One thing we have learned," Gates said, "is if you want to further the Kingdom of heaven, all you have to do is make yourself available—period."



SEEING CLEARLY Mike Gates (second from left) helps a team of volunteers stretch fencing along the perimeter of Christ's Outreach for the Blind camp in Mount Vernon.

The anticipation of moving to a new church facility three years ago probably stirred more excitement among members, Davis said.

Still, he said the debt retirement marks a milestone in Twelve Oaks' ministry, saying it taught the congregation the importance of trusting in God.

"Sometimes you're a little apprehensive or timid about doing what the Lord wants you to do," said Davis, a businessman. "Don't put limits on what God wants you to do. He's shown us through what He's done on New Holt Road He can do some great things through us."

Unprecedented giving

Former Treasurer Lynn Day said the latest debt retirement is much greater than a \$15,000 note the church retired in 1978 when it paid off a sanctuary built 13 years earlier.

"It amazed several people, including me," said Day, also a deacon. "The Lord was with us and the people responded. It served to make us come closer together."

Twelve Oaks Pastor Louis Brinker patterned the "Chest of Joash" after the Old Testament king who took an offering to rebuild the temple.

Placing a small chest on the Communion table, the pastor discussed it for five weeks prior to the offering. He also sent a letter with a special offering envelope to everyone on the church's mailing list.

"It's one of the most beautiful days I've ever had in my ministry," said Brinker, a pastor for 46 years, including the past 20 months at Twelve Oaks. "It's put a spirit of revival and expectancy in the church. People say, 'This is nothing compared to what we're going to do.'"

Campbellsville Univ. student dies in automobile accident

Campbellsville—Pam McCardwell, a junior at Campbellsville University, died Aug. 6 in a two-vehicle accident near Campbellsville.



Pam McCardwell

McCardwell, 20, was a passenger in a car with three other Campbellsville students who were injured in the accident.

The vehicle in which McCardwell was riding had stopped to make a turn when it was struck from behind by another vehicle, according to Campbellsville police.

Campbellsville students Christie Bagley of Louisville; James Dean of Williamsburg, Ohio; and Grant Litton of Somerset were treated at area hospitals and released. The driver of the other vehicle reportedly was not injured.

McCardwell, the daughter of Mark and Lisa McCardwell, was a 2005 graduate of Bullitt East High School in Mount Washington. A Christian social ministries major and a dean's list student at Campbellsville, she taught Sunday school at Lighthouse Baptist Church in Taylorsville and worked in Campbellsville's broadcast services office. She also was a student ambassador and a National Honor Society member.

McCardwell, who participated in overseas mission trips to Africa, Poland and Bolivia, had planned to return to Poland for the fall semester to work at a Christian camp.

Josh Anderson, dean of student services at Campbellsville, described McCardwell as "a fantastic student leader."

"Pam was a beautiful young lady with a sweet spirit, a servant's heart and a contagious love for Christ," noted John Hurtgen, dean of Campbellsville's school of theology. "You never met her without seeing a smile on her face."

In addition to her parents, McCardwell is survived by three brothers. Her funeral service was held Aug. 10 at Southeast Christian Church in Louisville.

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

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'To change it would make it worse'

By Barry Joslin

Louisville (BP)—My mother would have been 59 back on the first of March, and would have made 59 look like 45. She was a godly, sweet woman, yet she never saw 57 due to her death from colon cancer.

We watched as a family as God gathered her home to Himself. There were countless tears shed as the cancer progressed slowly for six years. There were numerous questions—questions that never got answered—questions that, in many ways, should not and cannot be answered until the coming day of the Lord Christ. Such answers would inevitably extinguish faith, and so we continue to live by faith (Habakkuk 2:4).

In the past two-plus years since her death, there has been much soul-searching that has included occasions of near breakeage of personal faith. I am a professor of theology, but theology professors are not impenetrable fortresses of unshakable faith, and no amount of academic training can prepare someone for the pain that is felt when a treasured family member wilts under the weight of such a disease. What textbook can prepare a son to watch his mother essentially starve to death, withering to a mere 82 pounds?

Platitudes offer little comfort

Those who have wrestled through the suffering of a loved one know full well that platitudes are of little comfort in the face of death. The Lord summons His people to study His character and nature as revealed to us in His living word in such circumstances. What is longed for is not the word of man, but the words of the Lord God. Like Job, we long for Him to speak (Job 38-42).

Yet at the same time it can be difficult for me to flee to Him, given that this was, after all, His plan for her days before there was one of them (Psalm 139). I may delight in

His sovereignty, but do I believe in His goodness? Is He truly good? How can goodness delight in suffering? God is good, and all things work together for good to those who love and are called by Him (Romans 8:28). But when what we know

doesn't square with what we see and experience, there is a battle in the dark night of the soul. It brings to mind the honest cry of Mark 9:24, "I believe, help my unbelief."

Don't alter "Plan A"

In a seminary chapel service a few months ago, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary President Albert Mohler made a statement that was tremendously helpful to me as I have been thinking and praying through the issues of God's goodness vis-à-vis His wisdom. He asserted, "To change it would make it worse." To change it would make it worse. In other words, to elicit a change or to remove the painful experience, were we able to, would injure God's purposes in and for suffering. This is "Plan A," and to alter it in any way would be to make it less "good" and therefore, in the end, less glorious. This is such a sensible statement, and an almost blinding flash of the obvious for those who take delight in the sovereignty of the Lord God.

Such an acknowledgment of God's sovereignty, in my mind, is essential for an understanding of His goodness. But it is much easier, I would suggest, to acknowledge the Lord's sovereignty than His goodness and wisdom when faced with suffering. Saying "God is in control" is indeed a great comfort and truth worthy of thoughtful reflection. Yet

What are you thinking?

The Western Recorder considers letters on any subject for publication, provided they don't make a personal attack. The maximum length for a letter is 300 words. Submit by mail to Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253; fax, (502) 489-3565; or e-mail, wesrec@earthlink.net.

Connecting all people to Jesus Christ

Connecting all people to Jesus Christ is the mission of the Kentucky Baptist Convention and Kentucky Baptists Connect was initiated three years ago to help us put feet to this mission.

We've seen many successes and many Kentucky Baptists Connect goals have either already been met or are well on their way to being met. But as we prepare to enter the final two years of the current five-year plan, we've seen only limited success with the primary goal of increasing baptisms. In fact, if KBC churches are going to reach the big goal of 25,000 baptisms a year by 2008-2009 it will require that each church increase baptisms by 20 percent each of the next two years.

This isn't to say the goal is far-fetched though. In fact, KBC churches did exceed 25,000 baptisms in 1951 and 1952 and did it with only about half the number of churches we now have. For me, the question is not "Can it happen again?" but

"How can it happen?"

Here's a simple plan that could be used mightily by God to reach people. It would involve the following:

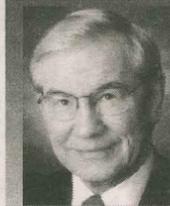
1. Connect people to God through prayer.

Spiritual plans require the presence and power of God (John 15:5). What would happen if Kentucky Baptists would regularly seek God in a concert of prayer? We can pray in groups, Sunday school classes and families. We can prayerwalk

schools, neighborhoods, businesses and churches. (Kentucky Baptists are already gathering for prayer on Sept. 11 to "Pray With One Voice" at locations in associations.)

2. Connect to communities through servant evangelism. Every church can strengthen its image by conducting a successful, ongoing servant evangelism emphasis in the community. Every church can conduct an effective outreach vacation Bible school. Find a need in your community and meet that need with increasing excellence.

PARTNERS IN THE MISSION



Bill Mackey

it is much more difficult to say, "It is good and wise for my mother to die of cancer." What I mean by this is that for one to assert the Lord's goodness and wisdom in the midst of such a circumstance is to say, "God is in control, and since His actions are good and wise, her death is good and wise in His sight."

In the end, my own mother's cancer will be seen to have been a good and wise thing. As God's child, I must believe that. The Scriptures teach me this. Yet grief and suffering can sometimes make it seem that God is not good, though He is fully good. I cannot merely acknowledge His sovereignty at the cost of His goodness or wisdom; I must also acknowledge His goodness and wisdom in this circumstance, since He is all of these things.

Yet, such is extremely difficult. While I do believe in God's wisdom, there is gnawing disbelief, particularly on special days such as her birthday. "How can this work for good?" I ask. I do not yet know. Still, in faith I do assert that to change it would indeed make it worse. We exist somewhere between the making and the embracing of that assertion.

Theologian John Frame pointedly crystallizes a central point that I personally must reckon with. He writes, "(God) declares His goodness, and He demonstrates it richly. (But) we don't merely know the bare fact that God is good; we know Him." Thus, I must seek Him, and at the same time am being upheld and guarded by the very One whose goodness and wisdom I may doubt, yet at the same time, believe.

Barry Joslin is assistant professor of Christian theology at Boyce College of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville

Upward Basketball has provided a great ministry. Seminars on wellness, rearing children and financial freedom are other good starting places.

3. Connect believers with skills to witness. There are so many excellent tools, such as "Witnessing Without Fear," "Walk Across the Room," "FAITH," "Becoming a Contagious Christian," "Steps to Peace with God," etc.

4. Connect people with the gospel through outreach events/church revivals. These can include block parties, vacation Bible schools, revivals and youth outreach events.

5. Connect people to the church through baptism and discipleship. This has been the greatest challenge. Follow up will require special enlistment of workers and training.

It seems to me that every church, with members who are serious about the Great Commission, can connect in prayer, servant evangelism, witnessing, harvesting and discipleship. I am grateful for those who experience this kind of connection and I pray that it will be true for all of us.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

STEWARDSHIP

Does your pastor receive adequate financial support?

By Don Spencer

It's that time of year again. Many churches are dealing with new budgets which include addressing compensation issues for the pastor and other employed staff. Consider

the following questions to help in this evaluation process:

■ Does your church pay your minister an amount comparable to other professionals with similar educational background and responsibility?

■ Is an adequate amount of housing allowance properly designated?

■ If a church-owned house (parsonage) is provided, has your church made some provision to offset the minister's inability to build equity in a home?

■ Have all elements of financial support for your minister kept pace with inflation?

■ Are ministry-related expenses paid on an accountable reimbursement basis?

■ Are amounts for expenses separated from compensation and protection benefits in the budget?

■ Are amounts provided for expenses adequate to cover the necessary expenses?

■ Is your minister treated as an employee for income tax purposes and self-employed for Social Security?

■ If your minister should die unexpectedly, is the amount of life insurance coverage adequate to meet the needs of the minister's family?

■ Does your minister's family have adequate medical insurance coverage?

■ If your minister should become disabled, has the church provided disability insurance that would replace a portion of the minister's current income?

■ Does your church contribute an adequate amount toward the minister's retirement?

■ Does your church pay the same percentage toward Social Security for the minister as it would for other employees by providing a Social Security equivalent?

■ Is your church truly committed to being biblical and fair with financial support so your minister and staff can serve without undue worry about finances?

For more information about financial support for ministers, visit www.kybaptist.org/financialbenefits.

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

How can parents help their kids avoid pain of divorce?

Q: What can I do to help "divorce proof" my children's future marriage relationships?

Recent academic studies show there are steps parents can take to make a difference in the next generation having successful marriages and avoiding divorce. Surround yourself with great books, marriage and parenting educators, mentor couples, and marriage and family therapists who can help you achieve the following goals:

Have good parent-child boundaries. Do not use your children as part of a "triangle" to relieve your own stress in your marriage. Get help together as a couple instead of "dumping" on your children.

Be involved in your child's life, although not to the detriment of your marriage. When you are an ever-present force for good in the river of your child's life, you will have credibility during the tough times to be part of their "key adviser" team who they will call on for help and advice.

Modulate your own emotional reactions to your child. Typically, one parent may tend to over-react to a child's behavior. Lean in to the reasonable response of the less reactive parent.

Focus on discipline, not punishment. Reasonable, logical, natural consequences for children's behavior are better than retributive, angry reactions. Be a team. Have a plan.

Practice healthy, reasoned conflict resolution skills. Model for your children how couples can practice give-and-take synergy to achieve win/win solutions.

Avoid divorce. If you follow the above suggestions, you will be more likely to be successful here as well. Even if you are a single parent whose marriage has ended in divorce, you still can model the behaviors above and achieve success in the most important business in the world—parenting. Even someone who has not achieved success as a spouse can achieve success as a parent, and can teach skills necessary to help them avoid a divorce of their own.—James Stillwell

Q: I am concerned about what we are allowing sports to teach our children about priorities. How should I respond?

