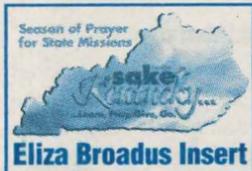


PRactical RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

WESTERN RECORDER

September 4, 2007
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Center of worship

High Impact church opens its doors to residents of Mount Sterling area

By Drew Nichter
News Director

Mount Sterling—About a block from the main square of downtown Mount Sterling, at the corner of High and Howard streets, sits a vacant building. The old gothic structure has remained dormant since First Baptist Church of Mount Sterling made the move to a new facility six years ago. The doors have been closed ever since.

Until now.

The sound of praise and worship once again emanate from the old church thanks to its new tenants, The Baptist Worship Center. One of the youngest of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's High Impact churches, the congregation and its pastor, Travis Drake, have flung open the doors to welcome in the people of Mount Sterling.

"We want to be as public as we can," Drake said.

The new facility is a tremendous step forward for the 50-member church that, until recently, met in the Ramada Inn conference center near Interstate 64, a home not seen as ideal by the community. Drake said he hopes the move will bring some legitimacy to a church that has been perceived as another fly-by-night church plant.

"Our biggest challenge was people realizing that we are a legitimate church," Drake said. "We're not going to give up; we're going to keep moving forward."

□ See *Church seeks to break ... Page 3*

The Drake family, (from left) Marcy, Grace, Travis and Paige, stand on the steps of The Baptist Worship Center's new facility. The building, located in downtown Mount Sterling, is the former home of First Baptist Church of Mount Sterling. It stood vacant for six years before the High Impact congregation moved in. They celebrated their first Sunday worship service in the facility Sept. 2. (Photo by Drew Nichter)

Court: Washington school can deny Bible club charter

Portland, Ore. (ABP)—A federal appeals court ruled Aug. 24 that a Washington state high school is not required to charter a Bible club, since the club allows only Christians to be full members.

In *Truth v. Kent Public School District*, a unanimous three-judge panel of the Oregon-based 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said Kentridge High School in Kent, Wash., does not have to offer official recognition to the Truth Bible Club.

The decision stems from a 2003 lawsuit filed on behalf of two then-students at Kentridge by the conservative Christian legal group Alliance Defense Fund. The students sued after the district refused to charter the Truth club because the club intended to limit full membership to Christians who have professed a "belief in the Bible and in Jesus Christ."

District officials said limiting membership in a club based on religion violated the district's anti-discrimination policy. Attorneys for the students, meanwhile, contended that other student clubs the school had already recognized—such as a gay-straight alliance—limited as a membership on the basis of ideology. Therefore, they said, refusing to recognize Truth violated the students' religious freedom under the First Amendment as well as a law that assures religious groups have access equal to that of other organizations in public schools.

But a federal district court agreed with the school district, and the appeals panel upheld that ruling.

In an opinion written by Judge Clifford Wallace, the court noted that Truth could still meet on school property even though not officially recognized and that other Christian groups had gained recognition without requiring that their members be Christians.

"On their face, the district's non-discrimination policies do not preclude or discriminate against religious speech," Wallace wrote. "Truth also has not shown that the district justifies its nondiscrimination policies with reference to the content of a message Truth's discriminatory conduct may attempt to convey. The policies are content-neutral."

ADF attorneys vowed to appeal the ruling. "Public high school officials cannot treat Christian students on campus as second-class citizens," said ADF Legal Counsel Tim Chandler. "The school district's so-called 'non-discrimination' policy is supposed to prevent discrimination on campus. Instead, the school officials are using the policy to discriminate against the Truth Bible Club, which simply wanted the same access as other groups at Kentridge High."

Ky. associations prepare to pray 'With One Voice'

By Kristie Randolph
Kentucky Baptist Convention

Louisville—Carl Cooper is on a mission to see revival come to Graves County through prayer.

A lay leader serving as prayer ministry director for Graves County Baptist Association, Cooper has developed a prayer newsletter, coordinated a prayer team and organized numerous prayer meetings.

Now, he's focusing his efforts on promoting the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Sept. 11 "With One Voice" statewide prayer gatherings, an event he believes will help bring about much-needed revival in Kentucky.

"We are excited for this event because we need revival now more than ever in our association, our nation and around the world," said Cooper, who will be attending his association's event at New Vision Baptist Church in Mayfield.

Graves County Association is one of 66 Kentucky Baptist associations participating in the "With One Voice" simultaneous prayer gatherings.

All events are scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Eastern time and 6:30 p.m. Central. Each participating association will host one gathering at its office headquarters or a local church.

GCBA leaders and volunteers have already hosted weekly prayer meetings specifically for "With One Voice," sent invitations to civic and other denominational leaders, and issued news releases to local papers and radio stations.

One church has even volunteered to sponsor an ad in the *Mayfield Messenger*, the area's daily newspaper.

"We don't want this to just be a Baptist thing," Cooper said. "Our hope is for all kinds of Christians to join us on Sept. 11. We need to pray for God's will to be done."

All 66 prayer gatherings are open to the public. At each location, Baptists and other Christians will gather for approximately one hour of concerted prayer. In most cases, the vast majority of the time will be dedicated to praying.

According to Randy Jones, missions growth team leader for the KBC, the event is part of the celebra-

tion of the 300th anniversary of the founding of the first Baptist association in the United States.

"This was designed in keeping with the tradition of associations—doing together what we can't do by ourselves," Jones said. "This is an opportunity for everyone to come together in prayer."

The event also follows up on two years of prayer tours in which a team of KBC leaders traveled the state to lead prayer gatherings. In 2005, the team traveled the perimeter of the state, making more than 30 stops for prayer gatherings of Kentucky Baptists. In 2006, the leaders' travels focused on the interior of the state.

KBC leaders said they hope the simultaneous nature of this year's prayer emphasis will spark large numbers of Christians to participate.

"Even if they can't make it to the actual event, I would encourage all Kentucky Baptists to pause and pray for spiritual renewal and revival," Jones said. "There's power in prayer, and there's power in many people praying for the same thing."

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, Sept. 5.

Hundreds of Baptist relief workers assist flood victims

By Mickey Noah
SBC North American Mission Board

Rochester, Minn. (BP)—More than 570 disaster relief volunteers from the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention and eight other states are working to aid victims affected by recent flooding in southeast Minnesota.

The Minnesota disaster relief activities are based in Winona, a town of some 27,000 located along the Mississippi River on the Minnesota-Wisconsin state line, about two hours southeast of Minneapolis-St. Paul. Officials estimate that as many as 2,000 homes in and around Winona have been impacted by the flooding.

"Southern Baptists everywhere need to pray for these people in Minnesota and Wisconsin," said Dave Wedekind, who along with his wife, Jeanne, serve as co-directors for disaster relief for the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention.

Long-term recovery process

Calling the floods the "worst in Minnesota since 1997," Wedekind



FLOOD RELIEF Several hundred volunteers from the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention have served more than 30,000 meals at Cornerstone Community Church in Winona, Minn., in the aftermath of recent flooding in southeastern Minnesota. (BP photo by Jeannie Wedekind)

said recovery from the flooding will be a long-term process.

"Most of the people don't have flood insurance because their homes were not located in a flood plain," he said.

Although Winona—located due east of Rochester, Minn.—is situated on the Mississippi River, the river was not a factor in the flooding, Wedekind said.

Instead, initial flooding result-

ed from 17 inches of torrential rain that fell in only five hours in southeast Minnesota's hill country, Wedekind said. The rain caused a dike to collapse and a series of mudslides.

Southern Baptist disaster relief units were activated the day after the rains hit and by Aug. 20 volunteers began showing up for duty.

In cooperation with the American Red Cross, the SBC disaster relief feeding units prepared and served 30,440 meals at Winona's Cornerstone Community Church from Aug. 20-27, Wedekind said.

Ten mud-out crews from Kentucky, Illinois and Tennessee have completed four mud-out jobs with many more to come. A childcare unit was mobilized out of Illinois, as well as chaplain units from South Carolina, Tennessee, Indiana, Illinois, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

"We've also recorded 528 presentations of the gospel since we started early last week," Wedekind said.

Meanwhile in Ohio, Duane Floro, ministry evangelism strategist for the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio, said disaster relief incident

command centers have been established in Mansfield and Findlay by NAMB and the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, respectively. Kentucky Baptist volunteers also have responded there. (See related article on page 7.)

Widespread ministry needs

Floro said the flooding impacted the Findlay area—between Toledo and Dayton—and across the state to Mansfield, between Columbus and Cleveland.

The Ohio state convention is handling childcare and feeding units in Findlay, a town of about 20,000, while the North Carolina volunteers are handling assessment and clean-up operations.

"We're actually still doing assessment," Floro said. "We haven't been able to get into some of the little towns yet."

Floro said his team—which is working closely with Buckeye Central/Erie Association and with Lincoln Heights Baptist Church in Mansfield—is projecting at least two weeks of disaster relief activity.

BAPTIST DIGEST

Annual soul-winning focus set for Oct. 7. "The Harvest ... His Plan, Our Passion" is the theme for Southern Baptists' Oct. 7 "soul-winning commitment day." The emphasis is part of the North American Mission Board's "On Mission to Share Jesus" initiative. "It is a time when SBC churches are encouraged to promote evangelism, inspire, motivate, enlist and share the gospel," said Dick Church, NAMB's church evangelism resource manager. "Hopefully, it will renew a church's passion for reaching the lost." Church said NAMB is offering a myriad of downloadable resources at www.namb.net/omtsj to assist congregations as they plan On Mission to Share Jesus Sunday.

Louisiana College to name law school after Pressler. Baptist-affiliated Louisiana College will establish a new "biblical" law school named after Paul Pressler, the Texas appeals court judge known as an architect of the Southern Baptist Convention's conservative shift. The college hopes to open the Judge Paul Pressler School of Law in 2009, according to Joe Aguillard, president of the 1,000-student school in Pineville, La. Aguillard said the law school—which would be the school's first doctoral program—will teach "a biblical worldview" and seek accreditation with the American Bar Association. Pressler, a Baptist layman from Houston, served in the Texas legislature and practiced law before being named a state judge in 1970. He later was appointed to Texas' 14th Court of Appeals, from which he retired in 1993.

Registration opens for BP journalism conference. Students will be challenged to attain "Excellence in Journalism" with a biblical worldview at the 7th annual Baptist Press Collegiate Journalism Conference Oct. 11-13 in Nashville. Lauren Green, a religion correspondent for Fox News, is among the keynote speakers, as well as Manny Garcia of the Miami Herald, Don Boykin of the Atlanta Journal-Constitution and Gary Fong of the San Francisco Chronicle. Students can register by visiting the conference Web site, www.bpnews.net/journalism. Workshop topics will include leadership lessons, graphic design, freelance writing, podcasting, photography and internships.

Primitive Baptists mark 100th anniversary. The National Primitive Baptist Convention is observing its centennial year, including a week-long meeting in Birmingham that ended Aug. 24. The predominantly African-American denomination was organized in Huntsville, Ala., in 1907 and has about 1,500 churches and 600,000 members nationwide. A century ago, most Primitive Baptists called themselves "hardshell"—unwilling to change or compromise their beliefs. Staunch Primitive Baptists typically are strict Calvinists. "They don't do evangelism because of the doctrine of election," said Bernard Yates, vice president of the convention. "We had to move from that place to a broader view of predestination. It's our responsibility to preach and teach God's Word. Let God take care of the rest."

Convention leaders withdraw blog endorsements

New York (ABP)—Several well-known Southern Baptist leaders have rescinded their endorsements of a controversial blog that provides news and opinion related to the Southern Baptist Convention.

Jerry Rankin, David Dockery, Thom Rainer and Frank Page all initially offered enthusiastic endorsements of SBC Outpost (www.sbcoutpost.com) after it was launched in June. The site is a collaborative effort by several reform-minded Southern Baptist pastors, theologians and laypeople.

At the time, Rankin, president of the SBC's International Mission Board, called the blog a "significant channel of communication that can serve Southern Baptists."

But each of those leaders has subsequently withdrawn his approval.

Page, the SBC's current president, said in an Aug. 22 column published by Baptist Press that he retracted his endorsement because the blog "degenerated quickly into a place of personal attack against denominational leaders." Such Internet-based attacks are part of a trend of church Web sites detailing allegations, accusations and complaints against leaders, he said.

Mohler: Confessions of faith more important than ever

Louisville (BP)—The Christian faith includes essential doctrinal content that the church must believe, teach and confess, Albert Mohler told students and faculty members during the annual fall convocation Aug. 28 at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Preaching from Hebrews 11:1-6 and Acts 16:30-31, Mohler said a clear articulation of central Christian doctrines in a confession of faith is more important than ever for evangelical churches and seminaries because they minister in a postmodern culture that denies the existence of objective truth.

"We must understand that Christianity is not a mood," Mohler said.

"Lost people are seeing the deep division and sometimes hatred that is flowing forth among churches and among those who are involved in convention discussions," Page wrote. "For Christ's sake, stop!"

Rankin said in a similar column that the blog "has not fulfilled its intended purpose."

"This had the potential of being a forum for an objective interchange of ideas and opinions that would contribute in a constructive way to the Southern Baptist Convention," Rankin wrote. "While I continue to endorse and advocate the value of open communication and understanding that comes from a free exchange of ideas, I am retracting my endorsement of SBC Outpost as the place for that to happen."

Rainer, president of LifeWay Christian Resources, said he had gladly endorsed the blog as an opportunity to focus the denomination on missions and evangelism. That didn't happen, he said.

"My words, instead, were construed by some to be an endorsement of every article that followed, particularly those articles that were critical of other entity presidents," Rainer said. "That was unacceptable."

I was wrong."

Other Baptist bloggers, including Geoff Baggett, pastor of Crossroads Fellowship in Cadiz, have removed links to SBC Outpost from their personal sites.

Reaction from blog contributors has been mixed. Former SBC Outpost host Micah Fries announced he is backing away from the blog as well.

"I envisioned this site to be a place where substantive dialogue could happen in a Christ-like manner," Fries wrote. "That has happened in tremendous ways at times. Unfortunately, however, I have also been disappointed to watch folks on both sides of these divides who simply don't play well with others."

Benjamin Cole, recently named associate pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Enid, Okla., said the blog operates best if contributors are free to disagree with convention policies and question administrators.

"We will not deny ourselves any occasion to speak our minds as honestly, forcefully, and even controversially as we deem necessary," Cole wrote. "Ultimately, our freedom to dissent is of much greater value to our Baptist identity than is our need for magisterial affirmation."

"It is not an emotion. ... It is established by the truth of God's Word, by the saving reality of God's deeds in Jesus Christ, around certain definite doctrines without which it is not possible to exercise the kind of faith that saves."

The faith of which Scripture speaks includes irreducible truths such as the character and attributes of God and the person and work of Christ, Mohler said, noting that creeds and confessions are important summary statements of these truths that have a long and venerable history.

Baptists have been a confessional people throughout their history, Mohler said. Southern Baptists did

not adopt a confession until 1925 because the denomination's churches and associations had their own statements of faith. The SBC first adopted the Baptist Faith & Message in 1925 because denials of God's truth were rampant in the culture and were threatening churches, Mohler said.

Some argue that the Bible is their only creed, but Mohler noted that cults such as the Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons also claim the Bible as their source of doctrine. Thus, it is important for Christians to know, in summary form, what the Bible teaches. While Scripture is the sole authority for Christians, confessions serve as concise expressions of its most important doctrines, Mohler said.

Harmon resigns KBC post to lead Somerset church

Louisville—French Harmon, leader of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's church development team since November 2006, has announced his resignation to accept the pastorate of First Baptist Church of Somerset.



French Harmon

Harmon, who has served on the KBC Mission Board staff since 2004, previously was a church development strategist, associate team leader and interim team leader for the KBC's former church development and evangelism team.

Prior to joining the KBC staff, Harmon served as pastor of Fort Mitchell Baptist Church and First Baptist Church of Allen as well as associate pastor of First Baptist Church of Russell and assistant pastor of Unity Baptist Church in Ashland. A graduate of Marshall University in Huntington, W. Va.; Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville; the University of Louisville; and Reformed Theological Seminary in Charlotte, N.C.; he also worked part-time as a campus minister in Prestonsburg and Pikeville.

KBC Executive Director Bill Mackey noted that Harmon "has made a significant contribution to our staff in helping to implement Kentucky Baptists Connect."

Citing Harmon's other ministry initiatives during his time with the KBC, Mackey said, "Having come from the local church and being a younger pastor, he has been able to provide initiatives related to involving our young leaders.

