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Media, experience shape views about Muslims, Mormons

Washington (RNS)—The media and personal experience rank as the top two influences on people's perceptions of Muslims and Mormons, according to a recent survey.

The results released by the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life found that out of more than 3,000 adults, 32 percent called the media the No. 1 influence on their perception of Muslims, while 18 percent cited personal experience as their top influence.

When it comes to views about Mormons, 29 percent cited personal experience, while 20 percent cited the media as an influence.

The poll also found that American adults, by a margin of 52-31 percent, believe Mormonism is a "Christian religion." But among white evangelicals who attend church at least weekly, 52 percent said Mormonism is not Christian.

The survey shows that the media tend to create unfavorable views toward Muslims especially. Of those who cited media as the biggest influence, 48 percent reported unfavorable views of Muslims. Only 20 percent said their views are favorable.

John Green, senior fellow at the Pew Forum, said the media's tendency to create unfavorable views of Muslims is probably linked to the content of the news, including the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

On the other hand, personal acquaintance with Muslims and Mormons results in more favorable opinions of them and their faiths. Green said being personally acquainted with Muslims and Mormons allows outsiders to gain a deeper understanding of these faiths and discuss their differences of belief.

Heroic impact



The "superheroes" stand guard at Murray State University's Curris Center, where The Journey Church meets each Sunday morning. The gang was a huge hit for the church's second birthday celebration, handing out free T-shirts and entertaining the kids. The "superheroes" are (from left) Ben Howard (Buzz Lightyear), Mitch Hultman (Superman), Bob Hathaway (Batman) and Jarrod Martin (Captain America). (Photo by Drew Nichter)

Murray church seeks to make 'heroes' out of ordinary people

By Drew Nichter
News Director

Murray—It is Sunday morning and The Journey Church is celebrating its second birthday. Pastor Matt Johnson is on stage welcoming the congregation to the ballroom of the Curris Center on the campus of Murray State University.

All of a sudden, there is a com-

motion at the back of the room.

As a movie score blares, four "superheroes" rush the stage. Armed with T-shirts, Batman, Superman, Captain America and Buzz Lightyear dash through the crowd, chucking shirts to anyone who wants one. Then, they disappear, leaving most in the room wondering, "What just happened?"

Connections Pastor Jarrod Martin, still decked out in his vintage Captain America costume, jumps on stage to help explain what's going on. He also admonishes Johnson for not getting in on the act. "Just because you don't look as good as I do in this (outfit), doesn't mean you shouldn't wear one."

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Research indicates 2.7 million Kentuckians may be spiritually lost

By Erin Roach
Kentucky Baptist Convention

Louisville—As many as 2.7 million Kentuckians may be spiritually lost, according to an examination of research by a Kentucky Baptist Convention church planting leader.

Larry Baker, director of the KBC's new work and associational missions department, said a new analysis of the Glenmary Research Center study, "Religious Congregations and Membership: 2000" on religious affiliation in the United States, indicates that only 33.5 percent of Kentucky's 4 million population can be clearly identified as being on the membership roll of any religious group. Baker said he interprets this statistic to mean that most of the 66.5 percent who have no strong affiliation are spiritually lost.

"I hope this can be a wake-up call for Southern Baptists because we used to be a people that reached out to the lost," Baker said. "Many of our

churches still do, but when I study associational statistics, I find out many, many of our churches have not even baptized a single person."

Baker examined the Glenmary statistics for Kentucky and then addressed them this summer on three blog posts at www.kybaptist.org/plantingwithpassion.

Only about 12.6 percent of Kentucky's residents attend church on an average Sunday, Baker estimated based on the research. And in three Kentucky counties, less than 10 percent of the population belongs to a church.

"I'm pretty sure that it's worse now than it was in 2000," Baker said. "We won't know for sure until 2010 (when the research is updated), but every indicator that I read about or see is that the lostness is greater now."

One indication that the problem is getting worse, Baker said, is the number of churches that are not see-

ing people come to faith in Christ and follow in believer's baptism.

"I was in an association this past week and learned from their latest report that 25 percent of their churches had not baptized a single person in the last year and that 50 percent had baptized two or less in the past year," he said.