Sports have begun to dominate the lives of our children and our families in ways that are not only dangerous; they may border on being idolatrous. On an almost weekly basis, I see parents and children making decisions and planning schedules based on their commitment to sports practices, games, etc. I am saddened at what many of these children are missing and I am concerned about what they are learning.

Don't get me wrong. I am a huge sports enthusiast. I understand what it means to be part of a team, and have long argued that participation in sports helps children learn the importance of commitment. However, a commitment to sports must be balanced among other commitments. The growing demands of sports organizations make such balance difficult—especially for Christian families.

During this past summer, children in my church missed vacation Bible school and summer camp due to sports. This fall, children in my church will miss our annual fall retreat, an event of tremendous spiritual impact, because of a Saturday football or soccer game.

On a fairly regular basis, the children in my church miss Sunday school or leave before worship due to sports. These children would never forget their glove or show up late for a game; but they drag into Sunday school without their Bible. Kids will be kids, but where are their parents?

God doesn't want the leftovers of our lives. He doesn't want us to attend worship only if we don't have a ball game to go to. He doesn't want to always take a back seat to other activities and interests.

I continue to worry, and wonder what we—and sports—are teaching our children.—David Garrard

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What does God want your church to do?

It sounds like a fairly simple, straightforward question, doesn't it? But on the other hand, churches have struggled for centuries to discover the "right" answer.

And don't even begin to assume that this editorial will provide the secret formula for congregations to discover God's will. Rather, it's a matter of affirming the importance of wrestling with that question on a regular basis and sincerely seeking God's wisdom.

Of course, there are a few "givens" when it comes to seeking God's will for your church. Among the most obvious are Christ's words of challenge and commission in Matthew 28: 19-20, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

For most Baptist churches, those words frequently are paired with Jesus' declaration in Acts 1:8, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

So there it is: Make disciples and be witnesses—everywhere. Perhaps the more challenging question is not "what?" but "how?" How do 21st century congregations most effectively fulfill Christ's Great Commission and Great Commandment to make disciples and be witnesses?

For some churches, it involves personal participation in mission projects and ministry efforts both at home and around the world. For others, the ministry field is more local, with state, national and global missions support channeled through the Cooperative Program and other ministry outlets. For still others, evangelism and discipleship apparently involve little more than showing up for church on Sunday and hoping the world will stumble across your well-kept secret at some point.

What's a better strategy? A few practical suggestions surface in a little book I picked up recently titled, "Jim & Casper Go to Church." Jim Henderson, a former pastor who now leads "Off the Map" ministries, invited

Matt Casper, a professed atheist, to join him in visiting and evaluating several congregations across the nation—from well-known megachurches to small house churches.

While some readers might be put off by the book's sometimes cynical, edgy perspective, among its strengths is sharing a fresh perspective about typical church rituals that many of us who have been in church all our lives tend to ignore or justify.

Warning that "few religious leaders or churches have any idea what it's like for an outsider to try to break into the holy huddle," George Barna notes in the book's forward, "Most church people have been so immersed in the church world that they

have completely lost touch with what it is like to come through the church door and try to fit into a place that has very distinct habits, language, goals, events, titles, architecture, traditions, expectations and measurements." That's a crucial challenge for many churches to ponder and address.

Henderson expresses concern that "some professed Christians are not actually following Jesus but are instead following religion."

"A lot of what happens at church is really just cultural stuff," he added, noting that "churches adapt to the culture they identify with and take on the communication style they feel most comfortable with."

Where can churches today turn for answers? Obviously to God's Word, fervent prayer and wise counsel from fellow pilgrims.

Among resources in Kentucky Baptist life are associational leaders, the KBC's regional church development strategists and other convention staff members available to provide assistance. LifeWay Christian Resources' focus on pastoral ministry and church consulting headed by former Kentucky Baptist leader Dan Garland also is a readily available resource.

The bottom line is rediscovering Christ's clear commands to "go ... make disciples" and to "be My witnesses ... to the ends of the earth." The next step is implementing practical, hands-on ways to make that a reality. When? Now.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

Christian discipleship in our own image?

By Beth Newman

Richmond, Va. (ABP)—Some time back I happened across a human-interest story in the religion section of an out-of-town newspaper. It was the headline, "For some youths, one church isn't enough," that caught

my eye. The story focused on a teenager, Emily, who dutifully attended the "traditional" church of her family and also attended another, much more lively, church with her peers. It seems a "win-win" situation.

I'm not so sure. According to Emily's mother, this bifurcated devotion is not a surrender to consumerism but a revelation of "the strength of her faith and the profoundly individual spiritual course each believer follows." This is only to be expected "because Jesus Christ is your own personal Lord and Savior."

Perhaps we should be glad that Emily is attending any church when she might be staying in bed. But I'm concerned about what sort of formation is taking place when devout and sincere Christians of two generations can speak of personal choices and a personal Savior.

Having a personal Savior, as one wit has put it, sounds suspiciously like having a personal tailor—someone to cater to our likes and needs. Jesus as Lord surely means, at least,

this much: He gets to make the decisions.

The poverty of the language of the "profoundly individual" is apparent once we contrast it with the biblical images of the church as a building with Christ as the cornerstone, as a body with Christ as its head, or, significantly, of the church as the bride of Christ. How often have we thought of ourselves bound as permanently to a specific congregation as we are bound to a spouse?

Such claims raise immediate concerns: The church is sinful and fallible. Dare we equate the church with communion with God? Who is the church to claim for itself such status? I do not wish to deny that the church is always a church of sinners.

And yet, it is through the church that we learn to use the language of "sinner" faithfully. To call ourselves sinners, as Martin Luther emphasized, is to know the freedom that comes from living dependent upon God's forgiveness and grace. Christian freedom is not the freedom to choose from a variety of options, but the freedom that comes from bondage to Christ and to the body of Christ.

In our context, of course, "bondage" is a terrifying term. It brings up images of suffocation, enslavement

or addiction. If we are bound to Christ and the church, then our individuality and freedom to think for ourselves might easily get snuffed out. And yet the gospel calls such bondage freedom. What are we to make of this?

To be bound to others in Christ means we are given the grace to be part of something much larger than our fleeting likes and dislikes. At the same time, this bondage frees us to speak truthfully to one another, human vessels that we are. We are freed to speak and receive the truth in love because we know that the final outcome is not in our hand. Faithful dissent is carried out not apart from but within tradition in order to keep the story going, to keep the gospel alive.

God gives us all the time we need to practice loving one another, being faithful, speaking truthfully, extending and receiving forgiveness and so forth. The Christian life is not simply an inward feeling or a matter of personal preferences.

Perhaps we should be happy that our teenager, Emily, is at least attending church. But in a culture that bombards us with the idea that we are our own creators, the church offers an alternative. The church is God's new creation "by water and the word." May our lives bear this out.

Beth Newman is a professor of theology and ethics at Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond, Va.

Lifesong Church 'hitting the target' in reaching Ashland

LIFESONG CHURCH AT A GLANCE

Location:
Ashland

Pastor:
Keith Menshouse

Launch Date:
Oct. 1, 2006

Sponsoring Church:
Fairview Baptist Church, Ashland

Continued from page 1

goal to block any shot that comes his way. Joining him on the field is his son, Clark, a straight-A student who will soon begin his second year at Ashland Community and Technical College.

Clark is also a "miracle," according to his dad and one of the primary reasons Keith Menshouse now leads Lifesong Church.

Parents' worst nightmare

On the night of May 7, 2005, Menshouse, who was pastor of Oakland Avenue Baptist Church in Catlettsburg at the time, and his wife, Debbie, were at home when the phone rang. A police officer, and friend of the family, was on the other end of the line telling them, "You really need to get out here," Menshouse recalled.

"Of course, I knew what that meant: 'If you want to see him before he dies, get out here,'" Menshouse said.

Clark was racing friends in another car on a dangerous stretch of road in Boyd County. He lost control of the car and slammed into a utility pole on the driver's side, bringing the pole down on top of the car. Two other teenagers in the car escaped with only minor injuries. Clark was not as fortunate. He was unconscious and bleeding heavily from a massive head wound.

After more than an hour, rescuers finally freed Clark from the car and flew him to Cabell Huntington Hospital in Huntington, W. Va.

In addition to Clark suffering a broken hand, leg and pelvis, doctors told the Menshouses that their son had sustained the "worst head bleeding they had ever seen," Menshouse recounted. Clark was not expected to live through the night.

But thanks to prayer, Menshouse said, Clark lived.

"I've heard people say, 'I never knew what praying was really about until that happened,'" Menshouse stated. "People just prayed for him all over the place."

Doctors suggested drilling a "bolt" in Clark's head to drain the blood from his brain and relieve the pressure. They were not optimistic that it would work for more than a day. Seven days later, the bolt was removed and 90 percent of the pooled blood was gone and the pressure was normal.

Clark began opening his eyes and responding to people with a "thumbs up." The Menshouse family was then faced with a difficult decision.

"After three weeks, the doctors wanted to know which nursing home we wanted to put him in," Menshouse recalled.

Against doctors' wishes, Menshouse and his wife took Clark home, made his bedroom into a hospital room, and rehabbed him there.

"Neither one of us could bear leaving him alone in a facility, even for a night," Menshouse said. "We've done everything totally outside the lines, but God blessed it and it

worked."

Meanwhile, Menshouse's duties as a father and a pastor began to conflict, forcing him to make another difficult decision. Menshouse announced his resignation from Oakland Avenue in September of 2005. The congregation allowed him to take a sabbatical until the end of the year. In January 2006, after six years as pastor, Menshouse made his resignation official.

"I've preached all my life that family is the most important thing after your personal relationship with God," Menshouse said. "It's supposed to be before your job which, as a pastor, is the church."

"We did put Clark first and we did whatever we needed to do to take care of him and that's why I left full-time pastoring. A lot of people can't understand that, but that's what we felt was the right thing to do."

Through extensive rehabilitation, Clark re-learned how to talk, walk and eat. He still has issues with balance, speech and memory, but over time, Clark, who is now 19, has become more like the normal teenager he was before the accident.

"In the beginning, I was very fragile and very weak," Clark said. "But over time, God has seriously healed me and I've become more like normal."

With help from teachers and friends at Paul Blazer High School, Clark was able to continue his school work from home. A year after the horrific accident that nearly took his life, Clark walked across the stage and accepted his diploma with his classmates.

"I can't necessarily tell you details about my graduation," Clark said of his big day. "I know it was awesome."

Amid the day-to-day struggle of Clark's rehabilitation, Keith Menshouse began talking with Mike Rice, pastor of Fairview Baptist Church in Ashland, in March of 2006, about the possibility of planting a high impact church in the city.

"I asked him to start praying about High Impact," Rice recalled.

"Personal burden"

During his time at Oakland Avenue, Menshouse had done research that showed "there was a gap of 20- to 30-year-olds" in the church. Menshouse began a contemporary worship service that drew as many people as the traditional service.

Even before the accident, Menshouse felt that God was calling him to reach people in that age group and younger.

"I knew that Clark was, even before the wreck, to the point where even he had lost interest in church," Menshouse noted. "Nobody spoke his language, nobody wanted to play his music."

"It was a personal burden on my and my wife's heart that we could provide something that he would want to go to and look forward to."

Placing that burden front and center, Menshouse began commu-



LIVING MIRACLE Lifesong Church Pastor Keith Menshouse (right) and his son, Clark, await the start of a game at the church's Cross Extreme sports camp. Clark was nearly killed in a car accident on May 7, 2005. He has made a miraculous recovery and is about to begin his second year of college. "When you see God do that for your kid, what can't God do?" his father asked. (Photo by Drew Nichter)

nicating with Larry Baker, the KBC's director of new work and associational ministries, about planting a high impact church in Ashland. And as Menshouse put it, "everything just went on the fast track."

With a handful of families and the sponsorship of Fairview Baptist Church, a launch date was originally set for the spring of this year. But the KBC "saw the momentum going," Menshouse noted, and Lifesong Church celebrated its first worship service Oct. 1, 2006.

"We put out very little publicity and we had 247 here in the first service," Menshouse added. "It really shocked us."