"His loss will be felt among us," Mackey added, "but we're grateful that he will provide the creative and spiritual leadership that First Baptist Church of Somerset desires."

Harmon, who has been serving as Somerset's interim pastor since Easter, will begin his full-time responsibilities there at the end of September.

Reflecting on his work with the KBC, Harmon noted, "It was an honor to be part of the Kentucky Baptists Connect initiative. Every day has been a blessing.

"I'm looking forward to the next chapter of our ministry," he added. "We felt the Lord calling us to this new ministry."

First Baptist, Somerset, "has always been a great church and a historic church in the KBC," he said. "We're going to plant ourselves there and help rebuild the church and allow the Lord to take it to new heights."

Harmon and his wife, Rachael, are the parents of three children, Trae, Madison and Jack.

Church seeks to break 'stained-glass barrier'

Continued from page 1

Drake said he hopes the congregation can now avoid falling into the trap of "staying inside," by breaking through what he calls the "stained-glass barrier."

"We will have to go past these walls," he declared.

One thing that sets The Baptist Worship Center apart from the other High Impact churches is its name. The congregation is the only one with the word "Baptist" in its name.

"I know that there studies out there that say you don't gain anything from it," Drake pointed out, "but I'm just a forward person and I believe when people are searching for a church, they do want to know who you are and what you are about."

Early calling

Drake said his path to Mount Sterling was determined early on. Answering the call to ministry in his early 20s, Drake, 27, got involved with Emmanuel Baptist Church in his hometown of Stanton. He crammed a lot of experience into a short amount of time, becoming the director of youth while enrolled in classes at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Va., through the school's dyncburg program. All the while, Drake noted, he felt God was pulling him in a different direction.

"God started putting it on my heart to plant a church," Drake recalled. "I knew it would happen one day, I just didn't know when."

In 2005, Drake left Kentucky to serve at Faith Baptist Church in Monroe, Ga. With his wife, Marcy, and daughter, Paige, by his side, Drake took on the roles of associate pastor and minister of youth at Faith Baptist.

The next year, Drake's calling began to take shape. His father, George Drake, a member of Stanton Baptist Church; and Jack Fletcher, director of missions for Red River Baptist Association, began exploring the possibility of beginning a new work in the Mount Sterling area.

With a core group in place and support from Stanton Baptist, as well as Porter Memorial Baptist Church in Lexington, Fletcher began looking for someone to lead the mission.

"When we found out that Travis was called to this area to do a church plant, all of it came together and just fit," Fletcher recalled.

Family struggles

Once Drake agreed to lead the church, the team began discussions with the KBC about becoming a High Impact church. Everything was on schedule to begin in March of this year, when life changed dramatically for the Drakes.

The family was scheduled to move back to Kentucky from Georgia on Feb. 9. But on Feb. 6, Marcy, who was six months pregnant with the couple's second daughter, went into labor. Grace Drake was born two days later, weighing only 1 pound, 10 ounces, and with a slew of dan-



A BORN CHURCH PLANTER Travis Drake preaches to members of The Baptist Worship Center at the church's former meeting place inside the Ramada Inn conference center. "We're willing to invest in the community and we want to help reach out to them," Drake said. (Photo by Drew Nichter)

gerous health problems.

Shortly after Grace was born, doctors began giving her medication to close the PDA artery in her heart, which in most babies closes on its own shortly after birth. The medicine caused her stomach to constrict, creating a perforation and allowing air and fluid from inside the stomach to leak out.

Doctors decided it would be best to transfer Grace to a hospital in Augusta, Ga., two hours away. While her parents were at home packing for the trip, they received "the phone call that you never want to get," Drake said.

"They called us and asked, 'How fast can you get here?'" Drake recalled. "They really didn't think she was going to make it."

Doctors administered medication to Grace that they expected would keep her alive only long enough for her family to arrive in Augusta.

"They were just trying to keep her body going," Drake said. "They didn't have much hope."

The first five months of life were difficult ones for Grace. In that time, she had two heart surgeries, bleeding on her brain, and was diagnosed with Turner Syndrome, a condition characterized by the lack of a second X chromosome in females. The time was stressful for the rest of the Drake family as well.

"We were spending lots and lots of money just driving back and forth," Mrs. Drake noted. "Financially, it was killing us."

Not long after Grace arrived in Augusta, the Drakes received an unexpected blessing. An individual from Faith Baptist arranged for the family to stay at a missionary parsonage at a Methodist church not far from the hospital.

During Grace's ordeal, her parents acknowledged they had their doubts about whether planting a church in Kentucky was what God really wanted them to do.

"I often wondered, 'God, do you still want us to go or is this Your way of telling us don't go?'" Mrs. Drake recalled.

Sensing that God's plan for their lives was still to start the church, and with Grace's condition improving, the Drakes moved to Mount Sterling in April and launched the church on May 1.

In June, Grace was transferred to University of Kentucky Hospital in Lexington. Only a few weeks later, as her mother put it, "God healed Grace's body."

Miracle baby

On July 9, she was scheduled to undergo surgery on her trachea to aid in her breathing. A couple of days earlier, after being dependent on a ventilator throughout her first few months of life, Grace "got feisty," according to her mother, pulled out her breathing tube and began breathing on her own.

"In a three-day period, she went from being on a ventilator for five months to being on nothing," Drake said. "It's just amazing."

Grace's doctors still have yet to explain the sudden change in her condition. But her father has his own explanation.

"My diagnosis is God did it," he declared.

Today, Grace is a precocious seven-month old baby. She still suffers from several health problems, including Turner Syndrome, which will likely affect her for the rest of her life. Despite Grace weighing only 8 pounds, Drake said she is becoming more like a normal baby.

As for The Baptist Worship Center, Drake said the location of the new facility will help in reaching the unchurched throughout Mount Sterling.

"It's a central place, it's in downtown. We'll be able to work with events that are going on," Drake noted.

The old church facility is still in the process of being renovated and the congregation is currently meeting in the building's education wing. Drake said he hopes to have the sanctuary ready to use by Easter. But if that does not happen, Drake affirmed that he is not worried, since it is out of his control—a lesson he has learned firsthand over the past several months.

"You have to leave it up to God," Drake emphasized. "If you're faithful and do what God asks of you, He'll be faithful to do the rest."

THE BAPTIST WORSHIP CENTER AT A GLANCE

Location:

Mount Sterling

Pastor:

Travis Drake

Launch Date:

May 1, 2007

Sponsoring Church:

Stanton Baptist Church;
Porter Memorial Baptist Church, Lexington;
Faith Baptist Church, Monroe, Ga.

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

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NOAH volunteers make their mark

By Jim Burton

New Orleans (BP)—On the third floor of the World Trade Center in downtown New Orleans, more than 16,000 Southern Baptists have gathered for meals, devotions and fellowship during the last 17 months. Each has left their mark on the city in so many ways.

On a recent Friday night, I stood in the center of what has been Operation NOAH (New Orleans Area Homes) Rebuild's Volunteer Village cafeteria. With the rush of summer nearly over, only 65 or so volunteers were staying there that night—down from more than 400 on most summer nights and spring break weeks.

I paused and thought, "If only these walls could talk," as I read encouraging graffiti left by volunteers that offered greetings and well wishes. They tell a story that vividly illustrates the missional nature of Southern Baptists.

It's estimated that Baptists from more than 34 states have left their mark on the Volunteer Village cafeteria walls. From as far away as Alaska, volunteers have journeyed to New Orleans to help rebuild homes damaged by the ravaging flood waters of Lake Pontchartrain that swept through much of the city af-

ter levees broke. The legacy of Hurricane Katrina left an indelible mark on this city, but so have the volunteers.

As I studied messages left on the wall, a wave of thankfulness swept over me. When Operation NOAH

Rebuild was first conceived, there were no promises of any volunteer response. But mission volunteers from across the nation answered the call to accomplish a task much larger than any one person.

Across the Gulf Coast, more than 175,000 Southern Baptists have volunteered since Katrina's landfall two years ago, USA Today estimated in a July 19 article. The second closest group is a para-church ministry with 71,412 volunteers. The second largest denominational response has mobilized 56,656 volunteers.

The most lasting mark left by these volunteers hasn't been on the walls of the Volunteer Village cafeteria. The greatest mark has been in the homes and the lives of hurricane survivors.

During March I was in a home being rebuilt by volunteers from Foothills Baptist Church in Issaquah, Wash., a Seattle suburb. The homeowners were senior adults who had evacuated to Los Angeles. Their

daughter, Ranata Barrier, was working with NOAH leadership and volunteers to restore the home. As the Northwest Baptist volunteers worked away, she asked that they stop because she had something to say. Ranata shared about her parents' plight and how badly they wanted to return home. Then with tears in her eyes she thanked the volunteers.

Thyra Ferguson has also expressed thanks to NOAH volunteers. She remembers each of them, including some of the more than 150 volunteers from the Georgia African-American fellowship who worked on her home. She has each of their names, and she writes to them regularly.

As much as we try, there is no way to measure the impact of Hurricane Katrina and the depth of hurt it created across the Mississippi and Louisiana Gulf coasts.

Despite volunteer counts in the tens of thousands, it's virtually impossible to measure the mark made in the recovery effort by their work. We know that relational bridges have been built, and thousands have made professions of faith. That's a mark we will have to wait to see in heaven.

Jim Burton is senior director for partnership mobilization for the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board

FIRST PERSON

What causes dropouts?

I write this in response to the study on why young people choose to leave church, published in the Aug. 14 issue.

I was in youth ministry for 14 years before God called me to men's ministry. First of all, the term "church dropout" is a new one to me. I liked it as an accurate description of young people who leave church after high school. But I also approach this subject from the perspective of a former student of two Baptist institutions of higher learning.

From what I have seen, the biggest reason for the dropout rate

from church is at home. Parents develop bad habits like vacationing from church in the summers, siding against their child with a church minister or member, and also making threats about leaving a church due to personal conflicts. No matter how a parent reacts to conflict at church (leave or stay), the child will leave when he or she is old enough because the link between the child and church is weak due to hurt feelings.

Also, some parents stay extremely busy with non-church activities during summer months because so many churches cancel activities for the summer. And if you announce

summer activities, these parents become irate. Then their children suffer yet another disenchantment with the church. So they learn from their parents that it's okay to get away from God's house because you're entitled to it.

But sometimes, someone at church complains about the child. And for one reason or another, the parents seem to side against the child by not siding with them entirely. So the child seeks revenge upon leaving the nest by not going to church. A lot of the reasons stated in the article were mere excuses. Children drop out of church due to reasons that go much deeper.

*Eddie Rainbolt
Louisville*

Pray 'With One Voice' across Kentucky

Our Lord taught us to pray and the Bible admonishes us to pray continually. It is an awesome privilege to pray personally and with others.

Kentucky Baptists will have a special opportunity to pray together on Sept. 11 when we gather for simultaneous prayer in 62 locations across the state. The simultaneous prayer gatherings are being collectively referred to as "With One Voice" and will be held at 6:30 p.m. (CDT) and 7:30 p.m. (EDT).

You can find the prayer gathering nearest you by visiting www.kybaptist.org/onevoice.

The Kentucky Baptist Convention has focused on prayer for many years. Some will remember the prayer guides for "100 Days of Prayer." This was followed by regional prayer meetings, which are continuing.

Two years ago, we held the "Pray the Perimeter" prayer tour. God blessed several of us on the KBC

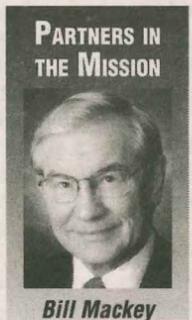
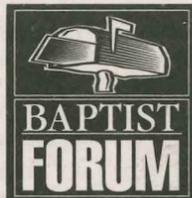
staff along with Woman's Missionary Union Executive Director Joy Bolton to travel the perimeter of the state and pray with 1,374 people in

32 locations. Last year, we followed up with "Pray the Interior" where we visited the interior associations and prayed with about 1,350 people in another 32 locations.

This year, directors of missions and local leaders will conduct each prayer meeting, which are being held as part of the celebration of the 300th anniversary of the first association in America. A KBC staff or related person also plans to be at each prayer meeting.

The prayer gatherings will focus on prayer for spiritual awakening and revival, effective outreach of the churches, and for ministers and their families.

I will remember the Pray the Perimeter and Interior prayer experiences as long as I live. Listening to the prayers of laypeople and pastors



Bill Mackey

FAMILY

Make certain you gain benefit from fringe benefits

By Jeremy White

Employer-provided fringe benefits are a significant part of many employees' overall compensation.



The U.S. Department of Labor estimates that the composition of compensation for the average private industry worker is 73 percent for wages and salaries and 27 percent for fringe benefits.

From my experience, here are the most common mistakes people make when working with and implementing fringe benefits with their financial plan:

Failing to review beneficiary choices. Your choices of a beneficiary for your retirement plan or group life insurance don't automatically change just because you have married or remarried. Many spouses have been surprised when they learn that they have not been named as beneficiary—because of negligence—after a death occurs.

Assuming the human resources department will take care of everything for you. The trend is for more and more choice (and the burden of making the choice) upon the employee. Take personal initiative.

Failing to take advantage of available employee fringe benefits. Make sure you know all the available benefits. Then, as the name implies, use them to your "benefit."

Holding too much company stock in stock option plans or retirement plans. Learn from those who suffered great misfortune at Enron. Stay diversified. Hold other stocks or mutual funds when possible.

Failing to review your fringe benefit choices annually. Your family circumstances change. New options frequently are added to your company's plans. Stay informed.

Contributing too much to flexible spending plans. It's wise to receive a tax deduction. But if you don't use it, you lose it. Estimate conservatively what you will spend for medical expenses or child care. Otherwise, you'll be buying three pairs of glasses in December to get reimbursed.

Failing to obtain professional consultation outside the company. You should seek professional counsel for some of the decisions you make, such as choosing a pension payout option. Many decisions made with your employer have lifetime implications.

May that be true for the churches, associations and conventions to the glory of God and the transformation of lives!

Jeremy White is a certified public accountant with Blythe, White & Associates in Paducah

in brokenness before God was an unforgettable experience.

I remember one pastor praying for his children and the youth to be saved and that if it required his life for them to be saved, he would gladly give it.

I also remember dramatic testimonies of answered prayer. Because of the prayers of a mother, one man was delivered from alcohol and called to preach. In another case, a wife prayed for her husband to be delivered from drug addiction. He is now a pastor of a growing church and is seeing many other people delivered from addictions.

There is great power in prayer. In Acts 2, the early Christians were united in prayer and the Holy Spirit came in power. At each major expansion of the gospel in the book of Acts, the church prayed and the Holy Spirit guided them into exponential growth.

May that be true for the churches, associations and conventions to the glory of God and the transformation of lives!

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

Help spouse come to terms with undeserved jealousy

Q: What should a person do if one's spouse is jealous for no good reason? In my case, I have never been unfaithful or even flirtatious, yet my husband always seems suspicious.

That poorly paid, yet oft-quoted writer Anonymous once penned these words: "Jealousy is nothing more than the fear of abandonment." According to Wikipedia, jealousy "typically refers to the thoughts, feelings and behaviors that occur when a person believes a valued relationship is being threatened by a rival."

MARRIAGE

Jealousy may occur because of a real threat or a perceived threat. In your case, the perceived threat is enough to trigger your husband's jealousy. Your question gets at potential strategies you can employ to help your husband feel more secure and safer in the relationship.

Talk with your husband about events and behaviors that seem to trigger his jealousy. Try to be sensitive to avoiding these situations and behaviors if at all possible. Help your husband identify anything in his relational history that would make him especially sensitive to abandonment and to realize in tangible ways how your relationship differs from those in the past.

Thought encourage him to see the irrationality in his own thought patterns and to begin to meditate on Scriptures such as Psalm 143:8 that speak of the steadfast, unfailing love of God: "Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul."

Strive as individuals and as a couple to draw nearer to the God who the Scripture tells us "is a consuming fire, a jealous God" (Deuteronomy 4:24). How ironic that this protective jealousy that draws us to a divine marriage also guards us from the destructive human jealousy that would result in our earthly marital destruction.—*Scott Wigginton*

Q: As a new school year gets under way, I am concerned about all the books and other items my kids have to lug to school every day. Are backpacks causing back problems for children?

I wish I had invented backpacks! Almost every student from kindergarten to college carries one. They are the modern book bag.

PARENTING

Besides books, I continue to be amazed at how much stuff children cram in their backpacks. Watch a child walking and you can see the backpack sagging. Help them into the car and you will discover how heavy the things are. Are your children hurting themselves? Perhaps.