"We've got to turn that around. We've got to get out of the comfortableness of our facilities, ... plant new churches, ... be aggressive in evangelism, and ... develop relationships with those people that are far away from God so that they can come to know who Jesus Christ is and to be saved," Baker added.

People in Kentucky are going to spend an eternity in hell if they die in the condition that the majority of them are in right now, Baker declared. "There is an urgency to this," he added. "I don't know how much time we've got left before Jesus comes back or how much time

we have individually, but we have to change our ways.

"Baptists are people that care about lost people, but our statistics and our outreach efforts don't look like we really care about people anymore. We need to change that."

Churches that want to take action in response to the overwhelming number of non-Christian people in the state can help renew their evangelism strategies by contacting the KBC's church development team, which can provide demographic studies for areas surrounding specific churches.

Demographic studies can show the faith receptivity and attitudes toward Baptist churches for a given radius around a church. For instance, a report for one Kentucky church in a rural town found that 43.6 percent of nearby households were likely to express a Baptist preference, which is much higher than the national average of 16.1 percent.

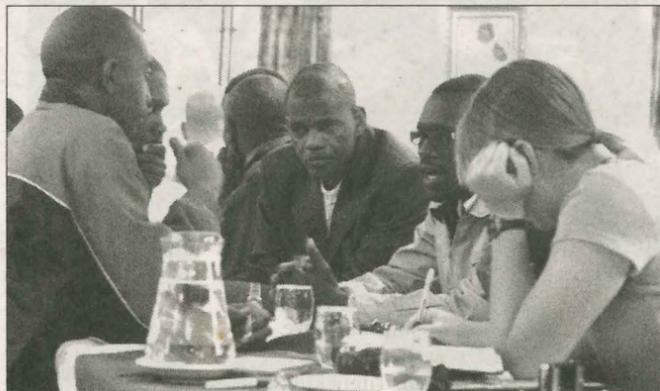
LifeWay helps launch True Love Waits initiative in Africa

By Don Beehler
Baptist Press

Nashville (BP)—True Love Waits International officially launched an initiative to expand its abstinence-until-marriage message throughout Africa during a three-day summit in Johannesburg, South Africa, attended by representatives from eight African countries.

The summit's 43 participants were guided through a comprehensive True Love Waits International training manual with follow-up lessons. They also heard from leaders in Uganda and Kenya about success in how the True Love Waits message has been implemented.

TRUE LOVE WAITS
Participants at the True Love Waits International summit in South Africa discuss ways to expand the abstinence-until-marriage initiative in their countries. (BP photo)



"The participants came with a sense of expectancy that did not diminish throughout the week," said Sharon Pumpelly, who serves as lead consultant for True Love Waits International, a ministry of LifeWay Christian Resources. Pumpelly and her husband, Larry, introduced True Love Waits to Uganda in 1994 while serving as missionaries with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board.

Diverse involvement

True Love Waits co-founder Jimmy Hester added, "To illustrate the diversity of the group, there were medical doctors, pastors, denominational leaders, health organization leaders and abstinence leaders."

The common thread that brought the group together was a shared desire to see a movement of God among the youth of their countries through young people committing themselves to God's plan for their sex lives, Hester said.

"Many positive comments were shared that affirmed the summit successfully cast a vision for True Love Waits International," he said.

One highlight of the summit was individual reports from each coun-

try. Leaders shared statistical information about their countries and what is currently taking place regarding sexual abstinence.

One leader recounted how his country is reaching military personnel with the True Love Waits challenge. Another told how churches are being planted as a result of True Love Waits presentations and follow-up work.

Earlier this year, the organization received \$950,000 in funding as part of LifeWay's "A Defining Moment" philanthropic campaign, created to help reach the nations for Jesus Christ. The donations enabled True Love Waits to begin expanding in six African countries.

"A Defining Moment has given us resources to be more proactive and intentional in our work in Africa, rather than just responding to requests," Hester said.