Lifesong Church has met in an old VFW hall in the heart of downtown Ashland since the beginning. Menshouse said he was merely looking for an office from which to do pre-launch preparations when he stumbled across the building, which the church shares with a children's advocacy center on the first floor. But the second floor was tailor-made for a church plant with limited funds looking for a home.

"I got off the elevator, looked to my left, saw the double doors and here's a stage, ... there's a café," Menshouse recounted. "I was like, 'Somebody pinch me.'"

Finding the building was an important step in the church's launch, but even more so was the name.

"We kicked around a bunch of names, but we wanted something that wasn't geographical," Menshouse said. "We don't want to be symbolized by where we are; we want to be symbolized by who we are."

Menshouse mentioned that through Clark's accident and recovery, the music of the contemporary Christian band Casting Crowns had become very important, especially the hit single, "Lifesong."

"It just dawned on us, 'That's really what we want to teach people to do, develop a life song of praise to God,'" Menshouse proclaimed.

The first 10 months of Lifesong have been busy for Menshouse and his staff.

"I just seems like God brings people here," he said. "We do no advertising. We have one sign on the back out there, but God's just been bringing people."

And Menshouse said he feels Lifesong is accomplishing its mission: "to reach the unchurched and the

dechurched in the Ashland area."

"We're hitting the target," Menshouse declared. "You walk up there on Sunday morning, over half that crowd has never been in anybody's church in the last five years. It's people who feel excluded or uncomfortable in a traditional church setting."

Menshouse credits much of the church's growth to the building that houses Lifesong.

"It has such a non-church feeling to it. People feel like they can come and take it in and not feel judged for what they wear," he said.

"If you've been in a negative church situation before," Menshouse continued, "you just assume it's going to happen again if it looks and feels the same."

Ministry credibility

Rice, Fairview Baptist's senior pastor, gives Lifesong high marks for the work the new congregation is doing in Ashland.

"The results, I think, give them a lot of credibility," Rice said. "They are reaching unchurched people."

As the sponsoring church, Fairview provides Lifesong with \$1,000 a month in financial support, as well as use of facilities, vehicles and people.

"Every time they have baptism, which is quite often, we usually come together for a joint service" on Sunday nights, Rice said.

Since Lifesong opened its doors last October, 35 new believers have been baptized.

"I don't think I've ever, in one year in any of the Baptist churches I've ever pastored, baptized even 20 people," Menshouse noted.

Lifesong has remained on the fast track. With attendance averaging more than 200 each week, the church added a second worship service on Sunday mornings.

"Sunday morning is all about evangelism," Menshouse pointed out. "We're not doing anything except telling people how to come to Christ."

The same can be said for Tuesday afternoon as well. As the kids in Central Park play their favorite sports at Cross Extreme, Pat Boggs, a Lifesong Church member and the man who helped start the camp, admitted there is an ulterior motive.

"If we can use a ball to teach them about Jesus," Boggs declared, "we'll do whatever we have to do."

African village discovers hope amid HIV/AIDS onslaught

By Craig Bland
Southern Baptist Texan

Mmamethlake, South Africa (BP)—People in the South African village of Mmamethlake and surrounding areas are beginning to see hope amid the ravages of HIV/AIDS thanks to the Mmamethlake Family Care Centre.

"I didn't know that the center was going to be so important," said Bethuel Motau, director of the outreach that not only tends to HIV/AIDS victims but also shares the gospel. "We have been able to make a big impact on the people."

The center began in 2003 as the vision of Motau and Andy Wilkinson, a former member of First Baptist Church of Grapevine, Texas. Offering a variety of services, the center reaches people from miles around the Mmamethlake village.

The center offers caregivers who are trained to tend to people with HIV/AIDS; counselors who work with families of the infected; HIV education programs, which include an emphasis on the importance of building strong family ties; and a jobs program.

The paths of Wilkinson and Motau crossed in 2002 and they quickly formed a close relationship when Wilkinson, a former petroleum engineer, traveled to South Africa on a mission to help drill water wells.

"Andy was very passionate about the HIV situation there and what

as Christians can do," said Jack Harris, a senior associate in the evangelism office of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention and former pastor of First Baptist, Grapevine.

After the trip, Wilkinson decided to put his Texas oil business and home up for sale and he and his wife, Gay, applied to the International Mission Board, spending two years in Mmamethlake.

To support the center, Wilkinson began the nonprofit Foundation for HIV/AIDS Relief in South Africa. He now resides in Colorado but remains heavily involved in the ministry, usually taking three trips a year to Mmamethlake.

"We want the Lord to raise up men like Andy," Motau said, "who see things through the eyes of the Lord. He has encouraged me and built me spiritually."

Motau begins a typical day at 4 a.m., mustering just enough strength and motivation for his 60-year-old feet to touch the ground.

"Sometimes in the morning I hurt," said Motau, who has been a pastor in central South Africa since 1982. "But it is the joy of the Lord that gets me out of bed."

The phone call began as early as 5:30 a.m., often requesting Motau's presence at the bedside of an HIV/AIDS carrier.

"When somebody is sick, they need someone there next to them ... a shoulder," Motau said. "I try to be

available as much as I can."

Motau arrives at the Mmamethlake Family Care Centre around 8 a.m. and he usually stays there until 5 in the afternoon. Most of the time, he extends his workday by an hour or more to visit an ill person or a grieving family.

"The more I see people coming to the Lord, the more it's my passion," Motau said. "There is a joy sharing about Christ, even to someone who is about to die."

Unfortunately for the ministry and the country's population, the rate of infection is still above the death rate for the epidemic.

"In South Africa, 1,800 people are dying a day," Wilkinson noted, "and still 2,000 a day are becoming positive with HIV. That means the epidemic hasn't even peaked."

Of the 5 million people diagnosed with HIV/AIDS, only 50,000 are receiving substantive treatment, he said.

"There is no hope on the horizon that the masses of people will be saved. That's our strong push for evangelism," Wilkinson said.

Christians are beginning to be noticed and associated with healthy living, which Motau said has caused many people in the area to want the hope he and the other workers at the care center demonstrate.

There has also been a change in the relationship between Christians and South Africa's government and



culture, Motau said.

"One school system is begging for a pastor to come into the school and present True Love Waits to the students," Wilkinson said, referring to the global abstinence program initiated by Southern Baptists in the 1990s.

"The principal is not a Christian, but he wants them to start a Christian youth movement in the school," Wilkinson said.

The South African government has tried to implement contraceptive programs to weaken the rate of infection, but they have only incurred more infections, Wilkinson said. People are now finding that in the areas where family morals and programs are presented, the rate of infection has declined, he pointed out.

GROWING OPTIMISM

Worshippers exit a Baptist church near Mmamethlake, South Africa, where people are beginning to see hope amid the spread of HIV/AIDS thanks to the ministry of the Mmamethlake Family Care Centre. (BP photo)

Make plans to attend the KBC Annual Meeting now!

Elizabethtown Accommodations (Elizabethtown is on Eastern Time) listed are located near exit #94 off I-65. Rates do not include the current Elizabethtown 10.24% hotel tax. Messengers are responsible for making their own reservations. Kentucky Baptist Convention must be mentioned and reservation deadlines met to receive blocked room rates. Most blocked rooms are non-smoking.

Best Western Atrium Gardens

1043 Executive Drive
270.769.3030
\$55.59 (standard, luxury rooms)
Complimentary breakfast
Restaurant on-site
Free high-speed internet in-room access
Fitness room
Located next to Cracker Barrel
Reservation deadline: October 28

Fairfield Inn & Suites

1031 Executive Drive
270.769.1440
\$89 (doubles, kings)
Complimentary breakfast
Free high-speed internet in-room access
Fitness room
Reservation deadline: October 31

Hampton Inn

1035 Executive Drive
270.765.6663
\$89 (doubles)
Complimentary breakfast
Free high-speed internet in-room access
Fitness room, pool
Reservation deadline: October 12

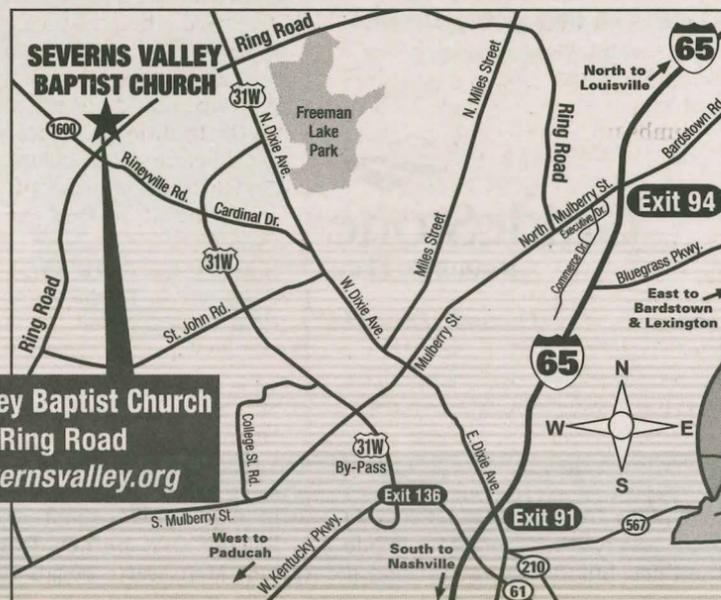
LaQuinta Inn

210.765.4747
\$79 (1-4 guests)
Complimentary breakfast
Free high-speed internet access
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Fitness center, indoor pool
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These hotels are also available but KBC blocked rooms are not this printing:

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1100 Ring Road
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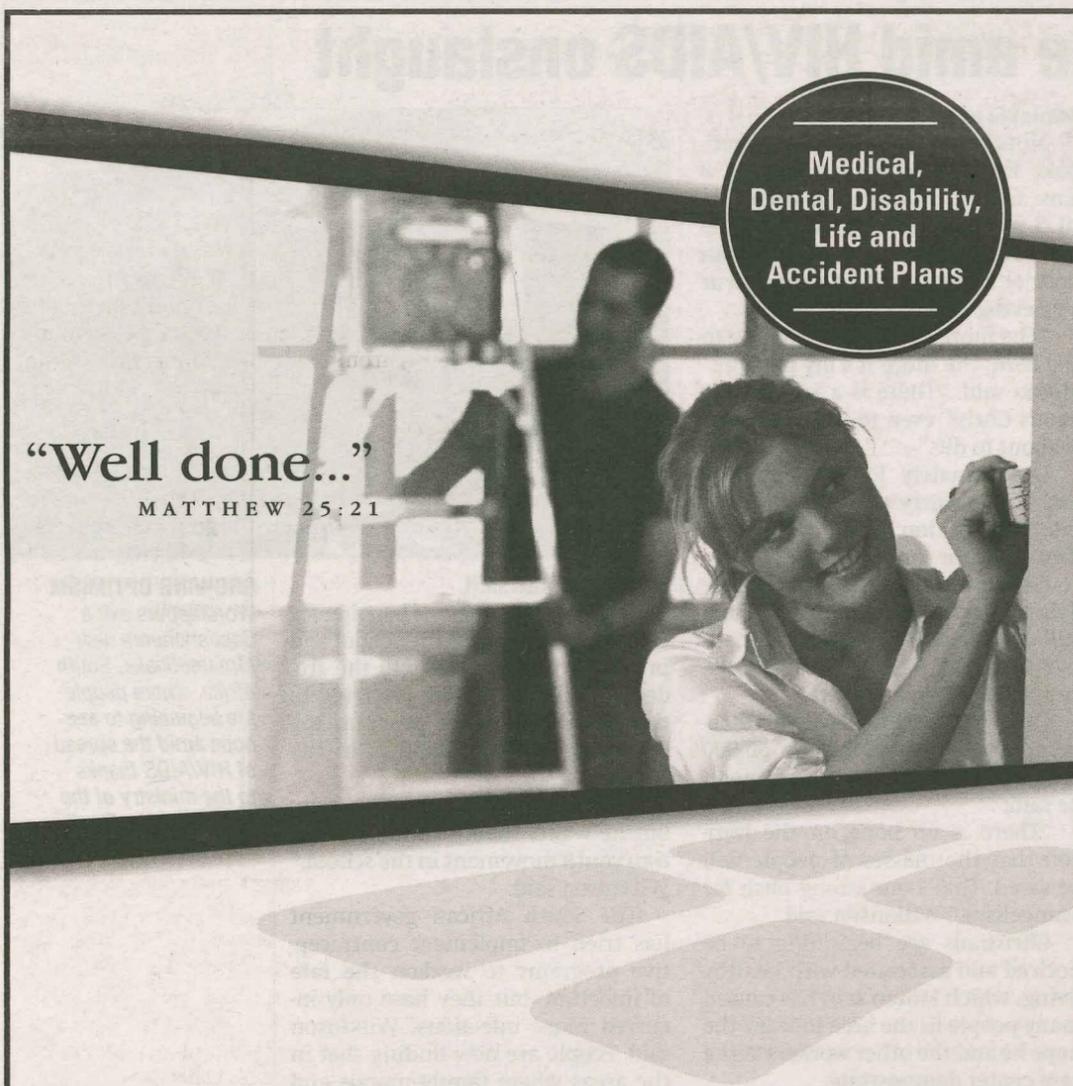
For more information,

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MATTHEW 25:21

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White House promises veto of hate crimes legislation

Washington (BP)—President Bush will veto legislation to expand hate crimes protections to homosexuals and transgendered individuals, even if he has to reject a defense authorization bill, the White House announced.