A growing number of school nurses, pediatricians, chiropractors and orthopedic surgeons are reporting injuries to children caused by the heavy loads they are carrying to and from school in backpacks. Bones are soft during the developmental stages of childhood. Excess weight can cause spinal column alignment problems that can lead to skeletal and muscular problems. Any adult who has carried a bulging hanging bag over their shoulder for very long can imagine the impact.

According to one Web site, starpacks.com, "Many pediatricians recommend that children not carry more than 10 to 15 percent of their body weight." However, many of today's students are carrying around more than 30 pounds each day. Just as golf bags were redesigned several years ago to more evenly distribute the weight of the clubs, backpacks also are undergoing changes. The idea is to shift the weight from the shoulders and back to the waist area. Some packs also feature inflated straps and lumbar supports.

Encourage your children to limit what they put in their backpack. Check with your pediatrician or with an occupational therapist for more information about this issue.—*David Garrard*

Family Forum writers are:

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Send questions for Family Forum to Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253 or e-mail wesrec@earthlink.net.



What will you do for the sake of Kentucky?

What are you willing to do for Kentucky's spiritual sake?

This month's Season of Prayer for State Missions and Eliza Broadus Offering offer clear ministry priorities with the 2007 theme: "For the Sake of Kentucky ... Learn, Pray, Give, Go."

A four-page insert in this issue of the Western Recorder highlights a variety of ministries Kentucky Baptists can support through education, prayer, financial gifts and personal involvement. Each of the ministries reflect this year's theme verse, "I do all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings" (1 Corinthians 9:23).

The season of prayer, set for Sept. 9-16, is an opportunity for individuals and congregations throughout the commonwealth to join in focused prayer for urgent spiritual needs and ministry efforts.

Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union, which does a masterful job of promoting the season of prayer and offering each year, has made available a variety of resources for congregations to participate in the annual emphasis.

Among the various resource materials, a church-wide promotion guide poses the following questions:

- Just what would you do for the sake of your family?
- What would you do for the sake of salvation in the lives around you?
- What would you do for the sake of Kentucky?

Those are timely questions that individual believers and churches need to ponder and address for the sake

of God's Kingdom.

In the midst of this year's season of prayer, Kentucky Baptists also will gather in dozens of locations throughout the state Sept. 11 for the "With One Voice" simultaneous prayer emphasis.

"As we gather to pray 'With One Voice,' our primary purpose will be to pray for spiritual awakening," the season of prayer bulletin insert notes. "We will be praying for the lost and for God to stir our churches. We will be praying to see people saved and baptized. ... The need for prayer in our state is great. For the sake of Kentucky, join us."

In addition to the crucial focus on prayer, the 2007-08 Eliza Broadus Offering has a goal of \$1 million. Included in that total is \$675,000 for Kentucky Baptist state missions

and evangelism to support such areas as Appalachian Regional Ministry, ministries to various language and ethnic groups, literacy ministry, international student ministry, evangelism training and disaster relief. The offering goal also includes \$250,000 for Kentucky WMU missions education projects and \$75,000 for Kentucky special ministries.

The bottom line is that learning about, praying for, giving to and getting personally involved in state missions is essential to help Kentucky Baptists reach unchurched individuals and families throughout the state with the gospel of Christ.

Take time this month to learn, pray, give and go for the sake of Kentucky. When it comes to making a lasting spiritual impact in our homes, churches, communities and state, what are you willing to do?

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Tannis Henderson

Discipleship starts with follow-through

It seems to be the consistent resounding in my head. It occurs when I am on the tee box, the free throw line or in the batter's box (not that I am in the latter two very much anymore). It is that constant reminder to pay attention to my follow-through.

It is amazing how an otherwise perfectly good shot can be messed up by not paying attention to the after shot. It had such promise at the beginning but my elbow went wild, or I stiff-armed it or countless other things that cause it to fail to live up to the potential it had at the beginning.

There are some striking parallels to youth ministry. This time of year seems to be full of community outreach events, revival meetings, back-to-school rallies, See You at the Pole events and numerous other activities geared to reach unsaved students with the gospel of Christ. I have seen hundreds of students come to know Jesus this time of year through these types of events. But like my errant golf shot or off-the-mark free throws, what started well doesn't always finish well. We have not done a great job—or sometimes any job at all for that matter—of follow-through with students to help them become growing disciples of Christ. It is as if our responsibility ends when they become Christians.

So how do we help today's students, like our Royal Ambassadors say in their pledge, "to become a well-informed, responsible follower of Christ?"

Begin with the end in mind. In a recent conversation I had with Steve Coleman, youth minister at

New Work Fellowship in Hopkinsville, he said, "Start with the end in mind. What do you want your students to look like when they come out of your youth program? What does that student need to look like and have experienced while he or she was a part of our youth ministry?"

"We have students who can quote a lot of stuff, but there's no life change," he added. "Don't just look for numbers. We are going to be held accountable for the time we had those students."

We must have a vision for the continuum of discipleship. According to Allen Jackson, professor of youth education at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, "Discipleship is not complete until the disciples become the disciplinarians."

Involve parents. Parents have a biblical mandate to disciple their children. It is also what students want. They want their parents involved in their lives.

According to a recent survey of young people ages 13-24 conducted by Associated Press and MTV, when asked "What makes you happy?" spending time with family was the top answer to that open-ended question.

Studies by LifeWay Christian Resources and other organizations have concluded that the spiritual life of the parents is a key determinant in students staying involved in church after they graduate from youth ministry. The research breaks down this way: If a student comes from a Christian family where Mom and Dad model their faith and it is evident that their faith makes a dif-

ference in their lives, only 20 percent of those students will not be involved in church in their late 20s. If a student comes from a totally unchurched family, there is a 50 percent probability they will not be involved in church in their late 20s. The final number is the most sobering one. If a student comes from a marginal church family, where the parents attend church only on Sunday mornings and there is minimum involvement beyond that, there is an 80 percent probability they will not be involved in church in their late 20s.

Encourage church involvement.

"A lot of times we lose students when they get out of high school because they've never really been involved in the church environment," Coleman pointed out. He said church leaders need to help young people "look for ways they can serve in the church." Many youth are taking managers in school and are assistant managers at their jobs but at church we let them serve Kool-Aid at vacation Bible school.

This fall, scores of students will come to Christ as a direct result of the Spirit of God working in our communities, schools, churches and families. We need to put into place now steps to help them begin their journey of discipleship. Begin Bible studies, mentoring relationships, accountability groups, evangelism training events and related efforts to help move students deeper in their relationship with Christ.

We also need to expect the same spiritual disciplines from our youth workers and from ourselves as parents. The simple fact is that we can't take students where we aren't.

Joe Ball, a former youth minister at Edgewood Baptist Church in Hopkinsville, is youth strategist for the Kentucky Baptist Convention

YOUTH MINISTRY CORNER



Joe Ball

Youth leader encourages adults to engage teen culture

"Youth think that if you don't understand their culture, you don't understand them."

Youth leader Tim Bargo of First Priority Tri-States

By **Dannah Prather**
Partnerships Editor

Lexington—How important is it that parents and youth ministry leaders know what "LOL" and "ROFL" mean?

According to youth minister Tim Bargo, it matters a great deal. He was one of three presenters at the recent Super Saturday kickoff event in Lexington who facilitated discussion on "Understanding Today's Youth Culture."

"Youth think that if you don't understand their culture, you don't understand them," said Bargo, who serves through the Middlesboro-based ministry First Priority Tri-States.

Just as international missionaries study the country in which they will serve, youth ministry workers should get acquainted with the world in which U.S. teens live, he suggested.

Culture is "the soup our teenagers swim in every day," Bargo said.

He cited several sources, including the book, "Youth Culture 101" by Walt Mueller.

There are 35,000 youth involved in Kentucky Baptist churches or ministries, Bargo noted. That compares to a youth population in the commonwealth of 1.25 million. "We're losing ground and we're losing it fast," he warned.

Despite troubling trends, Bargo said many youth demonstrate a high level of commitment to specific activities, including Bible study. "Some commit to Bible club and not church," he added.

Another population of students, many from unchurched homes, now is attending church for the first time. "It's become socially acceptable for kids to go to church on Sunday," Bargo said.

Research shows youth are interested in spirituality. Unfortunately they also tend to have a cafeteria-style faith. "They pick and choose," Bargo said. For example, a student may understand and appreciate the teachings and example of Jesus, but he or she might also claim to believe in reincarnation.

Theological relativism quickly becomes moral relativism, Bargo noted. In one survey, 70 percent of youth said cohabitation before marriage is acceptable; 50 percent of Christian youth polled in one study indicated they agree with that view.

In addition to Mueller's text and other resources, Bargo recommends student workers dip their toes into the "soup" of kid culture.

"Get to know students by getting to know their media," he suggested.

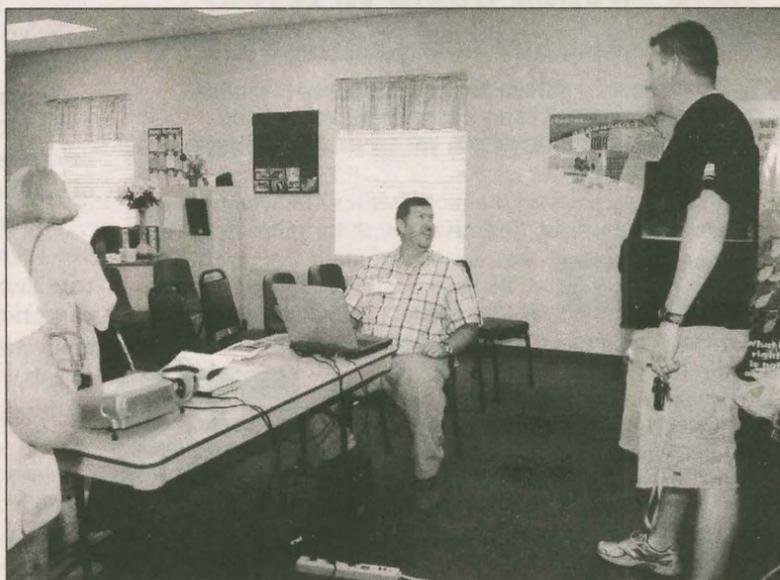
MP3 players, such as iPods, provide youth the opportunity to create their own "life soundtrack." Knowing the types of music students listen to shows what they are thinking and feeling about themselves and their world, Bargo said. This knowledge also arms parents and ministry leaders to identify dangerous artists and lyrics.

"There is a fine line between knowing the culture and endorsing the culture," he cautioned, but added, "The more you know about their culture, the more you can make a relationship with them."

Adults also need to keep up with how students communicate with one other, Bargo said. For example, e-mail and phone calls have been abandoned by many teens in favor of text messaging.

By using abbreviations in text messaging, youth have developed their own shorthand. For example, "LOL" and "ROFL" are abbreviations

SUPER '07
SATURDAY



YOUTH FOCUS Tim Bargo (seated) visits with workshop participants following his Super Saturday session on understanding youth culture. (Photo by Dannah Prather)

for "laugh out loud" and "roll on floor laughing."

One Sunday school teacher attending the Super Saturday session said he texts students what will be discussed on Sunday.

Texting also can encourage students to participate in class discussion. Sometimes "kids don't want to raise their hand and ask a question," Bargo said. A teacher can provide his or her cellphone number and invite students to text questions during class. This permits youth to ask questions anonymously.

It was noted, however, that not all cellphone contracts offer free, unlimited texting so teachers should make certain that texting their students won't increase their cellphone bills.

Other strong media influences include web logs—also known as blogs—and Web sites such as MySpace.com and Facebook.com.

Christian bands, popular youth

speakers and other members of the youth ministry subculture use MySpace and Facebook to communicate with students, but those sites also contain material most parents would find objectionable. Bargo noted that keeping computers in public areas of the home is the best way to know where children are surfing on the Web.

Resources available to help youth ministry leaders include www.cpyu.org. It provides podcasts, blogs, tip sheets, short articles, research, links and a newsletter to help adults stay informed about the quickly changing world of youth culture.

Closer to home, Joe Ball, youth strategist for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, authors the blog www.despisingnone.com, which includes a podcast.

For ideas on learning more about youth culture, contact Ball by e-mail at joe.ball@kybaptist.org or by phone at (866) 489-3353.

Lynch: Evaluate your church's curb appeal

By **Trennis Henderson**
Editor

Lexington—Does your church have curb appeal?

That was among the questions posed by Rodney Lynch during a recent Super Saturday workshop at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington.

Lynch, minister of music at Parkway Baptist Church in Bardstown, was among dozens of leaders who presented more than 100 workshops at the Lexington event.

Emphasizing that church facilities "are part of attracting and keeping people," Lynch said, "The impression we give people will keep them or not."

Warning that many congregations "don't take care of their facilities like they used to," Lynch said repairing broken ceiling tiles, water stains and peeling paint is "part of keeping your curb appeal."

Lynch encouraged church leaders to make a list of the 10 most common eyesores they see outside their facilities as well as repair needs inside the building.

"What do you see that needs to be updated, fixed or repaired?" he asked.

"Visualize yourself entering your church, stopping at a welcome center and attending worship," he added. "You are a guest at your church for the first time. What do you see? What do you sense? What is the attitude of the congregation? Is your experience warm and friendly? Will you return for another visit?"

Noting that a guest's first seven minutes on the church property typically create lasting impressions, Lynch asked, "What message are you sending to your community and to the unchurched?"

He said such simple problems as cobwebs, trash and general clutter can leave negative impressions.

"A lot of times, those who have been at the church for a long time have blinders on and ignore things," he noted. "It's hard to fix something if you're not aware of it."

"We need to be intentional about taking care of our facilities," Lynch emphasized. "Your landscaping, flower beds and sidewalks need to look good. How we take care of our property will let the community know how serious we are about what we're trying to do."

"Your church is known for something. Is it known for ugly facilities, cracked sidewalks, poor landscaping? ... There are some easy things we can do to beautify" church facilities.

Noting that "it doesn't take big bucks, but you've got to stay on top of it," Lynch cautioned, "Most churches let it be a domino effect. ... Don't just patch; fix it right."

In addition to the Super Saturday conference in Lexington, recent workshops have been held in Owensboro and Pikeville. Super Saturday events also will be held Sept. 8 at First Baptist Church of Paducah and First Baptist Church of Somerset and Sept. 15 at Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown.

Workshop provides new believers with tips for staying on right path

By **Drew Nichter**
News Director

Lexington—When she was a young Christian, Sue Fowler said she did not have the strong spiritual support she felt she needed.

She does not plan to repeat that mistake with her 8-year-old daughter, who is a new believer.

"The path is not always going to be an easy path to follow when you become a Christian," said Fowler, a member of Parksville Baptist Church.

Fowler sought advice at the "Five to Grow On" workshop during the recent Super Saturday training conference in Lexington.

Darrell Morgan, pastor of Williamstown Baptist Church, discussed the primary issues that new Christians deal with and ways that experienced believers can have a "solid foundational discussion" with a new believer.

In only four months as senior pastor, Morgan said his church has experienced tremendous growth through baptism. But with that growth comes the challenge of keeping new believers in the church.

Church leaders are "doing everything we can to make sure believers

get connected and understand what they've done and what God's done in their lives," Morgan noted.

He cited a statistic that showed many new Christians fall away from active church involvement within six months to a year of their decision to follow Christ. Morgan said he believes that may be because of a dependence on the excitement of accepting Christ.

"It is an emotional event," Morgan said, "but it isn't built on emotion."

Using the book "Beginning With Christ" as a resource, Morgan introduced five assurances that new Christians need in order to stay connected. They include:

- Assurance of salvation.
- Assurance of answered prayer.
- Assurance of victory.
- Assurance of forgiveness.
- Assurance of guidance.

"Being a new Christian can be overwhelming and discouraging," Morgan said. But, he added, "God will help find a way out, if you ask."

Fowler noted that a strong prayer life and family—both at home and church—can help young Christians overcome concerns such as negative peer pressure.

Forums to address financial support issues in churches

Louisville—Ministers and church employees will benefit from tax and compensation training at the Kentucky Baptist Convention's upcoming Financial Support Issues Conferences.

Held on five September dates at locations across the state, the events are designed to provide those compensated by a church with information about tax laws, investment choices, IRS rules and more.

This year's events will be held Sept. 17 at Hillcrest Baptist Church in Hopkinsville; Sept. 18 at the Kentucky Baptist Building in Louisville; Sept. 19 at First Baptist Church of Prestonsburg; Sept. 20 at First Baptist Church of London; and Sept. 21 at Central Baptist Church in Winchester.

Mike Ford, senior relationship manager for GuideStone Financial Resources, will lead the conferences. Ford will examine a variety of tax and financial issues, and also will provide information about GuideStone Financial Resources' newest investment products.