Since its introduction in Uganda 13 years ago, True Love Waits has been a catalyst for bringing people together to address the AIDS crisis and spread the message of biblical purity to schools, youth groups and communities. In the years that followed, Uganda's HIV/AIDS prevalence rate (the percentage of peo-

ple living with HIV/AIDS)—which in some areas was above 30 percent—dropped to the current rate of 6.7 percent of the country's 25 million people.

IMB mission strategy

True Love Waits has been a part of the IMB's mission strategy for several years. In addition to Uganda and Kenya, True Love Waits is being used in Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zambia, with a number of missionaries directly involved in the ministry.

"The majority of those that attended the summit are young African leaders who know the significance of the True Love Waits commitment and how it can affect the future of their countries," Hester said.

Echoing Hester's perspective, Tshepo Kgalaeng from Botswana wrote in a follow-up e-mail, "I just want to say a special thank you for inviting me to the summit; (it) was an eye-opener and spiritually reviving. I'm looking forward to working with you, because Botswana is one country that needs the True Love Waits message."

Judge's ruling allows suit against Southwestern Seminary to proceed

Fort Worth, Texas (BP)—The judge in a federal employment lawsuit against Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and its president has ruled the case may proceed with an amended complaint against the school.

Also, in court documents filed Sept. 14 in U.S. District Court in Fort Worth, Judge John McBryde noted that due to the additional complaint, the Texas seminary's request for dismissal of the case is moot.

The plaintiff, former Southwestern theology professor Sheri Klouda, claims she was wrongly denied tenure because she is a woman after being hired for a tenure-track position in 2002. The seminary said Klouda's tenure denial is consistent with a policy enacted after her hiring that, for doctrinal reasons, the teaching of men in theology classes should be done by men.

Klouda was hired for a tenure-track position when Kenneth Hemphill was Southwestern's president but later was notified that she would not be tenured, her lawsuit states.

The seminary argued in April that its action was "an ecclesiastical decision, which this court is bound to accept out of deference for the free exercise of religion, protected by the First Amendment."

Klouda's lawsuit, as originally constituted, charged Southwestern and its president, Paige Patterson, with breach of contract, fraud and defamation and sought unspecified damages.

Klouda earned a Ph.D. at Southwestern in 2002 and was elected unanimously by the trustees to her tenure-track position. Klouda left the seminary in 2006 and now teaches at Taylor University in Upland, Ind.

New BWA leader urges consensus

Birmingham, Ala. (RNS)—Neville Callam, the new general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, has little patience for theological disputes between moderate and conservative Baptists.

"What's centrally important is our concern for missions and evangelism, relief and development, human rights and theological reflection," said Callam of Jamaica, who began his new position Sept. 1.

The Baptist World Alliance, which represents about 37 million Baptists around the world, got caught in the middle of feuding factions a few years ago when the Southern Baptist Convention withdrew as a member body.

In 2003, the Baptist World Alliance admitted as a member body the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, a moderate group that had split off from the SBC. Southern Baptist lead-

ers then began accusing the BWA of drifting toward liberalism.

"We are very grateful to the many churches, including Southern Baptist Convention churches, that continue to support our work," Callam said during a visit to Samford University's Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham, Ala., as part of an 18-city tour of the U.S. and Canada.

"People on both sides have simplified the beliefs of people on the other side and those caricatures are not helpful," he said.

Differences over the role of women in ministry, homosexuality and other issues are serious but don't preclude larger cooperation, he noted.

"If the issues were clear-cut, you wouldn't have the difference," Callam added. "We need to seek out core ideas around which we have consensus."

Midwestern Seminary leaders square off over Roberts' fate

By Robert Marus and Greg Warner
Associated Baptist Press

Kansas City, Mo. (ABP)—Leaders of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary are reportedly squaring off in a struggle over the school's president, Phil Roberts.

Roberts' stewardship of the Kansas City, Mo.-based institution is the subject of a tug-of-war between seminary leaders, according to a Sept. 28 Kansas City Star article. The newspaper said members of the school's trustee board and its board of regents are choosing whether to back Roberts amid ongoing questions about his management style.

The public dispute began Sept. 21, when Associated Baptist Press first reported on the resignation of the college's chief financial officer, David Hodge, following a disagreement with Roberts.