“The qualifications (in the bill) are so broad that virtually any crime involving a homosexual individual has potential to have hate crimes elements,” said White House spokesman Tony Fratto, the Washington Times reported. “The proposals they’re talking about are not sufficiently narrow.”

The veto promise followed a May policy statement from the White House that said senior advisors in the administration would recommend Bush veto such a bill if it reaches his desk.

Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., has filed a hate crimes measure he is sponsoring as a possible amendment to the Department of Defense authorization bill. The Senate will not consider the hate crimes legislation or the defense measure until it returns Labor Day week from a month-long recess.

It appears the Senate would comfortably pass the measure. Support-

ers of the hate crimes language reportedly have hoped its attachment to the defense bill will make it more difficult for Bush to veto the overall legislation.

The House of Representatives approved a hate crimes bill in early May on a 237-180 vote. The House and Senate both have passed versions in past sessions, but they have yet to agree on a measure to send to the White House.

Current hate crimes law protects traits such as race, religion and national origin, but the bill's opponents said the new legislation would grant protection based on lifestyle. They also warn it would move federal law toward punishing thoughts and beliefs. In addition, some critics warn it could lead to suppression of speech that describes homosexual behavior as sinful and that it could be another stepping stone toward gay marriage legalization.

The Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission is one of numerous pro-family organizations that oppose such hate crimes measures.

Supporters of the bill contend it would only cover violent criminal conduct.

Promoters urge priority funding for research of adult stem cells

Washington (BP)—Promising results using adult stem cells in patients demonstrate that such research, and not destructive embryonic experiments, should receive priority in funding, promoters of the work said.

Patients, researchers and a bioethics specialist joined in a news conference in Washington to testify to the effectiveness of adult and other non-embryonic stem cell research. Their promotion of such experiments came the same day two members of the House of Representatives announced the introduction of legislation to give priority to adult stem cell research.

Embryonic stem cells are considered “pluripotent,” meaning they can develop into all of the different cell types in the body. Research using embryonic stem cells is opposed by most pro-life advocates, because extracting such cells results in the destruction of an embryo.

Adult stem cells, also referred to as non-embryonic stem cells, typically have been regarded as “multipotent,” meaning they can form many, though not all, of the body's cell types. In recent years, however, research has shown some adult cells have the same flexibility as embryonic cells. Extracting such cells does not harm the donor either.

“Even the scientific community unfortunately has tended to ignore the potential of adult stem cells, especially in relation to patients,” said David Prentice, senior fellow for life sciences at the Family Research Council.

“There are at least two dozen examples of adult stem cells showing this flexibility but without some of the problems associated with embryonic type stem cells,” Prentice said.

“The bottom line is: If we're considering patients first, it's the adult stem cells that are really the most promising” now, he said.

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Young people offer variety of reasons why they leave church

Continued from page 1

to attend," and 17 percent "chose to spend more time with friends outside the church."

"Relationships are often the glue that keep people in church or serves as the attraction to begin attending again following a period of absenteeism," said Brad Waggoner, vice president of research and ministry development at LifeWay. "Many people are deeply influenced by friends and loved ones."

Waggoner advised, "Church leaders should passionately and consistently challenge church members to maximize their influence with youth and young adults. Frequent and intentional contact can either prevent or counteract the tendency of some to drop out of church."

Fifty-eight percent of church dropouts selected at least one church- or pastor-related reason for leaving church. Most common was, "church members seemed judgmental or hypocritical" (26 percent). Another 20 percent "didn't feel connected to the people in my church."

"Religious, ethical or political beliefs" contributed to the departure of 52 percent of church dropouts. Two answers for leaving reflect this reason: "I disagreed with the church's stance on political or social issues" (18 percent) and "I was only going to church to please others" (17 percent).

Reasons they stay

Although they only represent 30 percent of those who attended a Protestant church for at least a year in high school, young adults who stay in church through ages 18-22 see the relevance, benefits and purpose of the church now and for their future. Among the most common reasons were:

- "Church was a vital part of my relationship with God" (65 percent).
- "I wanted the church to help guide my decisions in everyday life"

(58 percent).

- "I felt that church was helping me become a better person" (50 percent).

- "(I was) committed to the purpose and work of the church" (42 percent).

"When, by God's grace, young people see the church as essential in their lives and choose to continue attending, their loyalty remains strong," McConnell said. Among young adults who stayed in church during ages 18-22, only 6 percent do not currently attend church.

Many of those who drop out do return eventually. Among former church dropouts who are now ages 23-30, 35 percent currently attend church twice a month or more. Another 30 percent attend church more sporadically. Thus, about two-thirds of those who leave do return at some level.

This return to church after being gone for at least a year is primarily the result of encouragement from others.

In contrast to the life changes that drove many away from church, life events also bring young adults back to church.

Twenty-four percent return to church because "I had children and felt it was time for them to start attending." This reason is significantly more common for women than men (31 percent vs. 13 percent). Twenty percent "got married and wanted to attend with my spouse."

"There is no easy way to say it, but it must be said," Stetzer commented. "Parents and churches are not passing on a robust Christian faith and an accompanying commitment to the church. We can take some solace in the fact that many do eventually return."

"But, Christian parents and churches need to ask the hard question, 'What is it about our faith commitment that does not find root in the lives of our children?'"

Parents, churches can help teens stay in church

By Mark Kelly
Baptist Press

Nashville (BP)—Parents and churches together can help their teenagers decide to stay in church as young adults, new research from LifeWay Christian Resources indicates.

Despite appearances, teens do want guidance when it comes to the decisions they face in everyday life, and parents and churches who meet those needs make it more likely those teens will stay in church as young adults, according to the survey.

While the study revealed that 70 percent of young adults ages 23 to 30 stopped attending church regularly for at least a year between 18 and 22, it also indicated several tangible ways parents and churches could make them more likely to stay in church.

Proven value

Two-thirds of the teens who stay in church as young adults describe the church as "a vital part of my relationship with God"—demonstrating the importance of each teen having a strong relationship with God, as well as the importance of church attendance, said Ed Stetzer, director of LifeWay Research.

"Teens are looking for more from a youth ministry than a holding tank with pizza," Stetzer said. "They look for a church that teaches them how to live life. As they enter young adulthood, church involvement that has made a difference in their lives gives them a powerful reason to keep attending."

By ages 18-22, attending church has become a matter of choice—and young adults can be very pragmatic in making that choice, added Scott McConnell, associate director of LifeWay Research.

"Gone are the days in which young adults attend because they are 'supposed to,'" McConnell said. "If church did not prove its value during their teen years, young adults won't want to attend—and won't attend."

In addition, teens who find their pastor's sermons relevant to everyday life also are more likely to keep attending as young adults, the research indicated. Sixty-three percent of those who stayed in church said their pastors' sermons were relevant. A similar margin said the

worship style of the church they attended as teens was appealing to them.

"Attending worship is the basic level of involvement for most who attend church at all," McConnell said. "If as teens they can't relate to the sermons at their church or don't enjoy the worship style, then as young adults they can easily fall away from their only connection to the church."

Investing time

Teens who had adults from church make a significant time investment in their lives also were more likely to keep attending church. Forty-six percent of those who stayed in church said five or more adults at church had invested time with them personally and spiritually.

Meaningful relationships with adults at church helps teenagers see church as a place they belong, McConnell said.

"Investment time in young people lives out the love of Jesus Christ in a tangible way," he said. "It proves that a young person belongs at church. It can help connect the dots to help a teen integrate their faith into their life."

Family matters as well. Teens who, at age 17, have parents who are authentic examples of Christian faith—proactive and consistent in living out their faith—are more likely to keep attending as young adults. Across the board, 20 percent more of those who stayed in church indicated they had parents or family members who discussed spiritual things, gave them spiritual guidance and prayed together.

"Despite the conflicts that often occur during these years, it is difficult to understate the impact of a solid family involved in the faith community on the future involvement of teens," Stetzer said.

"Simply attending church is a positive influence toward the teen continuing as a young adult," he said. "However, any sign that parents have second thoughts is a negative influence."

While parents and church members can have a real impact on keeping young adults in church, they don't control the decision, Stetzer added. "Whether teens are bombarded with positive or negative influences about church, they all make their own decisions about whether to continue or stop attending."

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10 Minutes With ... Max Lucado

Renowned Christian author discusses new book, health

By Adelle Banks
Religion News Service

San Antonio (RNS)—Author Max Lucado looked at what he calls the "Hope Diamond" of the Bible, John 3:16, in a new book titled "3:16: The Numbers of Hope," that will be released next month.

Lucado announced earlier this year that he will step down as senior pastor of Oak Hills Church, a nondenominational congregation in San Antonio, due to a diagnosis of atrial fibrillation, which gives him an irregular heartbeat.

Lucado, 52, talked about the challenges he's facing and the well-known Bible verse. Here's what Lucado had to say:

You announced in March that you were going to step down as senior minister of your church. How difficult was that decision?

It's been the hardest decision in my life. I love the church and I love being a pastor but I developed a heart condition and that really prompted the decision because the church is about 5,500 in size, in members, so it needs a full-time healthy senior minister.

How are you feeling now?

I give myself a B minus. I'm not quite an A but I was a D, so I think I'm doing better.

So what will your new role be at the church when the new person arrives?

We're going to call it minister of teaching and writing because I do so much writing, and the church sees it as really an extension. I would like to preach somewhere between 30 and 40 percent of the time, maybe as much as 50 percent.

Why did you choose to write about John 3:16?

I love to write about a passage that people are already familiar with. The advantage of that is when people hear the verse, I'm not on new territory. We're on common ground. I just love to take a passage like that and maybe go deeper and see if there's something in there we haven't thought of.

You call it the "Hope diamond" of the Bible, but you also acknowledge that there's nothing politically correct about its claim. It seems that you are saying that it is exclusive rather than inclusive.

There are a couple of phrases that give 3:16 its starch. One of them is the phrase "only begotten Son." It comes from the Greek word "monogenes," which means "only genetic" or "one genetic." Jesus claims to have genetic connection with God that no one else ever claimed to have, same DNA.

Then the phrase "in him." God so loved the world He gave His monogenetic son so that whoever believes in Him. Well, that's pretty exclusive there. It's not my job to apologize for the exclusivity of the passage but to highlight it.

You unpack each segment of this famous verse chapter by chapter. Which do you think is most important?

The word I love is "whoever"—"whoever believes in him shall not perish." Now there's an inclusive word. It throws open the doors. Whoever, whatever generation, however rich you are, poor you are. Whatever ethnic background, whatever gender, whatever age.

You express the notion that there is a conspiracy to minimize hell. Why do you think that is?

I believe there is a devil. I believe there is a spiritual force that works against God's people and God's will. So if I'm the devil then I'm going to try to convince people there's no hell and I'm going to do so by getting them to minimize—with their language—hell.

You also talk about heaven. Is there a way to crystallize what you think heaven will be like?

I think heaven is the resurrected Earth with resurrected people who have put their faith in Christ. And I say resurrected Earth because I really think heaven will be on this Earth and the Earth will be restored to its Garden of Eden state.



Max Lucado

Recent college grad donates kidney to ailing classmate

By Tim Ellsworth
Baptist Press

Jackson, Tenn. (BP)—Alvin Jeffery knew that Dustin Mayfield needed help, so he leaped at the chance to offer it.

After all, what's a kidney between friends?

"I have two of them," Jeffery said. "Some people say God gave you two kidneys for a reason. Maybe it's so you can give one away to someone who doesn't have it."