Financial Support Issues conferences are designed for ministers and their spouses, church treasurers and other church employees. Members of finance, personnel or pastor search committees are also welcomed to attend.

The conferences are free to attend, but registration is required. For more information, visit www.kybaptist.org/financialsupport or call (502) 489-3521 or (866) 489-3521 (toll free in Kentucky).

Student mission demand on the rise in Ky.

Louisville—When Scott and Jackie Newman departed for Poland in 2006, they became one of the first missionary couples ever to be sponsored by Baptist Campus Ministry students across Kentucky.

Having been involved for years with Kentucky Wesleyan College's BCM, the Newmans' exposure to missions through BCM came full circle when they were selected for the two-year experience that would rely on funds raised by their fellow BCM students.

According to Keith Inman, associate team leader for the KBC's collegiate/young adult department, enabling students to send their peers overseas is just one of the ways BCMs are responding to the increase in students seeking mission opportunities.

The effort further reflects a recent shift in the KBC's student mobilization strategy. Missions has remained a focus for Baptist Campus Ministry since its inception, he said, but "we're not the gatekeeper anymore."

"We can't get our arms around the masses of people that want to go on mission," Inman said. "This generation wants to have a hands-on experience."

The Newmans are among the

countless students who have been impacted by the Kentucky Baptist Convention's BCM and its commitment to equipping students for missions.

For many years, BCMs across Kentucky have offered mission opportunities to students through the North American Mission Board, the International Mission Board and the KBC's summer Son Teams.

The KBC offered similar opportunities again this summer, but Inman said students now have more choices available to them through the Internet and through connections with international students on their campuses.

According to Lizzi-beth Spence, KBC collegiate ministry specialist, KBC-sponsored opportunities cannot meet the demands of interested students.

This summer alone, Kentucky BCMs mobilized more than 500 students for missions work. Only 40 of those students participated in efforts directly sponsored by the KBC's collegiate/young adult department.

"We do whatever we can to help them get connected," Spence said. "More students than ever are participating in missions because everyone feels that they can go."

Inman said he believes the shift

in strategy is critical to the KBC's goal of cultivating missions-minded leaders in the next generation.

In 2001, Inman participated in the IMB's London Summit, where missionaries and students gathered to discuss strategies for mobilizing students in a changing culture.

"During that time, I realized we were part of a worldwide student missions movement," Inman said. "We started looking for ways to streamline our efforts and try to get as many Kentucky students plugged into missions as possible."

Since then, Inman said both the International Mission Board and the North American Mission Board have also seen increases in student applicants for short-term missions.

According to Tika Scoles, student missions mobilizer for NAMB, the agency has seen an 89 percent increase in participants from the previous summer.

While spring and summer breaks continue to be a popular time for students to be involved in short-term mission trips, Spence said another recent shift is that more opportunities are opening up for extended involvement.

"Students are either taking a semester off school to serve, or going right after they graduate," she said.

Kentucky Baptist volunteers respond to Ohio floods

Mansfield, Ohio—Kentucky Baptist disaster relief volunteers from Northern Kentucky are working to restore areas affected by flooding in Mansfield, Ohio.

The Aug. 21 storms caused severe flooding throughout the city. Floodwaters have begun to recede and recovery efforts are under way.

Last week, a team of three Kentucky Baptist volunteers removed water and damaged materials from flooded homes, and also sanitized the homes to prevent further damage. Additional volunteers are

scheduled to continue the relief effort in the weeks to come.

The Southern Baptist North American Mission Board is coordinating the relief effort in Mansfield. Kentucky Baptist Convention disaster relief teams are responding to requests for aid submitted through the North American Mission Board.

Kentucky Baptists are part of a larger network of Southern Baptist volunteers trained to respond to disasters by manning mass feeding operations, using chainsaws

to clear downed trees and limbs, cleaning mud out of flooded homes and other efforts.

Southern Baptist disaster relief volunteers work in conjunction with other organizations, such as the Salvation Army, the American Red Cross and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Together, Southern Baptists compose the third largest relief organization in the nation.

For more information about Kentucky Baptist disaster relief, visit www.kybaptist.org/dr.

Baptist Seminary of Kentucky celebrates fifth anniversary

Lexington—Baptist Seminary of Kentucky, established in 2002, will hold a public celebration marking its fifth anniversary Sept. 8 at 2 p.m. at Calvary Baptist Church in Lexington.

Emmanuel McCall, immediate past moderator of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and vice president of Baptist World Alliance, will be the keynote speaker. Seminary President Greg Earwood also will speak.

"We stand for the original definition of a Baptist: freedom-loving, mission-minded and cooperative-spirited," Earwood said. He noted that the school's students "come to us because they believe in the sovereignty of God and the free will of human beings; they affirm women, both clergy and laity, in ministry; and they affirm the role of pastor as a servant-leader instead of the ruler of the congregation."

The school, which began with 15 students, currently has more than 50 students enrolled, Earwood added.

Dalen Jackson, BSK's first full-time faculty member, was promoted earlier this year to academic dean and professor of biblical studies. The seminary recently named Mark Medley as associate professor of theology.

Baptist Seminary of Kentucky is licensed by the Council on Postsecondary Education and will submit an application this fall for associate membership with the Association of Theological Schools.

The seminary is involved in partnerships with Georgetown College, CBF, Kentucky Baptist Fellowship and Lexington Theological Seminary.

For more information, visit www.bsky.org.

SIMULTANEOUS PRAYER GATHERINGS ACROSS OUR STATE

A Time for Prayer

With One Voice

September 11, 2007

6:30 pm CDT 7:30 pm EDT

KBC
KENTUCKY BAPTIST CONVENTION

502-489-3528 or 866-489-3528

For a complete list of prayer gathering locations, visit www.kybaptist.org/onevoice

Pray for...

- spiritual awakening
- movement of God in your church
- Kentucky Baptist ministries
- Kentucky Baptist missionaries
- people who do not know Jesus

With One Voice is part of the 300th anniversary celebration of associations in America - 1707-2007

Church residency programs help mentor young pastors

By Mark Wingfield
Associated Baptist Press

Dallas (ABP)—When a Baptist minister graduates from seminary or divinity school, what factors predict whether that person will succeed or fail in local church ministry?

Educational training plays a part, as does the personality of the congregation the minister serves. But according to data gathered by the Lilly Endowment, other intangibles play perhaps an even greater role in predicting whether that minister will remain in ministry five, 10 or 15 years down the road.

A good theological education is essential, but it may not be enough to help a young minister survive a first pastorate or a challenging pastorate, according to George Mason, senior pastor of Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas. Establishing a healthy pastoral identity, gaining confidence in ministry skills, finding a sense of community—all these play a key role in preparation for the pastorate that spans beyond traditional theological education.

As someone who now seeks to pass this baton to younger ministers, Mason himself draws upon a type of mentoring that is unusual in Baptist churches. When he became pastor at Wilshire in 1989, he followed in the footsteps of Bruce McIver, who had served the church 30 years.

What could have been a death sentence for a young pastor—living

in the shadow of a beloved long-term pastor who remained in the church—instead became a blessing that sparked a larger movement. McIver became a mentor to Mason, blessed him as pastor and made it his mission to help him succeed.

And so when McIver neared the end of his life, as he and Mason visited in a room at Baylor University Medical Center, they realized they could model for others what they had learned working together. Their idea was to create a two-year program of mentoring for young ministers, allowing them to gain experience in a healthy large-church setting before setting out on their own.

Pastoral initiative

That idea serendipitously collided with a new initiative of the Lilly Endowment, based in Indianapolis. Lilly leadership had taken note of the coming shortage of pastors in American churches and the high burnout rate of pastors already serving.

Wilshire became one of the first congregations in America—and one of the few Baptist congregations—to receive a grant from Lilly's Transition-into-Ministry program. With this first \$800,000 grant, Wilshire established a pastoral residency program.

Wilshire employs four pastoral residents in two-year cycles. They serve as members of the ministerial staff, preach regularly, teach Bi-

ble studies and special classes, participate in worship planning, make hospital visits and have contact with prospective members. They also participate in weekly seminars on preaching and pastoral ministry.

The mentoring process at Wilshire takes many forms, some planned and others unplanned. Residents report that some of their most helpful insights come from sitting around a table dissecting events they have watched unfolding in the natural life of the congregation.

"We had this all-access pass to see a live congregation," said Jake Hall, former pastoral resident at Wilshire and now pastor of Heritage Baptist Fellowship in Canton, Ga. "We got to take a look at this living, vibrant body and then go out from that experience and to see the points of life in a congregation."

"Learning by doing"

A large part of mentoring is learning by doing, said Andrew Daugherty, a Wake Forest Divinity School graduate who left Wilshire's residency last year to start a Baptist church in Rockwall, Texas.

"One of the things I learned, (in addition to) putting other tools in the pastoral toolbox besides preaching, was how to lean on people who may be more gifted in some areas of ministry than I am," he explained.

Through the residency, hands-on learning occurs in a safer and less-

threatening environment than a young minister might find in a first pastorate.

The end result is a strengthened calling to ministry and a quiver full of resources to sustain that calling, said Sean Allen, a Truett Seminary graduate who left Wilshire to become pastor of First Baptist Church of DeLand, Fla.

"The opportunity to come in and integrate what I had learned in seminary with what little experience I had had in ministry, to come into an environment this nurturing and loving and supporting, it's essential," he said. "I have a lot of friends in ministry who chose a different path, and they are now spinning their wheels in the mud, questioning their calling. I, on the other hand, have had my calling affirmed."

And that's where the benefits of mentoring pay dividends for the church at large, Mason said.

"Churches always try to think beyond themselves and wonder how their energies in serving the Lord, their financial contributions and efforts will be transformative for the world. This is a natural extension of that ambition," he said. "We hope through this program we are able to invest in many young people who will give leadership to churches beyond us, and they then will invest in others. (We hope) that it has a multiplication effect and will transform the Baptist community in America."

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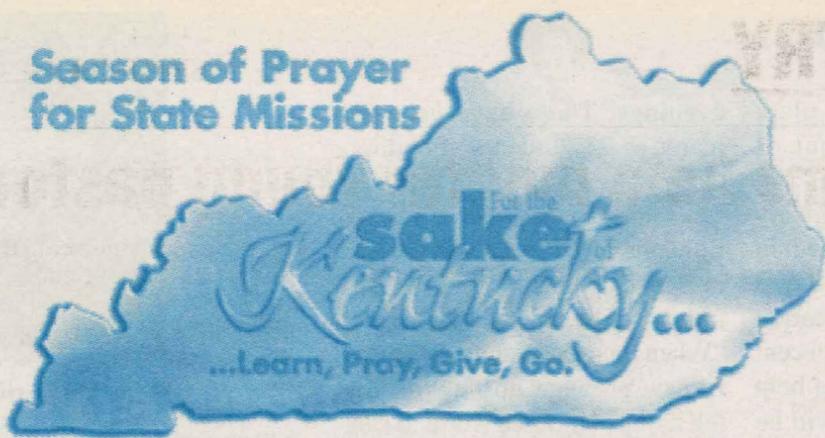
The Marshall Center for Christian Ministry

GEORGETOWN

C O L L E G E

Live. Learn. Believe.

Season of Prayer
for State Missions



**“I do all this for the sake of the gospel,
that I may share in its blessings.”
1 Corinthians 9:23 NIV**



Pauline White

Pauline White picked up an *On Mission* magazine for what she thought was just some light reading. Instead she heard God's call to eastern Kentucky. For the sake of those who are lost and in great need in Kentucky, Pauline sold her home in Florida and relocated to Lynch. A significant response for anyone, but especially for someone 72 years old. Pauline now runs a food bank in Clutts called "Shepherd's Pantry Inc., A Southern Baptist Ministry, Feeding His Sheep."

Lynn and Angie Wagoner thought they would satisfy the call to missions by taking six weeks vacation from their jobs and devoting that time to mission work. Instead they found that God wanted them long-term. For the sake of people with spiritual and physical needs in Kentucky, the Wagoners have operated God's Appalachian Partnership (G.A.P.) for the past eight years to minister to people living in a 25-mile stretch of the Southern Appalachian Mountains around McDowell.



Pam Pyle

For the sake of the lost in the inner city of Lexington, Pam Pyle directs ministries at the Irishtown Baptist Mission. Through Sunday worship, youth night, Bible studies, "Read to Succeed," "Feed the Hungry," and discipleship ministries, Pam is leading the efforts to share the gospel in Irishtown. "It is a joy to share the gospel with the people and see them respond to God's love. It is a joy to see the dedication of the many volunteers who love God and love serving in Irishtown."

Pam felt drawn to Irishtown first as a college student participating in Baptist Campus Ministry (BCM) at University of Kentucky. Each week the BCM would send a group of students to help the children with their homework.

In 1994 Pam served as a summer missionary with the Elkhorn Baptist Association. Part of her time was spent serving in Irishtown. Pam loved it and continued to think about the community long past her summer there.

Later, after a few summers as a summer missionary in Grand Isle, Louisiana, Pam felt God's call back to Kentucky. She deeply loved both Irishtown and Grand Isle and thought how great it would be if she could serve in both places.

"God can do amazing things and work things out better than we can ever imagine. In the fall of 2000, I felt God calling me to come back to Lexington. At the same time, the Elkhorn Association was looking for someone to serve nine months of the year in Irishtown. Then, God worked out the partnership between the Elkhorn Association and First Baptist Grand Isle."

"Since 2000, I have served nine months in Irishtown and three months each year in Grand Isle. The partnership is such an amazing answered prayer and blessing. I am so blessed to get to continue to see how God is at work in both places."

For the sake of Kentucky, Teresa Parrett serves as a Mission Service Corps missionary helping small churches know about resources available to them, such as training, materials, etc. "In my experience many of our rural churches were not aware of help available. This to me is what makes Southern Baptists so important. Through our many churches working together, the associa-

tions, state conventions, and SBC, the small church can have resources, training, etc. at their disposal that otherwise they might not be able to have on their own."

"On June 22, 1999 I met with David Aker to discuss my call to ministry. David got me connected with the Missions Growth Team at Kentucky Baptist Convention and on January 1, 2000 I became a Consultant working in the Mountain Missions Program. I am now in my 8th year working in the 47 eastern Kentucky counties helping to identify

needs, to bring mission teams and resources into the area to meet those needs, and traveling to share the story of what God is doing in eastern Kentucky."

Paul wrote of his ministry, "I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings" (1 Corinthians 9:23 NIV). Kentucky missions volunteers share in the blessings even as they share food, clothing, literacy skills, hugs and smiles. You can share the blessings, too. For the sake of Kentucky, we challenge you to learn, pray, give, and go.

2007 Season of Prayer for State Missions

and

Eliza Broadus Offering

Goal: \$1,000,000

God's Appalachian Partnership, a ministry in McDowell led by MSC missionaries, Lynn and Angie Wagoner, is housed in a former coal mine office building.

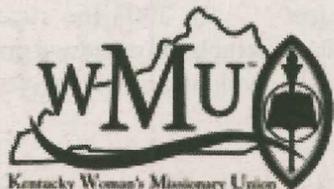


A packet of materials has been sent to the WMU director or contact person in every KBC church. It includes a DVD and teaching plans for all ages as well as suggestions for churchwide promotion of the Season of Prayer for State Missions and the Eliza Broadus Offering. Contact Kentucky WMU to order posters, prayer guides, and offering envelopes. You may request a state missions packet by calling Kentucky WMU at 502-489-3534 or toll free, 1-866-489-3534; or by email: kywmu@kybaptist.org. These materials are provided by the gifts of your church to the Eliza Broadus Offering and the Cooperative Program.

Church contributions to the Eliza Broadus Offering should be mailed to: Eliza Broadus Offering for State Missions, Kentucky Baptist Convention, PO Box 43433, Louisville, KY 40253-0433. Checks should be made payable to Kentucky Baptist Convention and designated "EBO." Church Treasurers may also include EBO contributions with other contributions through the Kentucky Baptist Convention using the KBC church contribution form and designating the amount for the Eliza Broadus Offering as "EBO."

Individuals or groups may contribute directly to the Eliza Broadus Offering. Please make checks payable to the Kentucky Baptist Convention and notate "EBO" on the check memo line. Mail these checks to: Eliza Broadus Offering, Kentucky WMU, PO Box 436569, Louisville, KY 40253-6569. Please enclose name and address for an acknowledgement of your gift.

Contributions for the 2007-08 Eliza Broadus Offering will be received from September 1, 2007 through August 31, 2008.





For the sake of Kentucky, learn about the needs in your community and across our state... Learning is the first step to missions involvement.