Gene Downing, an Oklahoma City businessman who is chairman of the seminary's trustee board, said at the time that he and other trustees were concerned about Roberts' leadership and the reasons Hodge resigned.

According to Downing, Roberts placed Hodge on administrative leave Sept. 20 after Hodge declined to give Roberts a copy of a confidential financial analysis. Hodge, who had left a bank presidency in Wichita, Kan., just six months earlier to take the position at Midwestern, prepared the analysis at Downing's request.

In the most recent Star story, Downing said the analysis "substantiated the lack of administrative skills on Dr. Roberts' part."

"I'll put it this way," Downing added. "He's a great preacher, a great family man. He represents

the seminary well. But he's lacking in administration and people skills. And in order for the seminary to grow, you have to have these things."

Roberts and his trustees have been in behind-the-scenes conflict in recent months over his leadership style as well as alleged financial "irregularities." Those issues, and Hodge's resignation, are expected to be addressed by trustees at a meeting scheduled for Oct. 15-16. But Downing told the Star that the trustees' executive committee will discuss them at a meeting this week.

The Star also reported that members of the seminary's board of regents—a non-governing advisory board tasked mainly with fundraising—are mounting a campaign to back Roberts. One regent also criticized Downing's handling of the issue.

"This is the most irresponsible act of a board chair that I have ever come in contact with during my 33-some years in corporate life," Richard Hastings, a Midwestern regent and CEO of a Kansas City hospital system, told the Star. "You handle problems internally until you get to a point where you can't handle it. And that's not what has happened in this case."

"It's implied that somehow Dr. Roberts has not been fiduciarily sound," he added, "but there's no evidence to demonstrate that. Phil Roberts is a good man. I would support him to the end."

Roberts has not responded to repeated requests for comment on the issue, and a seminary spokesperson said it is unlikely he will have anything to say to the press in light of the Star report.

Jim Castlen to be nominated as KBC first VP

Hazard—Jim Castlen, director of missions for Three Forks Baptist Association, will be nominated as Kentucky Baptist Convention first vice president during the Nov. 13-14 KBC annual meeting in Elizabethtown.



Jim Castlen

Castlen, a former Southern Baptist international missionary to the Philippines and Australia, has served Three Forks Association since 2002. He will be nominated by Alan Dodson, pastor of Cornerstone Baptist Church in Lexington.

Dodson said he believes Castlen "would bring a wonderful spirit and unique perspective to KBC leadership."

According to Castlen, the proposal for his nomination "came out of the blue."

"I was just sitting innocently at a luncheon one day and heard my name mentioned in this regard," he noted. "I told them I'm not a political kind of person and had rarely held office of any kind."

After agreeing to consider the possibility, Castlen said he "told Hershael York and the other guys to count me in."

York, former president of the KBC and an associate dean at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, previously announced he will nominate Bill Henard, pastor of Porter Memorial Baptist Church in Lexington, and an assistant professor at Southern Seminary, as KBC president.

"There are some of us who get together two or three times a year to fellowship," Castlen explained. "Bill Henard's name had come up as a potential presidential candidate. I think there was sort of a self-appointed nominating committee that grew out of this group."

If he is elected, Castlen said concerns he would seek to highlight include Kentucky Baptist churches' low baptism rate and the need for "a more fully-orbed gospel of obedience and the discipling process and mentoring one-on-one."

Castlen is a member of Big Creek Baptist Church in Hazard which gave 7.2 of undesignated receipts through the Cooperative Program and reported no baptisms last year, according to 2006 Annual Church Profile statistics.

Castlen has served churches in Kentucky, Alabama, Louisiana, Tennessee and Texas in music, youth and education, including Harlan Baptist Church and First Baptist Church of Mount Washington. He also was a professor of music at Clear Creek Baptist Bible College in Pineville from 1990 to 2002.

Murray church seeks to produce 'heroes'

Continued from page 1

Martin tells his friend, flexing his muscle.

Even though guys dressed like superheroes and tossing free T-shirts to a crowd may seem like something better suited for a minor-league baseball game, it works for The Journey Church.

"We'll try a lot of stuff," Johnson said. "Sometimes we fall flat on our face, but we give it a shot."