Jeffery, who is from Jonesboro, Ark., and graduated from Union University in Jackson, Tenn., in May, donated a kidney to Union junior Dustin Mayfield in a June transplant operation in Memphis. The operation was a success, and both men are well on the way to recovery.

"I just feel like God lined us up and took care of it all," Mayfield said. "I love Alvin to death. I can't think of anyone better to get a kidney from than him."

Mayfield, of Millington, Tenn., has a rare genetic disease called Alport syndrome that keeps his kidneys from developing properly. He has known for years that he would one day need a kidney transplant.

He did not experience any physical problems, however, until

his first year at Union.

Mayfield began talking to a transplant team at the hospital in August 2006. When his friends at Union discovered that Mayfield needed a transplant, some of them offered to donate. Jeffery was serious about it and Mayfield felt completely at ease with the possibility of Jeffery as a donor.

"I had always thought it would be cool to donate a kidney," Jeffery said. "It's something my mom has always instilled in me, to donate an organ if I get a chance to."

Tests confirmed that Jeffery and Mayfield were a close enough match, so they proceeded with plans for surgery and on June 5, doctors performed the transplant.

All indications are that Mayfield's body has accepted the kidney.

"I could tell people were praying for me," Mayfield said. "There's no way that it could have worked out better than it did. Everyone's been very supportive."

Mayfield and his family are thankful for Jeffery's selflessness.

"I keep calling him our hero," said Gail Mayfield, Dustin's mother. "For someone to step up and give a kidney—he knew it was going to be painful. He was all for it and never had a doubt."

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IN RECOGNITION of Deceased Kentucky Baptist Leaders

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

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

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- Full name of deceased
- Date of birth
- Date of death
- Active or retired status in last position held in city, state where located
- Name of church where member, association, state where located
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Crossings sets attendance records

Camp staff seeks to continue enhancing structure, schedule

Well, another year of Crossings has come and gone. This summer represented the eighth year for Crossings at the Creek and the second year for Crossings at Cedar more. Again, we are fortunate to say that our attendance at each camp set new records this summer.

We have been blessed in many ways this year with a safe camp and literally thousands of spiritual decisions made by students and adults. I want to personally thank each of you who have been in prayer for our camps' safety and for us to have a clear gospel presentation.

Beyond just numbers, we have learned a great deal this year that will require significant changes in our programming in the years to come. The most pronounced change will be that our camp structure and schedule will radically change as we seek to stay small while experiencing record attendance.

Throughout August, our staff will be reviewing evaluations from every student and youth leader so we can seek to be a better resource to our churches. Our

hearts' desire is that we actively be "students" of our churches concerning what they need to impact our youth culture.

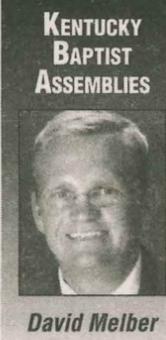
Every year, we as a ministry feel a greater weight of the stewardship that churches extend to us as we have their students and adults for a whole week. Additionally, as we are "teachers," God holds us to a stricter judgment according to James 3:1.

Please pray that as we look at all aspects of camp that we will be aware that God is our judge as we teach thousands of youth each year, and that we are always willing to make any necessary changes to be the very best we can in reaching youth.

These two areas are the most important goals in our evaluation process as we first realize that our primary accountability is to God and secondly that we have no "sacred traditions" of our ministry that take priority over the calling to reach students.

Thanks again for your prayers as God has certainly watched over us this year!

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



David Melber

For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



Church of the Covered Dish

Thom Tapp



Bible Crosswords

By Beverly Barnes

Across

- 1 "The ____ is unto you, and to your children" (Acts 2:39)
- 8 "____ loves me, this I know"
- 12 "____ and perfume rejoice the heart" (Proverbs 27:9)
- 14 Mississippi's neighbor, abbr.
- 15 "____ unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" (Matthew 23:25)
- 16 "When they had ... gone six ____, he sacrificed oxen" (2 Samuel 6:13)
- 18 Personal smell, in other words, for short
- 19 Extra-terrestrials, abbr.
- 20 Central state, abbr.
- 21 Craggy hill
- 22 "____ and outs"
- 24 "Forsake me not ____" (Psalm 119:8)
- 25 The book between Joel and Obadiah
- 26 Garment belted at the waist
- 28 "____ Shaddai"
- 29 Single
- 31 Bachelor of Education degrees, abbr.
- 32 "The Spirit and the ____ say, Come" (Revelation 22:17)
- 34 Beverly, for short
- 35 Road, abbr.
- 36 "____ your enemies" (Matthew 5:44)
- 37 Compass point
- 38 Charges
- 40 Birds build these
- 44 Need this to solve a mystery

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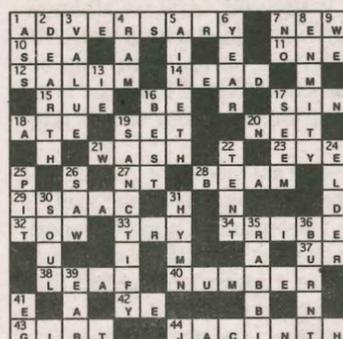
- 46 Compass point
- 48 Vowels: ____, ____, ____, o, u and sometimes y
- 50 Bends
- 52 Pluck guitar strings
- 54 Doctor of Divinity, abbr.
- 55 "Ye are not your ____" (1 Corinthians 6:19)
- 56 "One of the least of ____" (Matthew 25:40)

- 17 "Make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, ____ you" (1 Peter 5:10)
- 18 "In whom we have ____ and access with confidence" (Ephesians 3:12)
- 21 Transmit/receive, abbr.
- 23 Not, prefix
- 24 Biblical land: ____ of the Chaldees
- 25 Having, suffix
- 27 Jesus died on the ____
- 28 Garden of ____
- 29 Pregnancy doctor, abbr.
- 30 The first woman
- 31 The Israelites needed straw to make this (Exodus 5:7)
- 33 4, Romans num.
- 38 Money supply
- 39 Mouse's noise
- 41 "As far as the ____ is from the west" (Psalm 103:12)
- 42 A son of Adam (Luke 3:38)
- 43 The wheel of a car
- 45 The top of a jar
- 47 Earn
- 49 American English, abbr.
- 51 Therefore
- 53 "Unto every one of ____ is given grace" (Ephesians 4:7)

Down

- 1 "Not in word, but in ____" (1 Corinthians 4:20)
- 2 Violent uprising
- 3 A faithful and beloved brother (Col. 4:9)
- 4 ____ Sinai, abbr.
- 5 "With God nothing shall be ____" (Luke 1:37)
- 6 "Even the wind and the ____ obey him" (Mark 4:41)
- 7 Enclosure, abbr.
- 9 Spanish article
- 10 Southern continent, abbr.
- 11 "I love to tell the ____ of Jesus and His love"
- 13 "Aquila ... with his wife Priscilla ... were ____-makers" (Acts 18:2-3)

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NATIONAL NOTES

Haggard's successor chosen at Colorado megachurch. New Life Church, the Colorado megachurch that lost its senior pastor Ted Haggard to a sex and drug scandal last fall, expects to have a new leader soon. Pastor Brady Boyd, an associate senior pastor at Gateway Church in Southlake, Texas, has been chosen by the pastoral selection committee as their nominee to lead the Colorado Springs church. Boyd, 40, previously was senior pastor of Trinity Fellowship Church in Hereford, Texas. Haggard was dismissed from his church for "sexually immoral conduct" in November. Boyd will spend three Sundays with the congregation beginning Aug. 12. Church members will vote Aug. 27 on whether to call Boyd as pastor.

PBS to air intelligent design trial. PBS is preparing to air a re-enactment of the trial in which U.S. Middle District Court Judge John Jones, III ruled that the teaching of Intelligent Design in public classrooms is unconstitutional. The two-hour special called "Judgment Day: Intelligent Design on Trial" is scheduled to air Nov. 13 on the PBS science program NOVA. Plans for the episode include interviews with people who witnessed or participated in the trial, and actors will re-enact the proceedings based on court transcripts. Executive Producer Paula Apsell said the trial served as excellent scientific instruction with a thorough explanation of both sides taking place in the courtroom.

Study: Homosexual content prominent on TV. When it comes to homosexual characters and themes on prime-time television, ABC and the CW lead the pack, a new study said, although all five major broadcast networks have enough such programming to cause Christian families concern. The study of one year's worth of programming found that 15 percent of all of ABC's primetime programming hours during that span contained either homosexual characters or the discussion of homosexuality. The CW was second at 12 percent, followed by CBS (9 percent), NBC (7 percent) and Fox (6 percent). The first-of-its-kind study was conducted by the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, which found homosexual characters and themes on a wide range of programming. Each year, the organization releases a preview of the upcoming television seasons and examines what programs have homosexual characters. That preview will be released early next month.

Report: Christian video violates military policy

Officers' support of Christian Embassy organization called 'wrong' by Pentagon

Washington (RNS)—High-ranking Army and Air Force personnel violated military regulations when they participated in a promotional video for a private evangelical organization, according to a report by the Pentagon's Office of Inspector General.

A Pentagon spokesman said Aug. 6 it would be up to the Army and Air Force whether to discipline the military brass involved, but said no action is expected against top civilian employees.

The 47-page report, which was released last month, found that Air Force Maj. Gen. Jack Catton, Maj. Gen. Peter Sutton and a colonel whose name was not disclosed, as well as three Army officers—Brig. Gen. Bob Caslen, Brig. Gen. Vincent Brooks and a lieutenant colonel, also not identified—were wrong to take part in a fund-raising video for the Arlington, Va.-based Christian Embassy.

The Christian Embassy is part of Campus Crusade for Christ International, and sponsors prayer breakfasts and other religious activities for high-ranking federal employees and elected officials.

Video challenged

The dispute over the video surfaced last December against a backdrop of complaints that military officials frequently turn a blind eye to improper proselytizing and show

preferential treatment toward evangelicals.

"The officers were filmed during the duty day, in uniform with rank clearly displayed, in official and often identifiable Pentagon locations," the report said. "Their remarks conferred approval of and support to Christian Embassy, and the remarks of some officers implied they spoke for a group of senior military leaders rather than just for themselves."

At one point during the 10-minute video, which was filmed inside the Pentagon in 2005, Caslen referred to the Christian Embassy's special efforts for high-ranking officers through Flag Fellowship groups. He noted that whenever he runs into another fellowship member, "I immediately feel like I am being held accountable because we are the aroma of Jesus Christ."

Officers' claims

Catton, from the Air Force, explained in the video that the Christian Embassy helped him become a "director on the joint staff."

"As I meet the people that come into my directorate I tell them right up front who Jack Catton is, and I start with the fact that I'm an old-fashioned American, and my first priority is my faith in God, then my family and then country," Catton said on the video. "I share my faith because it describes who I am."

Catton later told the inspector general's office that he believed the Christian Embassy, which hosts a weekly prayer breakfast at the Pentagon, had become a "quasi-federal entity."

The report also singled out re-

tired Army Col. Ralph G. Benson, a former Pentagon chaplain, for providing special access to the organization and "mischaracterizing" the purpose of the video by implying it was "being produced to document the Pentagon chaplain's ministry rather than to promote a non-federal entity."

The report cleared Army Secretary Pete Geren and a civilian employee in the Army Budget Office of wrongdoing for appearing in the same video, concluding that their personal endorsements were given "without verbal or visual references to position, title or" the Department of Defense.

The report recommended the "secretary of the Air Force and the chief of staff of the Army take appropriate corrective action." Pentagon spokesman Lt. Col. Jonathan Withington said because the report cleared the civilian employees, any further action to address the conduct by the officers will fall to their respective services.

"Didn't go far enough"

The Military Religious Freedom Foundation, an Albuquerque, N.M.-based watchdog group founded by retired Air Force attorney Mikey Weinstein, asked the Department of Defense to investigate the video last December.

Weinstein expressed disappointment with the report's findings, which he said didn't go far enough to reprimand those involved.

"They suggested corrective action and we wanted to see courts martial," he said, adding that his organization planned to file a lawsuit against the Department of Defense.

25 years of ministry

Pattie Midkiff recognized for service through daycare and as receptionist

By Denise Spencer, OBI publications

In April, Mrs. Pattie Midkiff was honored for 25 years of ministry at Oneida Baptist Institute. Dr. W.F. Underwood (OBI '63) presented her with a plaque during chapel.