There is a waiting list for the tutoring program, with more children wanting help than there are tutors.

For the Sake of Kentucky: Learn

In every community in Kentucky, there are people who cannot read. Some are children struggling to grasp basic reading skills. Others are adults who never learned to read when they were in school. And some are newcomers to our state, learning to both read and speak English. For the sake of the gospel, literacy volunteers are helping children, youth, and adults learn.

Jacqueline (Jackie) Walker, literacy volunteer in Hopkinsville, says "Imagine a first grade student struggling at home to learn to read, struggling to pronounce her words correctly, and there is no one to help her because she is the only one in her family who speaks English. Or imagine a second grade boy trying to do his homework and he doesn't understand the basic math facts. Both of his parents are at work and the only one at

home to help him is an older brother who dropped out of school. He can't help him."

Literacy ministry is greatly needed to help people make it in our technical society. Today it takes a higher level of education than ever before to get a decent job. If students do not get help with school work, many will be left behind. Meeting literacy needs opens a door for the gospel.

Jackie volunteers for the after school tutoring ministry at First Baptist Church, Hopkinsville. Meeting every Thursday afternoon, about 20 volunteers work one to one, encouraging and helping children. There is a waiting list for the program, with more children wanting help than there are tutors. Jackie also directs the English as a Second Language ministry which meets on Sunday

evenings. There have been as many as 21 students attending class.

Jean Dixon, ESL tutor in Eubank, says that she is involved in literacy ministry because her father could not read or write. "When this opportunity came up, I knew growing up how daddy felt living in a closed world...I can remember daddy learning some simple something and being so amazed that he learned it." Jean is enthusiastic about ESL ministry and says that "Teaching English is one of the goals but our primary goal is to teach them the Lord Jesus Christ. Their time in the United States might just be a few years. We want them to learn about Him so they can go back and be missionaries in their own countries."



Jackie Walker tutors children every Thursday afternoon at First Baptist Church, Hopkinsville.



Rebecca Carnell

Rebecca Carnell, Literacy Consultant for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, trains volunteers in three types of literacy ministry: Adult Reading and Writing (ARW), Tutoring Children and Youth (TCY), and English as a Second Language (ESL). Tutors attend a 16-hour workshop to be certified in their tutoring area.

Each April, Rebecca leads a Literacy Conference sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention which provides encouragement and additional training to literacy volunteers. She is available to come to your church or association.

Many people in Kentucky need to learn to read. At the same time, many Kentucky Baptists need to learn about missions, including literacy. For the sake of Kentucky, learn about the needs in your community and across our state. A phone call to your association office, to the local school district or the social services office, will help you learn the needs. Learning is the first step to missions involvement!

For the Sake of Kentucky: Pray

If you have participated in the Kentucky state missions emphasis in year's past, you have probably used a bulletin insert prayer guide. Ever wondered what happened because you prayed?

In 2005 it was no coincidence that one of the focus areas of the state missions materials was Disaster Relief. Just as we were approaching the 2005 Season of Prayer for State Missions in September, the worst natural disaster ever to strike the United States came ashore. Her name was Katrina. And while Katrina did not do damage in Kentucky, Kentucky Disaster Relief teams were already in place before the storm ever made land, ready to move out as soon as possible after the storm.

When we interviewed Larry Koch, KBC Disaster Relief Coordinator, and other disaster

relief workers early in 2005, one thing that was mentioned several times was the need for rebuilding teams. It was noted that our volunteers were good at the initial response after a disaster, in doing such jobs as mud-outs, taking down trees, and other clean-up tasks. However, what we had not done was the follow-up, going back in six months to a year later to help with rebuilding. So, in September 2005 we prayed for "Baptist Rebuilders." Not only to rebuild after hurricanes, but after any type of disaster including floods, tornados, or fires - which happen right here in Kentucky.

Just ask Johnny Beaver, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Pascagoula, about rebuilding. "We felt so helpless with five feet of water in our church buildings and parsonage." Kentucky

volunteers Jerry and Etta Butcher helped the church install a new kitchen. Hamp Valentine, director of missions for the Tates Creek Baptist Association, and association volunteers remodeled the second floor of the educational building.

Now Kentucky Baptists have committed to provide volunteers to do rebuild projects on churches and homes in three associations in Mississippi and Louisiana for the next two years. Kentucky Baptists are also needed to help with Operation NOAH Rebuild, a construction missions effort in the Orleans East area of New Orleans. Rebuild volunteers do not have to be disaster relief trained to go and people at all skill levels can be of help.

In 2003 the state missions emphasis requested prayer for the volunteers who serve in Baptist

centers. In 2006, prayer was requested for volunteers in ministries such as food pantries, clothing closets, and children's clubs. Greg Whitetree, missionary at the Freeda Harris Baptist Center in Lookout says that volunteers have made an impact in the lives of children. One group of volunteers had been at the center doing a sports camp and VBS. As they were leaving, one of the local children asked the leader if they were coming back. He told her they would. The little girl replied that a lot of groups said this but none had ever returned. The group was moved to tears when they heard the child's comment and vowed to return.

They did just that during a weekend in October, bringing clothes and providing a special evangelistic weekend featuring free clothing, Bible studies for all ages, crafts classes, and a free

The Writer: Joy Bolton serves as Executive Director-Treasurer of Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union.

Please note: The 2007 *For the Sake of Kentucky* DVD complements this article. A copy of the DVD has been sent to each pastor and WMU director/contact

This insert made possible by the gifts of your church through the Cooperative Program and the Eliza Broadus Offering

Pray (continued)

lunch. The church sent letters to everyone they had worked with during the summer inviting them to the weekend event. The volunteers walked the hollows on Friday evening handing out fliers. One hundred twenty-seven people received clothing. Eighty-seven children, teenagers and adults attended the Bible study and craft classes. And while a "flannel graph" story was being told to children, the mother of the little girl who said, "Groups say that they will return but never do," accepted Christ. Thank you for praying for Baptist Center volunteers and ministries!

As we have prayed for these ministries, new ministries are being started by churches and associations. Eubank Baptist Church, located in a low-income area where many students qualify for free or reduced lunches, began work with area schools to identify families with needs. Over a year ago the church opened a food pantry which gradually developed into a monthly food distribution program. Church members haul in large shipments of food in trailers and others set the food up for distribution. The ministry received a grant from the 2006-07 Eliza Broadus Offering to help them purchase a covered trailer for food transport.

Shirley Cox, an MSC missionary and photo-journalist, testifies to the power of prayer. In

her own community of Mount Vernon, a small group of women gathered regularly for prayer in the town gazebo several years ago. The results have been astounding - drug dealers saved, a site of illicit activity torn down to be replaced with a new hospital, and a church that had dwindled to 30 active members now reaching an average of 100 converts a year.

Dr. Larry Martin, consultant on the KBC Missions Growth Team, believes that a prayer movement in Kentucky began at the 1996 Mountain Missions Conference. That year participants "were still on their knees, crying out in desperation to God, two hours after the meeting was scheduled to end." No one knows exactly how the prayer began, but those prayers led to prayer meetings that were scheduled in five state parks in Kentucky in 1997. "In 1999, God opened the windows of heaven" says Martin and many new ministries have developed in different parts of the state, especially in Eastern Kentucky.

The prayer movement continues through Quarterly Prayer Meetings for Spiritual Awakening. Prayer times occur each January, April, July, and October, currently alternating between Northside Baptist Church in Mount Vernon and the Severns Valley Baptist Association office.

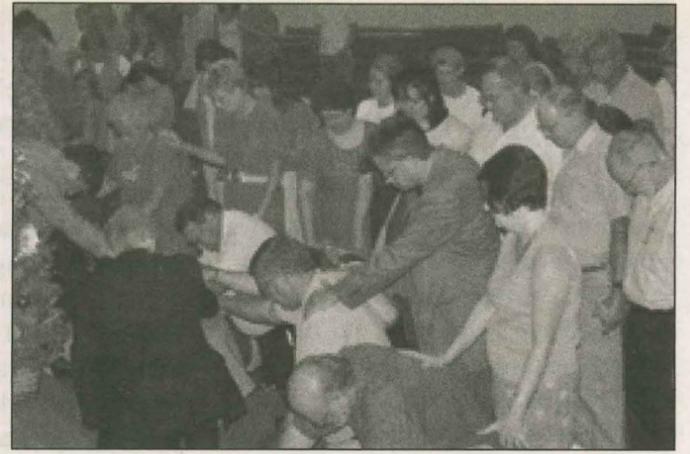
The prayer emphasis has been felt across Kentucky. Through

During the Pray the Perimeter and Pray the Interior Tours, people across Kentucky gathered to pray for spiritual awakening.

"Pray the Perimeter" in 2005 and "Pray the Interior" in 2006, Dr. Bill Mackey, KBC Executive Director, and members of the KBC staff traveled the state, praying with groups of people in many towns and churches.

Throughout the tours, Dr. Mackey issued a challenge to "pray the perimeter of your church field and your association." The purpose of the prayer meetings during each tour was not to talk about prayer, but to pray. At each location, participants gathered in small groups to pray for their communities and for spiritual awakening.

On September 11, 2007 every Kentucky Baptist can join in our prayer emphasis by responding "With One Voice" to a statewide call to prayer. On Tuesday, September 11 at 7:30 p.m. EDT, and 6:30 p.m. CDT, Kentucky Baptists will observe a call to prayer. In honor of the 300th Anniversary of Baptist Associations in America, the prayer observances will be hosted by local associations.



As we gather in locations across our state, our primary purpose will be to pray for spiritual awakening. We will be praying for the lost and for God to stir our churches. We will be praying to see people saved and baptized. Would you give an hour for prayer on September 11? It is a date you can remember. The need for prayer in our state is great. Join us.

For the sake of the lost in Kentucky, pray! Make a list of lost people and pray for them by name each day. Pray for spiritual awakening in your community. Pray for a movement of God in your church. And pray for Kentucky Baptist ministries across our state. Pray for the ministries mentioned in this article. A lost person needs your prayers.



For the Sake of Kentucky: Give

This is a story of giving coming full circle. If you have given to the Eliza Broadus Offering (EBO) in years past, you are a part of this story. Through EBO funding, Kentucky WMU has provided camping experiences for years. To keep costs down for the children, Kentucky WMU has used EBO funding to cover the costs of the staff, missionaries, and program expense.

Mission Adventure Camp at Cedar Crest is a WMU camp with a focus on missions. While it has been traditionally for GAs and Acteens, it is open to all girls and even has an Express camp for girls and boys. At camp, the staff and missionaries teach about missions around the world as well as how campers can be involved in missions. In 2006 campers learned about equestrian ministries in

Kentucky. Kentucky Baptists are involved in racetrack ministries, cowboy churches at various horse shows around the state and hippo therapy, which is the use of horses to console hurting people. After learning about equestrian ministries, each cabin decorated a stuffed horse and the camp missionaries judged them each week.

By the end of the summer, about 40 horses had been completed. With the help of volunteers, each horse was stuffed, sewn closed, and prepared for the Toy Project of Elkhorn Baptist Association. In December 2006, a few girls from camp joined Camp Director Stacy Nall in distributing the toy horses to needy families during the Elkhorn Toy Project.

During the Toy Project, selected families are invited to come

"shop" for toys for their children. Parents buy the toys for a fraction of the marked price. The money goes into a community assistance fund to help families in need with rent, utilities, food, and other emergency expenses. However, a few items are given away, including Bibles, health kits, and in 2006, toy horses.

The girls at Cedar Crest benefited from your giving to the Eliza Broadus Offering. As they learned about missions, they gave through the camp offering. They gave again as they made the toy horses for needy children. The giving continued when the toy horses were distributed. Your EBO giving came full circle through the gifts of GAs.

Mary Todd Myles, a camper from Graefenburg Baptist Church, explained the project:

"We had the bag of materials and decided what we were going to use. We each had a different job, then we put it together. It was a project that we did to give to families that did not have enough money to buy toys for Christmas. I learned that you should always try to help people."

Camper Brittany Walls said "I think camp is cool. I enjoyed it a lot. I just want to thank everyone who gave to let me and other children go to camp."

For the sake of the children in Kentucky, give to the Eliza Broadus Offering. Through summer missions education camps, children hear the gospel, learn about missions, and have the opportunity to give to others through camp ministry projects. Your giving will change a child. For the sake of Kentucky, give!

A prayer movement in Kentucky began at the 1996 Mountain Missions Conference. That year participants were still on their knees, crying out in desperation to God, two hours after the meeting was scheduled to end.

"The state camping program gives [campers] the opportunity to meet missionaries who are here from the field and learn about missions around the world and how they can participate in missions. Many missionaries tell me that they were first called to missions as a GA."

- Susan Bryant
GA Leader
Graefenburg
Baptist Church

For the Sake of Kentucky: Go

For several years Twyla Sheffield and the WMU Leadership Team in Boone's Creek Baptist Association wanted to do more than teach missions and train leaders. They felt that God was leading them to do missions.

But with many small churches, they needed help to do this. So the team prayed about how they could do a missions trip as an association.

When the WMU leaders received MissionsFEST information in 2003, they knew this was something they could do. It fit financially and there was to be a MissionsFEST in a vicinity close by.

Their first trip was to Cincinnati. There they worked in Vacation Bible School, helping a small inner city church. They also prayerwalked in the community and ministered at a nearby nursing home.

The next year, Boone's Creek had a group go to Prestonsburg to participate in MissionsFEST in the Enterprise Association. This group more than doubled in size over the first year. In Prestonsburg they worked in a variety of ministries - clothes closets, cleaning in churches, and other outreach ministries.

The next year, Boone's Creek had four times as many people go to MissionsFEST in West Virginia as had gone on the first trip. There they helped provide a witness in a community with few Southern Baptists. They visited in homes and held a block party as part of their ministry.

Now Twyla has a message for you about mission trips - Go! And one of the great opportunities for you to go on missions trip is MissionsFEST which is returning to Kentucky in 2008. MissionsFEST 2008 will be held in the Winchester area, Boone's Creek Baptist Association. A variety of needs and missions projects make this a wonderful opportunity for first-timers as well as experienced missions trip participants.

Jim Smith, Director of Missions for Boone's Creek Baptist Association, is excited about MissionsFEST 2008. In the first planning meeting, he had more places for the team to visit than could be seen in the one and a half day schedule. With an association covering nine counties, there are many opportunities and needs for ministry. Churches in the association are looking forward to the ministries that can be carried out with the help of MissionsFEST volunteers.

The Boone's Creek Baptist Camp provides year-round camp and recreation opportunities. The facility includes a gymnasium that doubles as a roller skating rink, as well as cabins, trails, and horseback riding. Becky Duvall Abney serves as Camp Manager and the excitement and dedication that Becky brings to the Camp is exemplary. She loves her work and takes on every challenge with a servant's heart. She is the daughter of Cova and Connie Duvall, Cova being the founder of Boone's Creek Camp, where the Association office is located. MissionsFEST projects at the camp include painting, repairs, and construction.

People Helping People is a new venture to bring many different services to those with economic need under one roof. People Helping People is developing an old shoe factory into the Family Development Center and eventually hopes to house a ministry office, food center, clothing center, counseling, job training, warehouse, and worship center in one location. This dream of Dale

Hansen, pastor of the Ephesus Baptist Church, is slowly becoming a reality. However, mis-

sion teams to do electrical and plumbing work, hang sheet rock, paint, clean, set up supplies for distribution and more will be a great help to convert this 92,000 square foot building into a one-stop resource center for people in need.

Ministry projects such as home repairs, painting, block parties, prayerwalking, sports clinics, clowning, and nursing home ministries are among the projects being planned for MissionsFEST 2008. Planners hope that projects will be conducted in all nine counties of Boone's Creek Association. Kristy Carr, director of MissionsFEST for national WMU, describes MissionsFEST as a pre-packaged missions trip. Participants do not have to plan the ministries or work out all of the logistics. Whether one or two from a church want to come or a larger team, MissionsFEST is a great opportunity.

To participate in MissionsFEST 2008, contact WMU, SBC for a registration form (1-205-991-8100 or www.wmu.com/VolunteerConnection/Volunteer). The MissionsFEST fee covers lodging, some meals, and some ministry supplies.



ELIZA BROADUS OFFERING

for Kentucky State Missions, Special Ministries, and Missions Education

2007-08 OFFERING ALLOCATIONS

The Eliza Broadus Offering is sponsored by Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union in partnership with the Kentucky Baptist Convention. All Eliza Broadus Offering funds are used for missions ministries and missions education in Kentucky.