If you have been to our campus or called our switchboard, it's likely that you have met Pattie. Her gentle voice, ready smile and helpful attitude are just a few of the things that are a blessing to us all as she serves as our main office receptionist.

Pattie first came to work at OBI on her 53rd birthday. "I was beginning a new career at age 53," she said. When her son, James, was a sophomore in high school, Pattie, who always was a homemaker, learned about Oneida from then-president Dr. Barkley Moore (OBI '58) who spoke at her church.

"I remember telling my daughter-in-law that I'd go to OBI and work for nothing if I could just get James there," Pattie said. Laughing, she added, "My first monthly paycheck was less than \$100."

She enrolled James, and the next week Dr. Moore called Pattie to ask if she would start the school's first faculty/staff daycare. Pattie raised seven children of her own and cared for other boys and girls in her home. She accepted the challenge, working in daycare for two and a half years before becoming the receptionist in the main office. "I've stayed here ever since," she said.

In 1997, Oneida's new daycare facility was dedicated to Pattie. She recalled her earliest daycare venture when the children stayed in her apartment.

"One of them had to sleep in my bed at nap-time because we didn't have enough beds," she said. There was only one small window over the kitchen sink.

Though Pattie and the daycare moved to a better building a year later, she still was thrilled to see the new daycare facility in 1997. "That was a big day," she said, "to look at that and think of how we started. My greatest desire was to see a new daycare."

Pattie said one of her biggest blessings at Oneida was meeting and marrying Dan Midkiff. He grew up on a farm and has always loved agriculture. Before coming to Oneida, he worked on ranches in Texas for 15 years.

When OBI's choir sang at the church where Dan's brother, Charles, is a member, Dr. Moore asked Charles if he knew of anyone who might be interested in working on our farm. Charles thought of Dan and encouraged him to contact

Oneida.

"Dan called the school and the first person he talked to was me," Pattie said. "And we all know how that turned out," she added with a smile. After several years of serving on the farm, Dan became transportation coordinator. Today he is responsible for maintaining all of our school vehicles.

What has kept Pattie at Oneida for 25 years? "I wouldn't want to be anywhere else," she said. "I enjoy it so much. It's been such a positive experience. I can attest to the fact that OBI does a lot of good for a lot of people. I appreciate the fact that I can be here and be a part of it."

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



W.F. Underwood

A family affair

Student's call to ministry involves wife & children

Family always has been a major emphasis at Clear Creek.

Second-year student Berwin Hall says he is thankful for a place where his family can be involved with him during his ministry training. Berwin has been married to Renita

for nine years. They have three children, ages 6, 3 and 1.

"The family has adjusted well with the move here," Berwin said. "My son loves to fish in the creek and the kids have plenty of room to ride their bicycles and play outside. It's nice to be able to watch my son as he gets excited trying to cast his fishing line into the water."

Berwin and his family come to us from High Street Baptist Church in Somerset. He served as a youth pastor until his move to Clear Creek. High Street Baptist Church has been a strong supporter of Clear Creek through the years. Students and grads have served this congregation as pastors and youth ministers.

Family played an important role in affirming Berwin's call to ministry and Clear Creek. "I could tell my wife already knew that something was going on with me the

day I finally decided to tell her that I had been called to the ministry," he said. "She was open to the call. She's not one that likes to move but when I told her we needed to come to Clear Creek for some training, she responded by saying, 'I'm ready to go.' God affirmed my calling through her support."

Through our Student Workshop Program, Berwin and Renita work on campus. Renita is donor management clerk in the development office. Berwin works in distance education. "(Workshop) allows you to work around your school schedule and it's a nice environment."

Currently, Clear Creek is trying to complete a \$1 million endowment for the workshop program to place permanently invested funds with the Kentucky Baptist Foundation. These funds will provide employment for future students. If you would like information about how you can support our students through this endowment, you can contact Jay Sulfridge, dean of institutional advancement.

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

Did evangelicals' support for Iraq war impact credibility?

By Robert Marus
Associated Baptist Press

Washington (ABP)—Beginning with ancient Christians martyred by the Roman Empire and running through Thomas Becket, Dietrich Bonhoeffer and beyond, church leaders often have spoken truth to the secular powers—regardless of the consequences.

But in the months leading up to the Iraq war, did the United States' powerful conservative evangelical community step away from its responsibility to speak hard truths to the government?

"I think (conservative evangelicals) abdicated or relinquished their prophetic role from the beginning" of President Bush's administration, said Adam Taylor, senior political director for Sojourners/Call to Renewal, a progressive evangelical group that opposed the war from the start.

But Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, said he thinks he and other conservative evangelicals who supported the war were fulfilling their roles properly.

Land: Evangelicals "spoke truth"

"I think that most of the evangelicals I think of—the majority that supported liberating Iraq and the minority who didn't support liberating Iraq by military force—both spoke truth as they saw it to power," he said. "And if they do that, they're certainly speaking prophetically."

Land led a group of five prominent evangelical leaders who, in the run-up to the war in the fall of 2002, signed an open letter declaring that Bush's Iraq plan satisfied the criteria of Christian "just-war" theory.

They wrote the letter to counter the chorus of Christian leaders—including mainline Protestants,

Catholics and fellow evangelicals—who already had spoken forcefully against the war.

Its signers included Prison Fellowship founder Chuck Colson. In a December 2002 article for Christianity Today magazine, Colson argued that the classical definition of Christian just-war theory should be "stretched" to accommodate a new age in which terrorism and warfare are intertwined.

He concluded that "out of love of neighbor then, Christians can and should support a preemptive strike" on Iraq to prevent Iraqi-based—or funded—attacks on the United States or its allies.

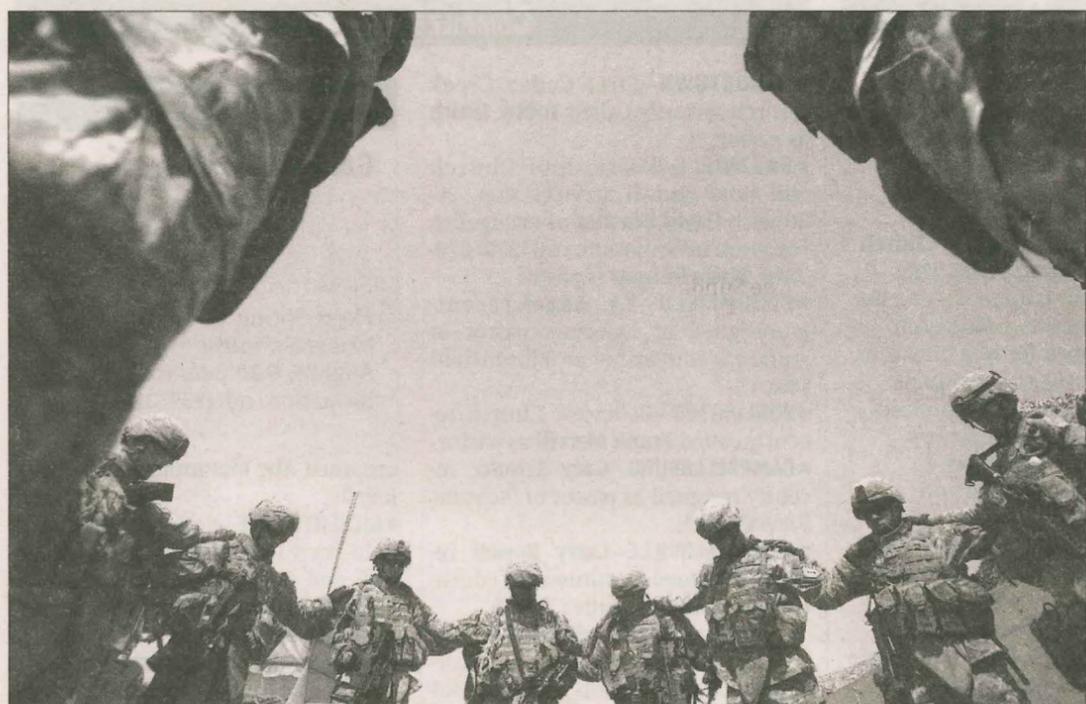
Charles Stanley, pastor of First Baptist Church of Atlanta and a former Southern Baptist Convention president, even argued from the pulpit that war may be sometimes divinely justified.

"Throughout Scripture, there is evidence that God favors war for divine reasons and sometimes uses it to accomplish His will. He has also given governments and their citizens very specific responsibilities in regards to this matter," Stanley said.

Polls at the time and later on showed that white evangelical Christians were among the war's strongest supporters. However, along with the rest of the public, evangelical support for involvement in Iraq has slipped considerably in polls taken over the last year.

Nonetheless, Land said he continues to believe the decision to attack was right at the time, even if the war itself has been mishandled.

"I still think that the liberation of Iraq was a noble cause, and it also was in the self-interest of our country and the other countries in the region," he said in a recent telephone interview. "And it certainly caused the fall of one of the more dastardly



PRAYER WARRIORS
U.S. soldiers pause to pray together before leaving for a mission in Baghdad earlier this month. (RNS/Reuters photo by Damir Sagolij)

personages of the 20th century."

But with a sizable number of Americans now saying the war was a mistake, Sojourners' Taylor said the fact that some of the evangelical community's most prominent leaders seemed to wholeheartedly endorse Bush's agenda makes the war a mistake for evangelicalism itself.

"In terms of the credibility of the evangelical voice and community, certainly it's had an impact," he said.

"Even if we may disagree on how those Christian values should be applied to public policy issues, we think we could agree ... on the importance of maintaining your prophetic integrity. And having an uncritical view of the war really compromised that prophetic integrity."

Baptist historian Bill Leonard said there are precedents for Christian leaders being burned for cozy-

ing up to presidents, including evangelist Billy Graham coming to terms with his close friendship with Richard Nixon after Watergate.

"And that was one of the cases where even Graham himself talked about his own sense of having been compromised," said Leonard, dean of Wake Forest University Divinity School.

"Teachable moment"

But Leonard also noted that disillusionment over the war has created a "teachable moment" among evangelicals.

"There is evidence among certain ... emerging church leaders who look over the fence, in a way, and who see where identification with one political party has taken some of their counterparts and their mentors and have pulled back from that," Leonard added.

Land, however, said such an understanding of evangelicalism's current dynamics assumes that he and other leaders viewed Bush's decision to go to war uncritically—and that the war itself has been an unmitigated disaster.

"I don't know any evangelicals personally who I had any suspicion" were mincing their words to Bush over the gravity of his decision to go to war, Land said. He noted that he has long been an advocate of American military action to liberate the oppressed.

"You understand I'm someone who argued for (the first President) Bush ... to intervene in Bosnia-Herzegovina and one who argued for President Clinton to intervene in Kosovo and praised him when he did so," he said. "I'm a pretty strong advocate for intervening when we can to stop human rights atrocities."

Land also noted that, whether or not he and other U.S. evangelical leaders wrongly paved the way to Iraq, the United States military is there now.

"To me, the discussion about whether or not we should have gone into Iraq militarily is an interesting discussion ... but it's also an abstract one," he said. "And the question is, now, what is the best way to win this war in a way that will benefit the Iraqi people and the people of the region and the United States?"

War & peace: Churches focus on prayer

By Ken Camp
Texas Baptist Standard

Dallas (ABP)—Christians who strongly favor or oppose the war in Iraq don't have to look far to find someone who disagrees with them. They may even be sharing the same pew.

In virtually every congregation, there are believers on opposite sides of the political divide over the Iraq war. Feelings run particularly high in communities near military installations, where some leaders have adopted an unofficial policy for keeping the peace: Pray for the troops, but when it comes to opinions about the Iraq war, "don't ask, don't tell."

"We just don't talk about it," said David Morgan, pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in Harker Heights, Texas, which is near the Army's Fort Hood.

Morgan has preached sermons on peacemaking, and the church has discussed, in general terms, Christian positions on war and peace. Members of Trinity Baptist also regularly pray for the troops and reach out to military personnel and their families.

"But when it comes to specific opinions about a war like this

one," Morgan said, "we don't discuss it."

Similarly, attention at Central Baptist Church in Richmond, Va., has focused on troops and their families rather than on political discussions about the war.

"It hasn't caused a conflict here," Pastor David Turner said. "We've got a strong military crowd; lots of veterans in the congregation. We've tried to respond to them with sensitivity."

Turner said his congregation has plenty of other pressing issues to handle, and it has chosen not to "get sidetracked" by debates over the war in Iraq.