Kentucky Baptist Convention

State Missions & Evangelism	\$675,000
State Missions	315,000
Language Missions	100,000
Church & Community Missions	130,000
Evangelism	7,000
Student Work	103,000
Baptist Men on Mission Special Projects	20,000

Kentucky Special Ministries \$75,000

Requests for Special Ministries Funds are made through an application process.

These funds are used to grant requests for mission project assistance with associations, churches, and MSC missionary projects.

The deadline for submitting an EBO allocation request for the 2006-07 offering is December 31, 2007. Contact Kentucky WMU for an allocation request form.

Missions Education

through Kentucky WMU	\$250,000
Leadership Training, Events, & Materials	79,445
Camp	91,155
Promotion	74,950
Scholarships	4,450

OFFERING GOAL \$1,000,000

For the Sake of Kentucky

Paul wrote "I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings" (1 Cor. 9:23 NIV). Steven Curtis Chapman echoes the compelling call of God in his song "For the Sake of the Call" which reminds us "we abandon it all for the sake of the call." What will you do for the sake of Kentucky?

For the sake of the lost in Kentucky, will you learn more about needs and opportunities in our state? There are many ways to learn - the internet, *Western Recorder*, KBC videos, a phone call to your association office, or just a drive through your community.

For the sake of the lost in Kentucky, will you pray? Pray about what you learn. Pray for the lost by name. Pray for God to direct you to a ministry.

For the sake of the lost in Kentucky will you give? The Eliza Broadus Offering provides critical funding for missions in our state.

For the sake of the lost in Kentucky will you go? Scripture teaches that we are all called to go. There are no exceptions to the Great Commission.

For the sake of Kentucky - learn, pray, give, go.

For the
sake of
Kentucky...
...Learn, Pray, Give, Go.

Group backs FDA control of tobacco companies, products

Nashville (BP)—It is a distasteful reality: The federal government carefully regulates products that aid individuals in breaking their addiction to tobacco, yet tobacco products themselves are not regulated by the Federal Drug Administration, Richard Land said August 28.

The SBC ethicist appeared with other religious leaders and local public health experts in a Faith United Against Tobacco press conference in Nashville. The group expressed its support for the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act.

The bill would bring tobacco products under the purview of the FDA, Land said, and would give the FDA authority to regulate tobacco products under the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act. Land is president of the SBC's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

"The tobacco companies have a problem," Land said. "Their product kills their customers." This was the driving force, he said, behind the industry's insatiable push to attract new consumers and use questionable marketing tactics to reach youngsters.

As early as 1932, Southern Baptists addressed the issue of tobacco in adopting a resolution that called on members of the denomination to "consider the probable ultimate effect of the growing and exces-

sive use of tobacco by our boys and girls," Land noted.

A 1984 SBC resolution called on parents to abstain from tobacco use for the benefit of their children and urged Southern Baptist tobacco farmers "to cease such agriculture."

"Every day over 1,000 of our children become addicted to this deadly product," Land said, adding that he had lost family members to tobacco-related diseases.

Tobacco use, he pointed out, is the "leading preventable cause of death" in the U.S., although tobacco products are "virtually unregulated."

If the bill passes, Land said the general public would finally discover what "deadly garbage" the tobacco industry is putting in cigarettes. The legislation authorizes the FDA to identify and disclose the ingredients used in tobacco products.

"While each person bears responsibility for whether he or she chooses to engage in tobacco use, responsibility also falls upon those in authority, who have the power to end tobacco deception and significantly reduce the illness and death that it can produce," Land said.

He emphasized he is not seeking a ban on tobacco products but reasonable oversight of the product. He also expressed regret that "dog food is more regulated for safety than cigarettes."

New Lifeway personnel bolster church consulting, relations area

Nashville (BP)—Ralph Hodge has a simple goal for LifeWay church relations and consulting: to help churches be healthy and effective.

Simple? Yes. Easy? No.

Hodge is director of the newly created church relations and consulting area of LifeWay Christian Resources that will be working closely with churches by strengthening the coordination of services available from the Nashville-based entity of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Toward helping churches become healthier and more effective, Hodge said, "One of the toughest issues for a church to face is getting a clear reality of where it is." In any given church, he noted that the pastor may have one idea of where the church is, the deacons another idea, the missions committee another and the laity yet another. Bringing all these ideas together for a clear picture is crucial.

LifeWay church relations and consulting uses a variety of assessment tools and processes to help churches discover their reality.

"We offer a church health assessment that also involves a personal interview process," Hodge said. "We can adapt it and expand it with a personal assessment based on interviews conducted by our uniquely qualified consultants. We can help a church understand where it is and help it discover where God wants it to be as a congregation. Then, we help the church develop a strategy to get from where it is to where it needs to be.

"We come in objectively and of-

fer assessment guidance" for "leading the church to make its own discoveries and come to its own conclusions," Hodge said.

LifeWay church relations and consulting encompasses architecture and stewardship consulting led by Gary Nicholson; pastoral ministries and church consulting led by Dan Garland; African-American church consulting led by Jay Wells; a network of regional church consultants for the United States and Canada led by Barry Sneed, David Trammel and Barry Campbell; and an out-bound call center led by Mark Dewbre.

When a church makes the decision to work with LifeWay church relations and consulting, Hodge said it gets a group of professionals with a vast "toolbox" to help it move toward greater health and effectiveness. Those tools include:

- A community and church contextual analysis that includes an exhaustive demographic profile of where the church is located.

- An evaluation of ministry effectiveness.

- A total church health assessment.

- A spatial and facility assessment.

- A communications audit.

- Team-building and coaching.

Costs for these services vary depending on the degree of personalization each church requests.

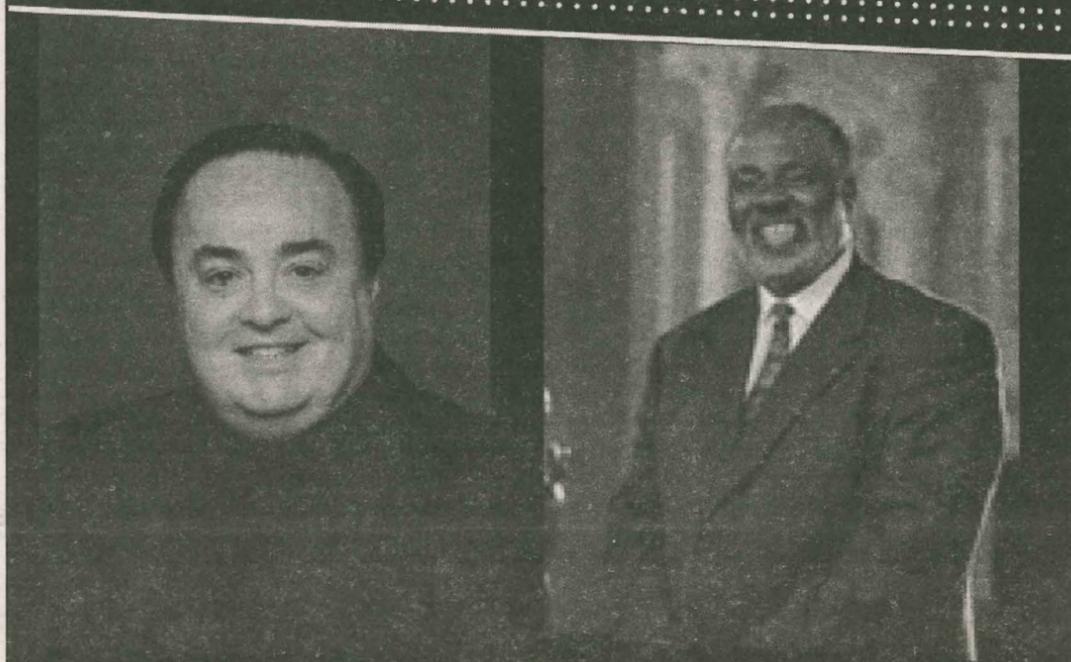
"Our team is made up of a great group of individuals with a tremendous combination of experience, innovation, education and skills," Hodge noted.

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Forum seeks to expand Christian dialogue

By Adelle Banks
Religion News Service

Nairobi, Kenya (RNS)—Like cousins at a big family reunion, representatives of the various streams of Christianity from across the globe will gather this fall near Nairobi, Kenya.

The Global Christian Forum is a rare opportunity for Christians who don't always speak to each other—and in some cases have never met—to spend a few days together and simply get to know one another.

It's not, supporters and organizers say, meant to be a large organization with a new agenda for the world's Christians.

"Enormous numbers of Christians do not talk to each other," said Cecil Robeck, a Fuller Theological Seminary professor and Pentecostal who serves on the forum's planning committee. "They talk about one another or they just try to do their own thing."

Robeck and other committee members hope the gathering, set for Nov. 6-9 in Limuru, Kenya, will open new conversations that might not have occurred a generation ago.

Existing ecumenical organizations have often differed on whether evangelism or social action should be their focus. Groups such as the World Evangelical Alliance and the World Council of Churches gather smaller circles of Christians and have differing ideologies or political persuasions that have kept them apart.

"I think, increasingly, a whole new generation is saying, 'This is nonsense. This is a violation of what we should be about,'" said Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, another member of the planning committee and a president of Christian Churches Together, a U.S. group that shares a similar vision.

Some 250 representatives of Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, Pentecostal and charismatic

Christians will break into small groups at the global meeting and share their "faith journeys," study the Bible and discuss the results of meetings that brought dozens of Christians together ahead of the gathering in Kenya.

The last regional meeting, held in June in Chile, included Latin American and Caribbean religious leaders.

"The testimonies of encounter with Jesus and of personal calling from each one of the participants allowed us to see each other as brothers and sisters, beyond differences and traditions, overcoming distrust and hostilities in an environment of humility and frankness," reads the report from the Chile meeting.

Those involved in the upcoming meeting said it's uncertain where it will lead. Another could be set for a future date or other regional gatherings could be planned.

More than a dozen leaders of the World Evangelical Alliance have committed to attend the global meeting.

Geoff Tunnicliffe, the alliance's international director, said he is optimistic that the meeting will help deepen personal relationships but he doesn't expect it to lead to another institutional entity.

"We're not looking to start to be part of some suprastructure, but are very committed to being part of a global conversation," said Tunnicliffe, whose office is in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Denton Lotz, outgoing general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, said he hopes Christians can gather and realize the basics of their faith on which they agree.

"We've been invited to a table to discuss and to see: Is a forum a potential avenue for Christians around the world to share with one another those things that unite us more than those things that divide us?" he said.

Billy Graham returns home after extended hospital stay

Asheville, N.C. (RNS)—Evangelist Billy Graham, who had been hospitalized for episodes of intestinal bleeding, went home Aug. 30, his staff announced.

Graham, 88, entered Mission Health & Hospitals in Asheville, N.C., on Aug. 18 and underwent a colonoscopy four days later. The procedure revealed an area of active bleeding, which was treated with cauterization.

"We have been pleased that he has been able to come back from this incident as well as he has," said Dr. Lucian Rice, an internal medicine specialist at the hospital.

"He will continue to have therapy at home, and I feel that he can have a very good recovery."

The colonoscopy showed that the bleeding problem was consistent with an arteriovenous malformation, which is a tangle of small blood vessels in the colon's lining.

Medical staffers reported that the evangelist had been in good spirits and took frequent walks in the hospital.

Graham suffers from Parkinson's disease and other ailments and has been mostly homebound in recent years. Ruth Graham, his wife of more than 63 years, died in June.

Ailing Kennedy resigns Florida pulpit

Fort Lauderdale, Fla. (RNS)—D. James Kennedy, who used his Florida-based television ministry to establish himself as a leading voice for religious conservatives, has retired from Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Fort Lauderdale.

Kennedy, 76, suffered a cardiac arrest in late December and has not returned to his pulpit of more than 48 years since falling ill.

Kennedy started the congregation in 1959. He became a well-known Christian broadcaster through his presidency of Coral Ridge Ministries, which broadcast his sermons.

"As Dr. Kennedy retires from the scene of active ministry, I praise God for giving the church this man of vision so committed to the Kingdom of God," said Frank Wright, president of National Religious Broadcasters. "With his godly wisdom, his courageous heart and his consistent example, he has inspired millions to love, follow and serve Jesus Christ."

Leaders of Coral Ridge Ministries have begun plans to broaden its audience of 3 million to 30 million by 2012, by using Kennedy's teachings on television, radio, the Internet and in print.

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For brochure, information and letter from Pastor Myers
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Chevy and Ford

Competition & cooperation are not mutually exclusive

I was reared in Grenada, Mississippi, where I graduated from high school in 1966. My father was the Chevrolet dealer. He had two other Chevrolet dealerships in other Mississippi towns. His parents were also in the Chevrolet business before he got into it. So, I truly have an automobile dealer family heritage. Had my father not died the summer following my graduation from high school, I would likely be in the automobile business in Mississippi.

For some of my early years we lived next door to the Ford dealer. In fact, the Ford dealer had a son one year older than I, and we were really good friends. We played together and spent the night with each other all of the time. His parents treated me like family, and my parents treated him like family. Although our fathers were fierce competitors in the automobile business, I do not recall being aware of any unpleasant experience between them. They got along with each other very well. Today I have two very good friends, one of whom is a Chevrolet dealer and the other a Ford dealer. We all get along

very well. Of course, my Ford dealer friend understands why I still drive a Chevrolet.

I have been giving a lot of thought lately to the issue of "competition and cooperation." When you put \$47 trillion on the table, which is the amount of wealth that will pass from one generation to the next, every charity in the United States wants to get its share. As a result, the more than 1.5 million charities, large and small, are gearing up to go after the \$47 trillion. New charitable organizations are born practically every day, which simply heightens the competition.

What about our larger Baptist family of churches, associations, institutions and agencies, who are increasingly more and more dependent on private gifts? This includes local, state and national Baptist organizations. Cooperation has been the Baptist way to a lost world. Can we continue to cooperate in a worldwide effort, and at the same time compete for charitable gifts from among the same constituents? We can, and we must!

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

KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION



Barry Allen

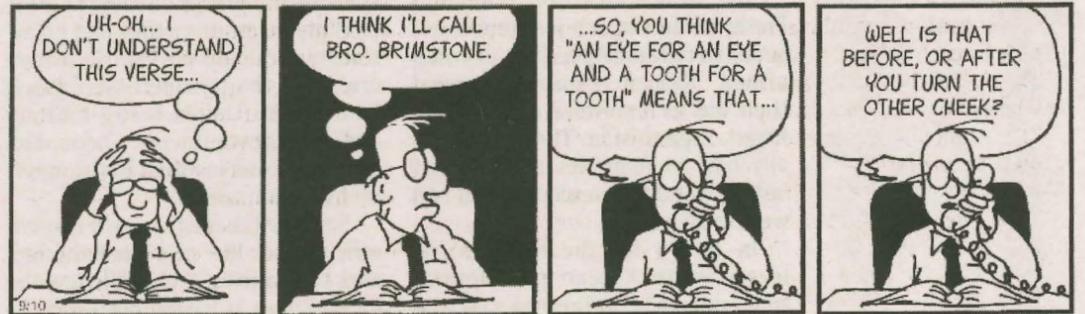
For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



Church of the Covered Dish

Thom Tapp



Bible Crosswords

By Teri Grottko

Across

- 1 Jacob's other name
- 5 Mr., Sp. abbr.
- 7 Selenium, chem. symbol
- 9 Middle Latin, abbr.
- 10 "The gift ... perverteth the words of the ____" (Exodus 23:8)
- 13 "Tola the son of ____" (Judges 10:1)
- 16 Concise
- 17 Each, abbr.
- 18 "For the statues of ____" (Micah 6:16)
- 19 Neon, chem. symbol
- 20 Wisconsin, abbr.
- 21 Antimony, chem. symbol
- 22 "Why dost thou ... cause me to behold ____?" (Hab. 1:3)
- 26 "Great well that is in ____" (1 Samuel 19:22)
- 28 "Melech, and ____, and Ahaz" (1 Chronicles 8:35)
- 30 "Rekem, and ____, and Taralah" (Joshua 18:27)
- 32 Boy
- 34 "We were willing to have imparted unto you ... also ____ own souls" (1 Thessalonians 2:8)
- 36 Conjunction
- 37 "One that is proud and ____" (Isaiah 2:12)
- 41 "Will he ____ thy riches?" (Job 36:19)
- 44 Adam's wife
- 45 Where Joseph, Mary, and Jesus went to escape Herod
- 47 Not him
- 48 "Barley was in the ____" (Exodus 9:31)
- 51 Smallest state, abbr.
- 52 Impossible to deny

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- 57 "____ thy cause with thy neighbor" (Proverbs 25:9)
- 58 "Your own husbands ... may without the word be ____ by the conversation of the wives" (1 Peter 3:1)
- 24 Organization to assist those who have served in the armed forces, abbr.
- 25 "Pass ye unto ____, and see" (Amos 6:2)
- 27 Condition that affects motor coordination, abbr.
- 29 Part of the Freudian psyche
- 31 "For, ____, the winter is past" (Song of Solomon 2:11)
- 33 "Doe, ____, a female deer, Re ..." (2 words)
- 35 Say again
- 36 Preposition
- 38 Above
- 39 "I ____ the Lord" (Jonah 1:9)
- 40 You, King James Eng.
- 42 Address abbreviation
- 43 Magnetic resonance imaging, abbr.
- 46 Food, slang
- 49 Moses parted the ____ Sea
- 50 Peninsula state, abbr.
- 52 "____ thou count me therefore" (Philemon 17)
- 53 Iron, chem. symbol
- 54 Tantalum, chem. symbol
- 55 "Lest ... I myself should ____ a castaway ..." (1 Corinthians 9:27)
- 56 Enlisted woman, abbr.

Last week's solution

1	B	R		3	C	K	M	A	4	K	I	N	6	G	7	B		
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48	R	A	R	E									50	L	A	K	E	S
51	S	T	S					52	C	A	U	L	K	E	R	S		

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Details of S. Korean hostage deal draw mixed response

"God's work will not stop in Afghanistan."

Southern Baptist Convention President Frank Page

Ghazni, Afghanistan (BP)—Taliban militants released the 19 South Korean Christian hostages last week in the wake of an agreement reached with the South Korean government.

Two prominent Southern Baptists expressed thankfulness for the development but dismay that as part of the deal the South Korean government will ban Christian missionary work in Afghanistan.

The 19 hostages from Saemmul Presbyterian Church just outside of Seoul were kidnapped July 19 when armed Taliban gunmen stopped their bus as it traveled on a road to Kabul, Afghanistan. The party actually had 23 members at the time, but two later were executed and two were released.

In return for the hostages' release, South Korean presidential spokesman Cheon Ho-seon said, the country agreed to keep its promise to pull its troops out of Afghanistan by the end of this year—something it had announced last year—and to ban "missionary work by Korean Christians in Afghanistan." A Taliban spokesman confirmed the agreement, according to the Los Angeles Times.

Southern Baptist Convention President Frank Page said the news about the hostages elicits mixed emotions.

"I have prayed for the release of these hostages," he said. "So, therefore I am delighted that they are being released.

"But I am saddened about some of the conditions for the release. I had encouraged the Koreans not to

negotiate with terrorists, and had hoped that they would be released out of sheer human kindness and/or military intervention. While the statement is made that missionary work will stop, God's work will not stop in Afghanistan."

The Taliban initially had demanded the release of Taliban prisoners in exchange for the release of the hostages. But during negotiations South Korean officials told Taliban representatives they had no authority to release the Taliban prisoners, since the prisoners were being held by the United States military and other governments, Cheon said. No money was involved in the agreement, Cheon added.

Some Afghanistan government officials fear the deal—and the fact that the Taliban likely will view the kidnappings as having been successful—will lead to more kidnappings.

"While I rejoice that terrorists are releasing innocent victims, I am truly saddened by the conditions to which the government of South Korea has agreed," said Daniel Heimbach, an ethics professor at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.

"Christian aid workers and missionaries put their lives on the line every day and, while Christians believe that physical life is precious, we also believe that sharing the good news of eternal life is worth vastly more," he added. "The government of South Korea has acquiesced to terms no Christian can accept and no one called of Jesus Christ can obey."

The missionary dog

Great Pyrenees pup's arrival sparks special 'cuenta' about God's provision

By Lynn Cole, OBI farm manager

This is a very true story about a Great Pyrenees dog. He was bred and born in western Kentucky and traveled to the mission field at Oneida Baptist Institute in far eastern Kentucky to serve on our farm.

This need arose when the dog we used here to herd goats developed some serious health issues. It was clear that a new dog was needed immediately so that it could learn how to herd and guard the goats.

Charles Litchfield heard about this need. In mid-December 2006, he traveled with Ned Davis in the "Oneida Express" to deliver a load of new cabinets donated to the campus by Cadiz Wholesale Cabinets. Mr. Litchfield and his daughter, Teresa Cook, both own Great Pyrenees dogs. They became excited about the possibility of helping locate a dog for the Oneida farm. Mr. Litchfield and his wife, Edith, returned to the campus in mid-January in the "Oneida Express" with a load of donated furniture. By this time the Litchfields and Teresa had searched all over western Kentucky. They had contacted friends, relatives and numerous dog breeders. It seemed there were no Great Pyrenees to be found.

At last, Illisa Beavers, an employee of the Trigg County Veterinary Clinic, called Teresa and told her that Jackie Futrell brought in some Great Pyrenees puppies for their last round of shots. There was just one puppy that was not sold.

Teresa contacted Jackie about the dog, but Jackie said she did not want to sell her. Teresa ex-

plained that the dog would be going to Oneida Baptist Institute to help on their farm.

Jackie then became excited. She said her husband, Kelvin, had an uncle, Robert Futrell, who worked on our campus. In honor of the family tie, she said she was pleased to donate the dog.

Now I had been told that a puppy had been located and would be coming after it was weaned, but I didn't know the source.

Late one evening in early March I returned from church and found a phone message from Robert Futrell, who wanted me to call him ASAP. I called immediately and he told me I was fortunate to have been able to get through because he had been talking to his niece and just lost the connection. He told me that we were to receive a puppy the next day. I asked where it was coming from and he said from his niece. I said, "Wait a minute. We have one coming on the 'Oneida Express' in a few days. I don't really need two puppies. Let me call Ned Davis and see if he knows anything about this."

I called Ned; he called Mr. Litchfield and then called me back with word that the puppies were actually one and the same. The puppy was to be delivered by the "Oneida Express" the next day. I then called Robert back and confirmed that we were, in fact, discussing the same dog.

Following this God-guided episode it was easy to see that this puppy needed an appropriate name. It would need to reflect God's intervention in bringing her to Oneida where she began her goat ministry. "Cuenta," which means "story" in Spanish, became her name. Amen.

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

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Called to study and teach

Professor's call extended as a student at Clear Creek

A unique aspect about Clear Creek is the call from God that must be evident from every student who comes to study here. That same call holds true to every faculty/staff person who comes to serve here too. This is not "just a job" to those who come to serve here; it is a calling to Kingdom work. Some of our current faculty/staff personnel are here because God extended the call on their life to more than just a time of study here as a student. Dr. Bill Helton's call started as a student when he came here to study and extended to a call to return here and teach.

Helton, a 1989 graduate, has been a professor of Bible at Clear Creek since 1998. He knew as a student that God was calling him to Clear Creek to teach.

"We enjoyed every minute of our time together as a family at Clear Creek while I was studying as a student," says Helton. "It was a time of joy and pleasure for us. I grew tremendously in my faith. God spoke clearly to me as a student here and I knew He wanted me to come back to the college some day and teach. After years of equipping I finally got the call to come back to Clear Creek

and serve on the faculty."

Helton also has a unique connection to Clear Creek that dates back to the 1930s.

"R.P. Mahon (first President L.C. Kelly's good friend and partner during the first years of Clear Creek) was preaching a revival in the area and my mother was saved and then baptized by him. He also performed my parents' wedding ceremony in 1946 in the chapel at the college," said Helton.

A native of Harlan, Ky., Helton is especially thankful for the godly vision that L. C. Kelly followed when he saw more than just a cornfield in this Clear Creek valley.

"I am from the mountains of Harlan. I feel like

I am one of those students that L.C. Kelly envisioned when he saw the need for a school here to help equip the mountain preachers of Appalachia," Helton said. "I am glad that Clear Creek was here to provide an opportunity for me to study and be equipped for God's call on my life."

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Donnie Fox

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.ccbcc.edu; e-mail: dfox@ccbbc.edu

Seeking answers through song

Two years later, trumpeter searches for God's will in Katrina disaster

By Missy Daniel
Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly

Washington (RNS)—Two years after Hurricane Katrina, it may be that one of the most searching spiritual responses to the deluge and disaster has come not from a theologian but from an acclaimed jazz musician.

Trumpeter, composer and band-leader Terence Blanchard's new CD, "A Tale of God's Will (A Requiem for Katrina)," is being praised as a masterpiece, a triumph and one of the most important jazz releases of the year.

Part of the reason is the message behind the music, and that message begins with the title, Blanchard said. How could something so devastating and terrible be God's will? Why does God permit disaster? Is God trying to tell us something in the wake of Katrina?

"In the Christian faith we have a saying," Blanchard said in an interview. "God acts in strange ways. I think this was a way for God to get our attention. Maybe this is a way for us to kind of stop and take a hard look at what we're doing as a community."

On one level, "A Tale of God's Will" can be heard as a meditation on the Almighty and His purposes.

"In the aftermath of Katrina, when you're faced with that level of devastation and you're frustrated beyond belief, you're hurt beyond anything you can imagine, I mean it causes you to dig deep and try to find some answers," Blanchard explained.

"I went through the whole thing of blaming man for his neglect in servicing the levees, and blaming

men for their neglect in rescuing and helping people. And I talked to some other friends of mine, who are also Christians and believers, and you know we all just started talking about it saying, well, there has to be a bigger picture here, there has to be a bigger story. There has to be something for us to learn from this," he said.

Hometown musician

Blanchard, 45, who was born in New Orleans and has lived there most of his life, said he used to play every Sunday at Central Congregational Church. "My father used to tell me all the time, 'I don't care what time you get in from playing your gig Saturday night, you've got to get up and go to church and play on Sunday morning.'"

He also went with his mother to her Baptist church, where the music was mostly gospel.

"That music had a profound effect on me," Blanchard said, "because at the core of that music is honesty; it's truth, and that's what stuck with me, and that's what I still have, and when it came time to record the music for this album, that's what I drew upon."

Blanchard said he remembers living as a child in the Lower Ninth Ward of New Orleans when Hurricane Betsy struck in 1965 and seeing nothing but water as he was picked up from his porch and put into a boat.

"Levees"—Blanchard's second track on the new CD—"is all about that," he said. "The strings represent the water that's just everywhere, and the trumpet represents the cries



for help that went unheard.

"When we were listening to the playbacks," Blanchard said, "the thing I kept thinking about with this music is that not only is it hopeful music, but it embodies a number of other emotions—hopeless, helplessness, anger and frustration."

Making something beautiful

It's hard not to wonder how such beautiful sounds—one review of the new CD describes the music as "lush melody and woeful wails, pockets of grace, and flood waters of melancholy"—were inspired by an event that was so ugly. Blanchard pondered that as he remembered returning to his mother's destroyed house after Katrina.

"The only thing I heard was silence," Blanchard recalled. "I didn't hear any insects, no birds, no dogs barking, nobody cutting the grass. ... Nothing. Only air, only the wind.

People were asking me immediately, you know, 'Are you going to write music based on the hurricane?' And I kept telling them ... this thing is so vast it's hard to kind of assimilate anything, and I don't hear anything right now. How do you write music for something that's so tragic, so horrible?"

Blanchard's horn and his band tell the tale of Katrina's destruction and its aftermath with powerful sounds that wail and weep and whisper, but he said the music is not the end of the story.

"I don't want people to think that New Orleans is fine," he noted, "and that we're moving on to another issue. No, New Orleans is not fine. People are fighting tooth and nail to bring their communities back."

"I wanted the trumpet to scream on every track," he said. "But I feel that God is using me to speak for all the souls in New Orleans."

ASKING "WHY?"

Terence Blanchard's new CD, "A Tale of God's Will (A Requiem for Katrina)," asks why God allowed Hurricane Katrina to devastate New Orleans. (RNS photo by Jenny Bagert)

Unity helps restore two New Orleans churches battered by Katrina

By Michael McCormack
Baptist Press

New Orleans (BP)—Grass covers the lot where Elysian Fields Avenue Baptist Church's building stood for nearly 50 years. Like thousands of structures in New Orleans, it was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina.

Even though the church building did not survive the 2005 storm, members of Elysian Fields continue to impact the church's community. Theirs is a story of recovery and partnership.

For about a year now, Bill Day, associate director for New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary's Leavell Center for Evangelism and Church Health, has been studying the 1,500 places of worship in the five parishes that make up the greater New Orleans area—Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard and St. Tammany parishes.

"I would like to know what the impact of Katrina is and was on places of worship in this area to find out which ones will die, which ones will survive but be weaker and which churches, despite Katrina, will actually grow," Day said.

While many congregations are fighting for survival, others, like Elysian Fields, have found traction in the otherwise muddy road to recov-



STICKING TOGETHER Ken Taylor, pastor of Elysian Fields Avenue Baptist Church, stands by the battered sign and empty field that was once home to his congregation's building. The church now meets with nearby Gentilly Baptist Church. (BP photo by Michael McCormack)

ery in New Orleans.

Day divided churches into two groups: Places of worship classified as "functioning" were worshipping at their pre-Katrina site and those worshipping elsewhere or not at all were deemed "not functioning." In April, the number of functioning places of worship was at more than 70 percent.

"I'm interested to see the different ways that denominational entities have chosen to deal with Katrina," Day said. "What have Southern Baptists, Methodists and the Catholic Archdiocese done to assist their churches?"

"My suspicion is that having a denominational affiliation is an advan-

tage," he said.

Ken Taylor, Elysian Fields' pastor, would agree.

"Through the whole thing, partnerships have been unbelievably valuable to Kingdom work," Taylor said.

About four months after Katrina, Elysian Fields began meeting again in a member family's gutted home. Then in June 2006, Elysian Fields and Gentilly Baptist churches began meeting together at Gentilly Baptist Church's campus. Elysian Baptist also received major damage from the hurricane but its building was repairable. Taylor said it did not take long for the two congregations to sense they might be together for quite some time.

"I'd say that within our first two months, when we were still meeting outside, we fell in love with the place," Taylor said.

For more than a year, the two churches have been worshipping, mobilizing, serving and healing together. They have a partnership with the Arkansas Baptist Builders through August 2008, through which thousands of volunteers have come to New Orleans to aid in the recovery effort.

Baptist churches around the country also have aided Elysian

Fields and Gentilly Baptist churches by covering ministry, rebuilding and insurance costs.

Taylor noted one particular church that threw a block party for its neighborhood last November.

"I'll never forget that day," Taylor said. "I'll always remember people just coming and sitting for hours. It was a turning point for our church and our neighborhood. They're coming down again in October for another block party."

In fact, Taylor said Elysian Fields and Gentilly Baptist churches have been so busy coordinating volunteer groups and staging neighborhood recovery projects that they have made little progress toward formally merging. Taylor said they plan to finalize the merger sometime this fall.

Not every place of worship in New Orleans has experienced the same kind of burden-bearing care Elysian Fields and Gentilly churches have enjoyed. The recovery pace for places of worship in the three parishes that received the most catastrophic flooding has been much slower.

"We had about 140 churches before the storm," said Joe McKeever, director of missions for the Baptist Association of Greater New Orleans. "Right now we have 94."

HOW TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

By Tom Townsend

The month of September always has a new feel to me: the beginning of fall, school, football, and in some cases, a new fiscal year.

I like new beginnings. I like the smell and freshness of new things, but I especially like the reality of new life in Christ Jesus. I like the fact that He came to give me life abundant and everlasting through my faith in Him. Come to think of it, I don't know of anything that has a better freshness than waking from a restful sleep and knowing that I am a new creation in Him. The Bible states it this way, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Corinthians 5:17). Consider the following:

■ God loves you as much as He has ever loved anyone in the past, present or future. That puts us in some pretty awesome company with the likes of the Apostle Peter, Mary and Billy and Ruth Graham.

■ God will never love you more in the future than He loves you today. No matter how hard you work to earn His love, it remains constant. That takes a lot of pressure off us to conform to some standard of perfection.

■ God has a wonderful plan for your life. In order to discover that plan, you must accept His Son as your Savior, believe in Him and confess your sins to Him. Whatever plans you have, they will never measure up to the Lord's plan for your life so it only makes sense to let Him take control.

Now, how does that feel? Can you smell the freshness of your new life in Jesus? It sure makes the season seem better than ever. And the new month? Well, I can't wait to see what the Lord has in store for this new creation!

Tom Townsend is marketing and business manager for the Western Recorder

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **COXS CREEK**—Vine Hill Church will hold a youth service Sept. 16, 2 p.m., with **Scott Hill**, youth pastor for the Christian youth camp MissionFuge, as featured speaker. For more information, contact **Sonya Humphrey** at (502) 649-4909.