"I haven't talked extensively about the war, though we often mention the troops and their struggle and service," he said. "Unless you have a good reason to make this an issue, I can't imagine doing it. There are always so many potential conflicts in churches, most people don't need another one."

In El Paso, Texas, members of First Baptist Church near Fort Bliss have steered clear of divisive political discussions. Instead, the church focuses on supporting the troops and praying both for them and for the elected officials who make de-

isions about their future, said Pastor Richard Rush.

"We believe we have a responsibility to pray for those who are in authority over us and to seek God's guidance on their behalf," Rush said.

Prayer also has been the focus at Woodland Baptist Church in San Antonio—home city to Fort Sam Houston, Randolph Air Force Base and Lackland Air Force Base, among other installations.

"I'm sure we have a wide variety of opinions in our congregation about the war," said Pastor Judson Edwards, "but it's just not something we've made a point of conflict or controversy."

Instead, people at Woodland have directed their attention to soldiers' families and injured military personnel at Brooke Army Medical Center, Edwards said.

"Rather than becoming a divisive issue, it's been more of a rallying point—a unifying thing for our church as we've focused on prayer," he said. "We've been united in our concern for the troops and in our prayers for getting them home safely."

With additional reporting by Robert Dilday of the Virginia Religious Herald

PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following Kentucky Baptist ministries and missionaries:

God's Kitchen of Victory Baptist Church in Shelbyville. This ministry provides a hot meal two days each week for homeless and hungry individuals. Several area churches work with Victory Baptist Church to provide food and volunteers for the feeding ministry. Those who receive a meal are prayed with and hear a presentation of the gospel. Pray that people will come to know Christ as their Savior and get involved in local churches. Pray also that God will continue to provide the resources for this ministry.

Missionary Teresa Parrett of Somerset. Parrett serves in Eastern Kentucky as coordinator for Appalachian Regional Ministry and as an area consultant with Mission Service Corps. She coordinates the placement of missionaries and short-term volunteers in ministry positions. Parrett is a tremendous encourager and has played a role in hundreds of people coming to know Jesus Christ. Pray for wisdom and guidance as she connects missionaries with ministry needs. Pray that God will continue to provide volunteers to meet spiritual and physical needs in the mountains of Eastern Kentucky.

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

■ **BARDSTOWN**—First Cedar Creek Church recently called **Tobey Smith** as pastor.

■ **BARDWELL**—Mississippi Church will hold revival services Aug. 26-30 with **David Brasher** as evangelist. For more information, call (270) 628-3340. **Mark Burnett** is pastor.

■ **BLOOMFIELD**—**T.J. Angel** recently resigned as associate pastor of students/education at Bloomfield Church.

■ **BURLINGTON**—Bellevue Church recently called **Frank Merrill** as pastor.

■ **CAMPBELLSBURG**—**Gary Schultz** recently resigned as pastor of Pleasant View Church.

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—**Larry Rowell** recently resigned as minister of education for Campbellsville Church.

Saloma Church will host homecoming services Aug. 26, with worship at 11 a.m., a noon potluck meal and **From the Heart** in concert at 1:30 p.m. For more information, call (270) 789-0082. **John Chowning** is pastor.

■ **CORBIN**—Corinth Church recently ordained **Daniel Junker, Raleigh Morgan** and **Clinton Rouse** as deacons. **Lenny Strunk** is pastor.

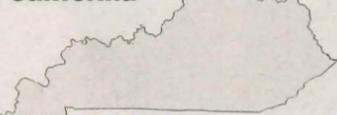
Randy McPheron recently resigned as pastor of West Corbin Church.

■ **CORYDON**—Corydon Church will hold revival services Aug. 26-29 with **Tommy Reed** as evangelist. For more information, call (270) 533-9266.

■ **COXS CREEK**—New Salem Church

Spotlight on ...

California



Flagg Spring Church will host bluegrass music on the lawn Aug. 25, 6:30 p.m. For more information, call (859) 322-2485.

ordained **Abe Maraman** as a deacon July 29.

■ **GILBERTSVILLE**—Bethel Church will hold revival services Aug. 19, 10:45 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., and Aug. 20-22, 7 p.m., with **Ronnie Sivells** as evangelist. **Gary Cruse** is pastor.

■ **HENDERSON**—**Jeff Coursey** recently resigned as pastor of Hyland Church to accept a position with Henderson County High School.

■ **JENKINS**—**Nathan Crawford** recently resigned as pastor of First Church.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Heritage Church recently called **Shaun Watson** as associate pastor of family ministries. He previously was youth pastor of Pellville Church.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Cloverleaf Church will host **Mercy's Mark** in concert Aug. 17, 7 p.m. **Geoffrey Lacefield** is pastor.

Lee's Lane Church will celebrate its 75th anniversary Aug. 26, 2 p.m., with a homecoming celebration featuring special music, speakers and



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August

18 Super Saturday, Immanuel Baptist Church, Lexington.

20-22 Freedom Experience, Lincoln County High School.

25 Super Saturday, First Baptist Church, Owensboro, and First Baptist Church, Pikeville.

September

1-3 Wrangler Trail Ride, Land Between the Lakes.

8 Super Saturday, First Baptist Church, Paducah, and First Baptist Church, Somerset.

13 Understanding Other Beliefs, Baptist Building, Louisville.

13 Retired Director of Missions/Spouse Luncheon, Severns Valley Association Office, Elizabethtown.

14-15 Women on Mission/Baptist Nursing Fellowship Fall Retreat, Jonathan Creek.

15 Super Saturday, Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.

17-18 State Baptist Ministers Golf Tournament, Cherry Blossom Golf & Country Club, Georgetown.

22 Children in Action Day Camp, Cedar Crest.

22 Punt, Pass & Kick, Campbellsville University.

28-29 Focus 2007, Crestwood Baptist Church, Crestwood.

29 Marriage Celebration, Fort Mitchell Baptist Church.

October

4-6 Basic Training for Church Planters, Baptist Building, Louisville.

5-6 Celebrate the Mission, Harrodsburg Baptist Church.

12-13 Women on Mission/Baptist Nursing Fellowship Fall Retreat, Cedarmore.

15 KBC East—Senior Adult Choir Festival, First Baptist Church, London.

20 Vacation Bible School Theme Preview, Baptist Building, Louisville.

22 KBC West—Senior Adult Choir Festival, Immanuel Baptist Church, Paducah.

25-26 Quarterly Prayer Meeting for Spiritual Awakening, Severns Valley Association Office, Elizabethtown.

27 101 Workshop, Union Baptist Church, Union.

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

a reception. For more information, call (502) 447-6696.

■ **SCOTTSVILLE**—**Richard and Joyce Vinson**, members of Scottsville Church, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary Aug. 5. **Dale Darley** is pastor.

■ **WILLIAMSBURG**—**Jerry Sester** recently resigned as pastor of Red Bird Church.

■ **WINCHESTER**—Allansville Church recently called **Ray Coates** as pastor. Heritage Church recently called **Gerald Peoples** as pastor.

CLASSIFIED ADS

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

FOR SALE: 22 pews (13.5 feet) in good condition. Contact Helen Stanfill at First Baptist Church Oak Grove, (270) 439-5331.

SEEKING: Part-time director: Kingdom Kids Learning Center, Westside Baptist Church, Murray, Ky. Up to 25 hours/week (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday). For application or more information, contact church office at (270) 753-8240. Deadline to apply: Aug. 20, 2007.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of youth for First Baptist Church, Richmond, Ky. Responsibilities include proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ through biblical teachings; facilitating ministry opportunities and assisting with pastoral care; developing, managing and evaluating a comprehensive program for middle school and high school students and their families. Ability to build and maintain effective working relationships and rapport with members, prospects and staff is required. Compensation includes salary, vacation, insurance, SECA and retirement. Send cover letter, resumé, salary history and available starting date to: Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 425 Eastern Bypass, Richmond, KY 40475; or via e-mail to richard.landiers@firstbaptistnet.com.

SEEKING: Part-time music minister for blended worship. Send to Fairview Baptist Church, 6426 Ky. Highway 1247, Waynesburg, KY 40489; or e-mail inquiries to jdb@wimaxexpress.com.

SEEKING: Part-time worship leader/minister of music. Send resumé to Grace Community Baptist Church, 7300 National Turnpike, Louisville, KY 40214; e-mail gcbc7300@peoplepc.com.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music for Southern Baptist church—approximately 20 hours per week. Prefer college training related to church music. Send resumé/application to Cecilia Baptist Church, 416 E Main St., Cecilia, KY 42724, Attn: Personnel Committee. E-mail to: church@ceciliabaptist.com.

SEEKING: Pastor. Beaver Dam Baptist Church in Beaver Dam, Ky., is actively seeking the pastor whom God has chosen to lead us into the future. We are a multi-generational congregation with a strong foundation of more than 200 years of ministry. The church is located in a small, western Kentucky town. Drawing people from several communities, we have an average attendance of 350 to 450 in Sunday morning service. Beaver Dam Baptist Church has a tradition of outstanding music, a strong youth program and a thriving Christian education program. Our church upholds the priesthood of the believer and has reaffirmed our acceptance of the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message. Please send resumé to: BDBC Pastor Search Committee, PO Box 341, Beaver Dam, KY 42320.

SEEKING: Candidates for director of missions for Ozark Prairie Baptist Association in Lockwood, Mo. Send resumé to DOM Search Committee, Drawer S, Lockwood, MO 65682.

SEEKING: Full-time associate pastor for Franklin Crossroads Baptist Church, a growing, strongly evangelistic, mission-minded congregation helping to build the Kingdom of God, soon to have two campuses. Send resumé to 4695 Hardinsburg Road, Cecilia, KY 42724 by Aug. 27; or e-mail resumé to franklincrossroads@windstream.net. Visit our Web site at franklincrossroads.org.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music (called to the ministry) for a dynamically growing congregation (20 hours per week). Duties: leading a comprehensive music program. For more information, see our Web site at www.woodburnbaptist.org. Send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Woodburn Baptist Church, PO Box 38, Woodburn, KY 42170.

SEEKING: Pastor. Union Baptist Church, 25 minutes south of Cincinnati, Ohio, in Northern Kentucky, offers the best of a rural and suburban setting, and is situated in the midst of booming housing developments. UBC is looking for a pastor to lead its flock of 274 (average worship attendance; more than 400 on high Sundays) in outreach to our community. This 120-year-old Southern Baptist church has a newer 500-seat sanctuary ready for its next pastor. Please submit resumé, along with tapes, to Union Baptist Church, PO Box 194, Union, KY 41091, Attn: Mike Webster.

SEEKING: Full-time youth minister for Bellevue Baptist Church, located in Boone County, Ky. Resumés may be e-mailed to tomwithorn@fuse.net; or mailed to Bellevue Baptist Church, 6658 5th St., Burlington, KY 41005. All resumés must be received by Sept. 1, 2007.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music. McLean County church passionate about worship and reaching the lost is seeking a worship leader for praise band and choir. Contact Calhoun Baptist Church at drsams@cbcheart.com.

SEEKING: Minister to families for Grace Baptist Church. Seeking to magnify Christ in Lexington, GBC seeks Spirit-led minister who will coordinate and be directly involved in our youth/children, senior adult, outreach/visitation, education, training and promotion ministries. Please e-mail your resumé and letter of interest to gbclexington@windstream.net; or mail to 811 Bryan Ave., Lexington, KY 40505.

SEEKING: Minister of youth. Enthusiastic, passionate, contemporary minister needed to lead teenagers to Christ and on to spiritual maturity. Calhoun Baptist Church in McLean County, Kentucky, seeks to help hurting people, evangelize the lost, assemble together for fellowship, rejoice in the Lord through worship, and teach the uncompromising Word of God. Compensation package includes parsonage, health insurance and retirement benefits. Interested candidates should contact Dr. Richard Sams at drsams@cbcheart.com.

From Kansas to Kenya

Working together, U.S. and Nairobi students share Christ with community

By Sue Sprenkle
SBC International Mission Board

Nairobi, Kenya (BP)—A Kansas college student steps gingerly through piles of trash on the streets of downtown Nairobi, Kenya. As she reaches down to shake a pile of rags and cardboard, out pops the head of 3-year-old Michael. He smiles and extends grubby arms to hug her.

Jessie Hock hugs Michael, a boy who knows only life on the street. She softly sings "Jesus Loves Me" in his ear and gives him a kiss, despite his overwhelming odor.