■ **DRY RIDGE**—Dry Ridge Church will hold revival services Sept. 16, 8:30 and 10:45 a.m., and 6 p.m., and Sept. 17-19, 7 p.m. Area pastors will serve as guest speakers and **Carl Brown** will be guest worship leader. **Joe Kitchens** is pastor.

■ **HICKMAN**—East Hickman Church will celebrate its 50th anniversary and homecoming services Sept. 16 with former pastor **Bob Swift** as

guest speaker. For more information, call (270) 236-2300. **Ben Stratton** is pastor.

■ **HOPKINSVILLE**—First Church will hold revival services Sept. 16, 10:45 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Sept. 17-18, 6:30 p.m., and Sept. 19, 6 p.m. **Rodney Travis** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Cloverleaf Church will host the Southern gospel music group **Driven** in concert Sept. 9, 7 p.m.

■ **MORGANFIELD**—Northside Church will celebrate 50 years of ministry with revival services Sept. 16-19. **Mike Bebout** will be the guest evangelist with services Sept. 16, 11 a.m., and 7 p.m., and Sept. 17-19, 7 p.m. A

special singing service will be held Sept. 16, 1:30 p.m. **Jim Adams** is pastor.

■ **MURRAY**—Grace Church will hold an evangelism rally Sept. 7, 7 p.m., with **James Shutt** as evangelist and music by the Northside Quartet.

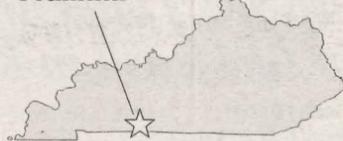
■ **SCOTTSVILLE**—Scottsville Church will hold revival services Sept. 16-19, 7 p.m. **Dale Darley** is pastor.

■ **SHEPHERDSVILLE**—An interdenominational prayer vigil for students, teachers, administrators, bus drivers and volunteers will be hosted by the Seventh District PTA Sept. 9, 3 p.m., in the Parquet Springs Convention Center. For more information, contact **Tina Decker** at (270) 862-4795.

■ **SMITHFIELD**—Smithfield Church will host "Bring a Friend" to Sunday school Sept. 16, 10 a.m., with morning worship at 11 a.m. The **Josh Mar-**

Spotlight on ...

Franklin



Blackjack Church will celebrate its 140th anniversary with homecoming services Sept. 16, 10 a.m., with guest speaker **Wilbur Powell** and music by **Kendall Bush**. For more information, call (270) 586-4959. **Winston Roberts** is pastor.

tin Band will be in concert at 5 p.m., followed by a dessert fellowship. **Ed Life** is 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: Full-time youth and children's pastor for First Baptist Church of Prestonsburg. Please submit resumé to search committee at jcw8855@bellsouth.net, or PO Box 756, Prestonsburg, KY 41653.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor with skills to lead, mentor and teach God's divine Word for Adairville Baptist Church in Adairville, Ky. ABC is an SBC church in a small, rural, farming community in south-central Kentucky, just north of Nashville, Tenn. We have an average attendance of 150-200 in Sunday morning worship, a tradition of outstanding music and a growing youth program. Our desire is to spread God's Word to our community and around the world. If interested, please submit your resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, Adairville Baptist Church, PO Box 36, Adairville, KY 42202; or e-mail to abc42202@yahoo.com.

SEEKING: Worship pastor at Victory Baptist Church (Lexington, Ky.) to equip disciples to grow as passionate worshippers of God. We are a 15-year-old church family pursuing a vision for blended worship that is doctrinally rich and affection-strong, using many elements, including music from hymns and songs from Passion & Tomlin, Sovereign Grace, Hillsong, Getty & Townsend, Brewster and others. Since worship is led by a band and praise team, experience and ability to lead with guitar or keyboard is preferred. The worship pastor also is responsible for other aspects of an arts ministry, a choir that sings regularly, the technical and media team, and for developing the next generation of worshippers among our children and youth. Pastor also will take on aspects of the pastoral team duties. To apply, send resumé (including worship philosophy) and several orders of worship to: wpsearch@vbclex.org.

SEEKING: Senior pastor for Lynn Camp Baptist Church of Corbin, Ky. If interested, please send resumé to faithlookup@gmail.com.

SEEKING: Part-time children and family pastor for Rosemont Baptist Church, Lexington, Ky. Candidate will lead creative ministry for children ages birth through 6th grade and their families. For application information, please contact the church: (859) 277-6147.

SEEKING: Part-time interim minister of worship and music for First Baptist Church, Williamsburg, Ky. If interested, e-mail resumé to fbcwoffice@bellsouth.net, or to Kirby Clark at klclark@ucumberlands.edu; send hard copy to First Baptist Church, 230 S 5th Street, Williamsburg, KY 40769; or call (606) 549-0280.

SEEKING: Full-time senior pastor for First Baptist Church, Hodgenville. Please send resumé to: First Baptist Church, 730 Tonieville Road, Hodgenville, KY 42748; or e-mail to sally@fbchodgenville.org.

SEEKING: Part-time music minister. Formal music training/experience is preferred. Submit resumé to Olivet Baptist Church, 13741 Palmyra Road, Herndon, KY 42236-8133. For a full position description, please call the church at (270) 439-4155.

SEEKING: Director for Illinois Baptist Children's Home and Family Services for its 38-bed residential care facility. Masters of Social Work degree or equivalent masters degree in human services field required, with experience in residential care preferred. Additional experience desired: individual and group counseling, budget management, facility management and staff development. Contact Executive Director Doug Devore at (618) 382-4164; or send resumé to 949 County Road 1300 N, Carmi, IL 62821; or dougdevore@bchfs.com.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music (minimum 12 hrs/wk) for Southern Baptist church in Jessamine County (Nicholasville), Ky. Able to help develop blended music, lead in worship, adult choir and help establish children and youth music programs and seasonal programs. Sunday morning attendance: 125-150. Resumé to: Minister of Music Search Committee, Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, PO Box 669, Nicholasville, KY 40356.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Southern Baptist church. Prefer seminary graduate or some seminary training. Must have a shepherd's heart, strong leadership skills and be a team worker. Must also have a passion for the Lord's work and the church and be devoted to outreach. Send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, Cecilia Baptist Church, PO Box 1526, Elizabethtown, KY 42702.

SEEKING: Part-time children's minister (preschool-6th grade). Send resumé by Sept. 30 to: First Baptist Church, Hodgenville, c/o Katie Sandidge, 730 Tonieville Road, Hodgenville, KY 42748; or call Sandidge, (270) 766-8970, or Dawn Conner, (270) 234-3977.

SEEKING: Bivocational pastor for a dynamic church in a growing community. Average SS and worship attendance: approximately 150. Total package: \$28,000/year. If interested, please send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, West Broadway BC, 8420 Six Mile Lane, Louisville, KY 40220-3419.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor to lead a mission-minded congregation (average worship attendance over 100). Smithsboro BC is in a rural area of southeast Kentucky near Hazard. Inquirers should send resumé and sermon tape or video to: Pastor Search Committee, Smithsboro Baptist Church, PO Box 279, Vicco, KY 41773.

SEEKING: Part-time music minister for Morgantown First Baptist Church. Motivated, Christ-centered individual to work with adult and youth choirs. Traditional and contemporary styles of music. Seminary students welcome. Send resumé to Bro. Greg Wallace at mtownfbc@logantele.com, or call (270) 526-4711. Resumés may be sent to PO Box 444, Morgantown, KY 42261.

SEEKING: Part-time music director for a conservative Baptist church in a growing area. Must be able to work with adult choir (30 members). Send resumé to Hedgeville Baptist Church, 4700 Lancaster Road, Danville, KY 40422, Attn: Music Director Search Committee.

SEEKING: Part-time youth minister for a conservative Baptist church in a growing area. Send resumé to Hedgeville Baptist Church, 4700 Lancaster Road, Danville, KY 40422, Attn: Youth Minister Search Committee.

SEEKING: Bivocational pastor. Send resumé to St. John Baptist Church, 1775 St. John Road, Frankfort, KY 40601.

SEEKING: Part-time worship accompanist for Sunday worship, Wednesday worship and choir practice. Piano preferred. Contact Green Acres Baptist Church, (502) 964-8165; or Rev. Daniel Powell.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music for First Baptist Church of Shepherdsville (20 miles south of Louisville). We are a growing moderate Baptist church transitioning from a traditional worship style to a more blended service. Please send resumé to drewprince@gmail.com.

SEEKING: Full-time secretary/administrative assistant. Successful candidate will use personal gifts of communication, organization and technical skills for efficient and effective church office business. Send resumé to: John Bloomer, Melbourne Heights Baptist Church, 3728 Taylorsville Road, Louisville, KY 40220.

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.

SERVICES: Christian long distance: 3.9 interstate; 3.9 in state. No monthly service charge. Call: (866) 587-8346 or www.lowermyphonebill.com/haroldtt.

TRAVEL: Mission and church travel—including air charters. Guaranteed lowest complete individual and group rate packages. (866) 213-0578 or www.lchthusTravel.com.

WANTED: A church bus or van—low mileage, good condition. Contact John Collett, (859) 428-9396; or Lisa Lewis, (502) 347-0064.

Canadian Baptists 'return favor' to help New Orleans

By Stacey Billger
Louisiana Baptist Convention

New Orleans (BP)—"I wanted to return some favors," the man said.

Larry Spencer, the founding pastor of Discovery Baptist Church in Regina, Saskatchewan, remembered how volunteers helped build their church facility in 1978 and subsequently assisted with other ministries in the community.

"We never would have been able to build the church," Spencer said, "without churches in the South."

A mission trip to New Orleans gave Spencer an "opportunity to reciprocate." Seeing the scope of Hurricane Katrina's destruction, Spencer noted, "There are going to be opportunities for years to come for those who want to take on this kind of ministry or who have experience."

Spencer and numerous others in the Canadian Convention of Southern Baptists have experienced firsthand the benefit of partnership in Kingdom work.

Because "Canada has really benefited from volunteers ... it was time for us to repay with what little bit we can do," said Ken Ponath, construction coordinator for the 21-member Canadian Baptist Builders team.

Joining with others from partner conventions in Arkansas and Kansas/Nebraska, the group spent a week rewiring, painting and installing insulation and drywall in 10 homes and at Gentilly Baptist Church.

Canadian Baptist Builders was established three years ago and the group worked on projects across Canada as well as disaster relief in Louisiana and Florida. For more than half of the Canadian volunteers who traveled to New Orleans, it was their first mission trip—and one that left a lasting impression.

Tisha Murrihill, a professional harpist from Calgary, had no prior experience with construction work and admitted she was hesitant to go due to "worry about fingers." But after attending a prayer meeting, she knew God wanted her in New Orleans.

"I want to be a pair of hands and feet, how ever God wants to use me," she said, adding, "I bought a basic wiring book to read on the plane."

"These folks are saying 'thank you' with their time, skills and testimonies in New Orleans," said John Yeats, communications director for the Louisiana Baptist Convention.

For homeowner Jerry Dean Queen, having a team of volunteers help rebuild her home "really makes you feel like someone cares. You don't get this every day ... when someone comes from Canada to help. I feel like they're God-sent people."

Lives shattered by Katrina get help, hope

By Adam Miller
SBC North American Mission Board

New Orleans (BP)—About a year after Hurricane Katrina passed over New Orleans, Thyra and Larry Ferguson came back to their home on Mandolin Street, four blocks from the levee that had held back Lake Pontchartrain. Thyra, a New Orleans native, had grown up one block from the levee and remembers when her friends from high school would swim in the London Avenue Canal, one of the places where Pontchartrain breached and poured into the city.

When the Fergusons came home, their house "looked like Batman and the Joker had a fight in there," Thyra said. The water had turned the beige carpet black. Their deep freezer thawed, emitting the smell of spoiled shrimp and fish. Furniture had simply crumbled. Their collection of baby, family and high school graduation pictures was ruined.

"We couldn't believe it," Thyra said.

The list of repairs and replacements lengthened, and of the \$50,000 the Fergusons would need to bring life back to normal, they'd received \$10,000 in FEMA relief and \$3,000 from insurance, far short of covering flood damage.

That's when Operation NOAH Rebuild stepped in. With the assistance the Fergusons already had received, they bought windows, a few appliances and some wiring. Southern Baptist man-hours and dollars supplied the rest: roof, new cabinets, drywall, insulation and paint for the exterior.

"NOAH started working on my house in November and they're still working on my house," said Thyra, whose air conditioning was being installed the day she spoke with Baptist Press. "They're working on my neighbor's house too."

Lives in turmoil

The story of Thyra and Larry represents the countless lives in Louisiana and Mississippi thrown off balance by the catastrophe of the 2005 hurricane season.

In Mississippi, where the eye of Katrina landed, 15,000 FEMA trailers still house families along the state's coastal region. While Mississippi is not receiving aid from NOAH teams, the state has felt the impact of Southern Baptist volunteer involvement.

"We hardly have a day that we don't have teams down there," said Jim Futral, executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. "But if it had not been for Southern Baptists coming and loving and caring and working and feeding and giving, the disaster would have been 10 times worse than it was. It has been without question the most incredible thing to see the church response."

Stories of the selfless efforts of Southern Baptists and other believers abound in the areas where tragedy seemed to rule two years ago. This year dozens of families will move out of FEMA trailers into their restored homes.

"On each visit I see more evidence of a region coming back to life," said Jim Burton, senior director of part-



DIFFERENCE MAKERS Southern Baptist volunteers have made a difference in the lives of thousands of New Orleans residents in the two years since Hurricane Katrina. Homeowner Doris Coubarous (left) watches as Denise Lennox, from Idlewild Baptist Church in Lutz, Fla., assists her son Joshua, 8, in painting Coubarous' home. (BP photos by Gibbs Frazier)

nership mobilization for the North American Mission Board.

"We are finding that the needs of each homeowner are very different," Burton recounted. "Some just need us to install a faucet; others have needed us to participate in a complete rebuild of their home. Our goal is to meet as many homeowner needs as possible while staying within budget."

Thousands respond

About 16,000 volunteers in 900 teams—including World Changers, Baptist Builders and church groups—have assisted with Operation NOAH Rebuild in New Orleans, and thanks to the generosity of Southern Baptists, more than \$26 million has gone toward Katrina recovery efforts.

Volunteers have helped completely restore homes, churches and lives, and the NOAH office has reported 260 baptisms as a result of volunteers' efforts.

Housing for volunteers has recently moved from the World Trade Center in New Orleans into Hopeview Baptist Church. The NOAH offices are housed now in Calvary Baptist Church in the Algiers area of the city.

Through it all, Operation NOAH Rebuild has been a shining example of Southern Baptist partnership at its best as NAMB has partnered in national volunteer recruitment and funding to assist the Louisiana Baptist Convention and its churches in providing on-site services and manpower alongside volunteers from churches throughout the U.S. and Canada.

But the work is far from finished. "We are so thankful for the way Southern Baptists have volunteered down here, but we don't need to think that it's all over," said David Hankins, executive director of the Louisiana Baptist Convention. "I think the mindset has become for some, 'Oh, I thought everything was OK.' We are very thankful for all the help but not everything is

fixed. Things are not back to normal. As one person here said two years ago, 'You'll have to keep your hearts warm toward New Orleans for a long time.'"

Hankins expressed immediate concern about the need for volunteers during the fall and winter, a time when there's a real threat of operations coming to a standstill for lack of manpower.

NOAH needs volunteer evangelism teams for activities such as door-to-door visitation, prayerwalking, community assessment and block parties as well as volunteers for construction. The projects are being coordinated through the NOAH office in partnership with state evangelism offices and directors of missions for Baptist associations across the country.

"There's a great open door. More people are willing to talk whereas in the past it was sometimes a little bit difficult to engage people in New Orleans in conversation about Jesus," said Richard Leach, NAMB's director of ministry and servant evangelism. "Add to that openness the presence of many more volunteers who are sharing the gospel and you see the magnitude of what God is doing."

"The residents in New Orleans have been helped so much that it's overwhelming to a lot of people to see that we really do care," he added.

As for Katrina survivors like the Fergusons, God has used the efforts of Southern Baptists to give them their life back.

"I've been a Catholic for 52 years," Thyra said. "But since Katrina I've been going to the Baptist church. I like that they teach the Bible."

Thyra said she loves the 52 volunteers "God sent to work on my house. Now I want to get in the position where I can go on a mission and help someone else."

"On each visit I see more evidence of a region coming back to life."

Jim Burton, senior director of partnership mobilization for the SBC North American Mission Board

HELPING HAND
Thousands of Southern Baptist volunteers have converged on New Orleans since Katrina devastated the city two years ago. Among them, Collin Anderson (on ladder) and his wife, Melanie, from Breckenridge, Texas.



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