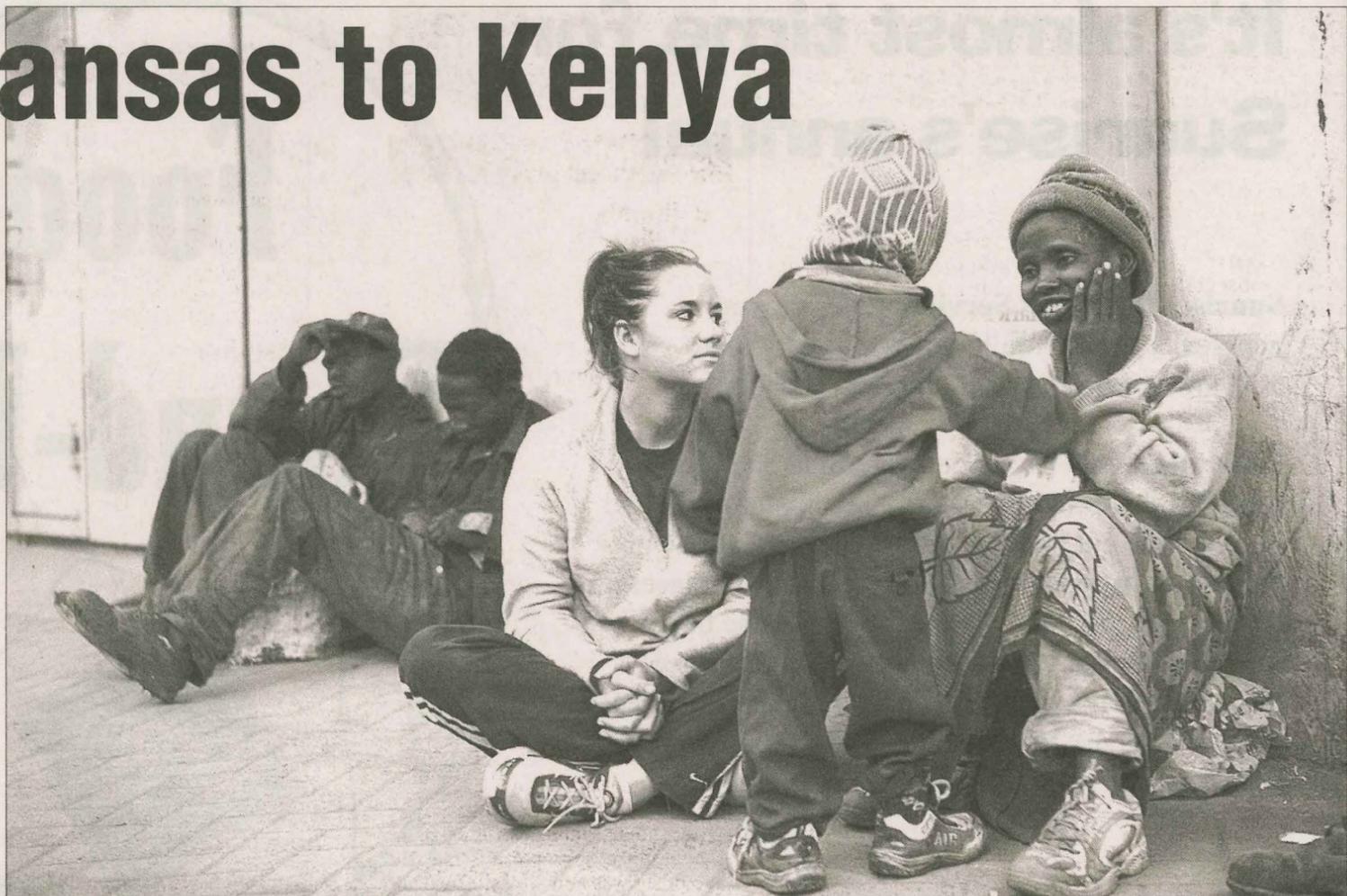
"You can't really call this a job," she said. "I mean, we get to hang out all day and talk about Jesus. I can't think of a better way to spend a semester."

Hock and Luke Ross from Fort Hays State University in Kansas, and Keisha Brown from Kansas State University, spent a semester as short-term missionaries in Nairobi, along with Christian Challenge student ministry director Porfirio Ramirez from FHSU.

They worked with a street kids' ministry, an orphanage and with students from the University of Nairobi. The past two summers, volunteer teams from various Kansas universities and colleges have worked with Nairobi students to share the gospel going door-to-door.

The impact on the Nairobi students was significant, although sometimes it wasn't immediately evident. On one occasion, 20 minutes after a meeting with local students was scheduled to start, no one had arrived.

The Kansas team rearranged chairs in the room, not worrying about the turnout. During the semester they'd learned that Kenyan students are rarely on time.



Finally, a rumble of footsteps signaled the entrance of 40 students. Hock greeted and hugged the female students as they came through the door. Brown stood quietly, smile shining bright, as students argued about whether she looked more like a Kikuyu, Kamba or Maasai—all different tribes of Kenya.

Third-year Kenyan student Patroba Lisege spotted Ross across the room, shouting a greeting to him. The two shook hands and then jokingly jabbed each other in the ribs like brothers.

Lisege was a member of Ross' small-group Bible study. The Kansas team led weekly group meetings in dorm rooms to develop relationships.

"I can't believe someone our age would give up an entire semester of school just to come and hang out

with us," Lisege said. "They love God and you (could) see it in their lives. I learned to share my faith by watching them share. I have something special that I need to share with others."

Evelyn Gitau, a fourth-year student, loved hanging out with the Kansans because in the quest to learn more about her culture, they helped her deepen her faith.

"As they (learned) about us, I (realized) that I (was) growing a lot because I (was) finding out who I am and why I am that way," Gitau said. "I (was) learning to rely more on God."

In the early morning hours before the sun came up, the Kansas and Kenyan students fed street children, shared Bible stories and spent time with them, showing them that they have value in God's eyes.

A lesson in faith and compassion came through working with Christ the Academy school, a product of an orphanage in Githurai.

A local pastor began the school for children of refugees. The university students made weekly visits. One week they decided to take bags of beans and rice. Little did the students know, the school had wanted to offer lunches to their students but did not have food. The pastor prayed and trusted that God would provide.

"We'd never taken food there before, but something just moved us to buy some rice and beans," Ramirez recalled.

"We had no idea of their need or prayers. It's amazing how God provides and how He uses the same situation to teach us to listen to Him. This semester has taught all of us a lot about relying on God."

HARD LIFE Michael, 3, chats with his mother, Rispa (right), as Jessie Hock looks on. Michael and his mother live on the streets of Nairobi, Kenya. Hock, a student at Fort Hays State University in Hays, Kan., took a semester off from school to go as a short-term missionary to Nairobi for five months. (BP photos)

One year after war in Lebanon, the 'real work' begins

By Emilee Brandon
Baptist Press

Southern Lebanon (BP)—Ruined buildings, their walls peppered by bullets and shrapnel, still mark Lebanon's landscape a year after a 34-day conflict with Israel ended.

On the surface, it doesn't appear

much different from last summer when Baptist relief workers came to provide medical care for the injured, distribute blankets and heaters, water and food—and Bibles—to those who were caught in the crossfire.

Rami, a local believer, worked

alongside the American volunteers. He was afraid of identifying himself as a Christian in this predominantly Muslim area. He remembers sitting in a van, afraid to get out, afraid he would jeopardize his family if he did.

When Baptist workers "asked me to go with them to pass out things, I hesitated a little bit. ... (But then) I saw these doctors coming from America. They left ... everything they had to come here, and I'm this close and I didn't even want to get out of the van."

Rami prayed that God would give him the courage and faith to help the people who needed so much—most importantly the Savior.

Rami accompanied the Baptist physicians into villages where they were the first ones who had come to help. He said this was the first time he had seen people with that much love. He saw people kiss the hands of the doctors.

An Islamic leader in one of the villages noticed this love, too. He

was curious why strangers from another country would help people they didn't know. He asked Rami why they were doing this. Rami simply replied, "Because the Messiah taught us this. I learned it in the Bible."

An uncommon bond formed between the two men. Over time as Rami and the volunteers worked in the Muslim village, the men became friends.

Months later, the pair unexpectedly met again on a village road. Rami recalled, "He came to me and said, 'Even if you aren't working in our village anymore, you need to come back and visit us.'"

The chance meeting gave Rami the opportunity to give his friend a Bible. "(Offering) tuna is one thing, a heater is one thing," he said, "but a Bible is the most important thing."

"If there hadn't been a war, there wouldn't have been a chance to take these things along with the Word of God to them," Rami said. "This is the beginning of the real work."



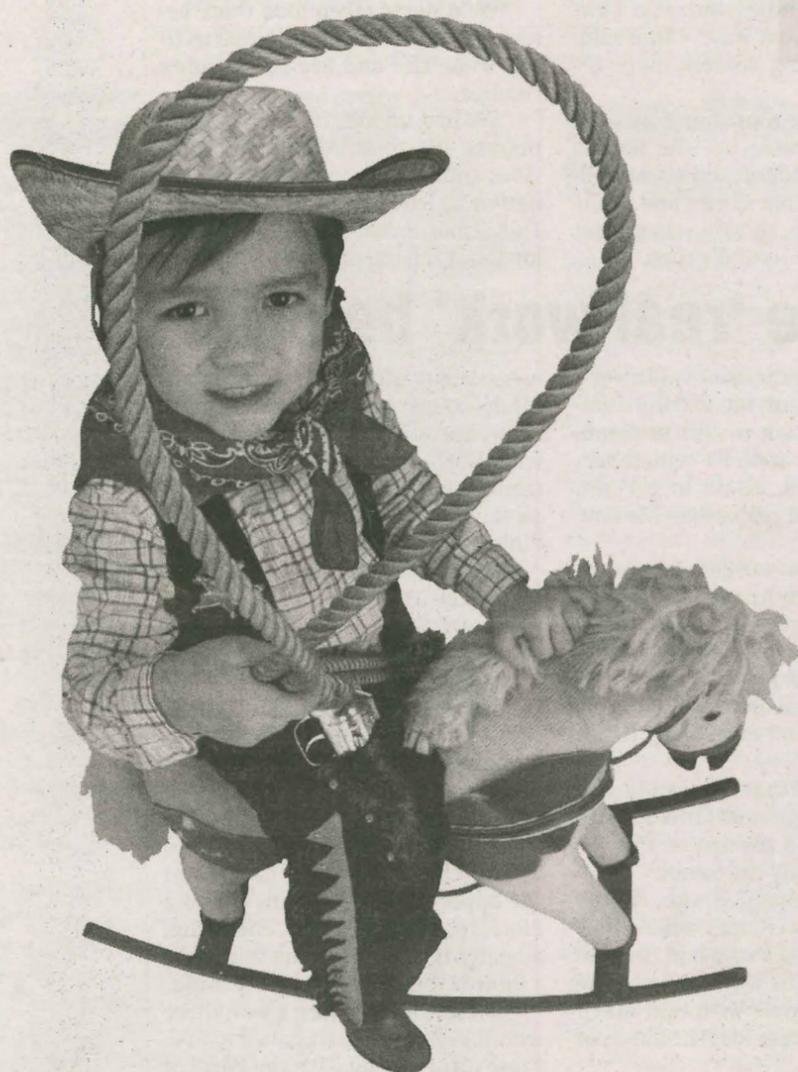
SLOW RECOVERY An Islamic sheik (left), and his family stand in front of their home, which was bombed last year during the 34-day war with Israel. Baptist relief workers have been helping rebuild homes and feed and comfort people who lost their homes, friends and families.

It's almost time for Sunrise's annual

Sunrise Children's Services relies on your generosity to provide food for the more than 300 children and teens in our care each day.

Rather than collect cumbersome food and trying to transport it from all over the state, inventory it, and send it back out to all of our programs, Sunrise now collects donations of cash and gift cards to places like Kroger and Walmart. This allows us to be better stewards of your gifts because we can purchase perishable items like fresh fruits and meats, and each program can use the cash and cards to purchase the right foods in the right quantities.

The kids are counting on you!



Food Round-Up!



Watch your church bulletin for information about Food Round-Up. If your church doesn't already participate, suggest the idea to your pastor. Every church should receive a packet of information in mid-August.

**Food Round-Up will run
September 1st through October 20th.**

For more information,
call (800) 456-1386

www.sunrise.org