The superheroes were a light-hearted way of introducing the church's new sermon series called "Heroes," part of which involves a 40-day project to help 400 disadvantaged area families get basic hygiene products they cannot afford on their own. Borrowing a slogan from the popular NBC television show, Johnson challenges the church to "Serve the City ... Save the World."

"Big impact"

On The Journey's website, Johnson describes the "Heroes" series as "all about ... big impact." The church should know something about impact, as one of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's High Impact church plants. The Journey became the second such church in the initiative when it launched on Sept. 11, 2005. But if Johnson had had his way, it wouldn't have been in Murray.

"I wanted to go somewhere where there weren't a lot of churches," Johnson said, referring to the fact that there are more than 70 churches of various denominations in Calloway County.

Johnson, 32, said he caught the bug to plant a church shortly before graduating from Murray State in 1997. His campus minister at the time, Keith Inman, (who now serves as the associate team leader for the KBC's collegiate/young adult ministry group) encouraged Johnson to attend a Rick Warren-led Purpose-Driven Church conference in California.

"That was really the first time I got a picture of what church could and should be," Johnson said.

And he had plenty of prior experience. As the son of a pastor—Robert Johnson of Northside Baptist Church in Mayfield—Johnson had seen his share of Baptist churches in western Kentucky. He began public speaking at the age of 12 and had been "on the circuit," as he put it, since he was 15 years old.

Following a two-year stint as a student pastor at a church in Colorado, Johnson moved back to Kentucky and contacted his college buddy Martin, 32, about planting a church together.

Focused on planting in a big city, Johnson began researching successful church starts, "trying to get a handle on how to do it," he noted. Despite his exhaustive efforts, Johnson said God kept throwing up "roadblocks" and bringing him back to Murray.

In March of 2004, Johnson's vision of a church plant came together. "In one week's time, I felt like God said, 'Now's the time and Murray is the place,'" Johnson recalled.

Two months later, he shared



SUPERFRIENDS Jarrod Martin (as Captain America) and Pastor Matt Johnson have fun introducing the church's new "Heroes" sermon series. Martin serves as Connections Pastor at The Journey and "when called upon ... does goofy stuff and makes fun of himself in order to give everybody a good laugh," Johnson said. (Photo by Drew Nichter)

the vision with Martin and his wife, Sarah. After a few days of prayer and discussion, the Martins got on board.

"We had a real confidence that God was doing this and we thought if we don't jump on, we're going to miss out on something huge," Martin said.

Over the next several months, the three began doing a lot of "unscientific" research on Murray and the Calloway County area.

Through an endless number of phone calls to churches in the county, Johnson and Martin determined that at least 70 percent of the population was unchurched. In addition, only about 500 of Murray State's approximately 10,000 students attended church.

"So all of a sudden, the light bulb went on," Johnson said. "This is why we're supposed to launch a church in Murray and these are the people ... that we have to reach."

After crunching the numbers, Johnson found out about the KBC's new High Impact Church emphasis. He and Martin determined that their fledgling church plant met every requirement except having a sponsoring church. As Johnson pointed out, finding a sponsoring church proved to be easier said than done.

"We probably went two months talking to people and just got shot down right and left," Johnson recalled.

At the time, Martin was serving as youth minister at First Baptist Church of Benton. On the heels of many rejections, he suggested going to Pastor Don Wilson to request sponsorship.

Hoping to get financial support in the amount of only \$5,000, Johnson and Martin made their pitch to Wilson. The pastor was so convinced by the vision, the church committed \$75,000 over three years to The Journey. With First Baptist, Benton, on board, Johnson's father's church, Northside Baptist, also made a significant financial commitment.

Having gained the support they needed, The Journey Church was approved as the second High Impact church in March of 2005. Six months

later, with Johnson, the Martins and five college students on board, the church held its first service at the church center. It quickly became known as the "college church."

"Early on, it was a mass influx of college students," Johnson said. "We would have families come and there wouldn't be anything for their kids and they would see all these college students. We kept hearing over and over again, 'We love (the church), but there is nothing for our kids here.'"

Family-friendly

Martin said The Journey is working hard to create an environment that is "inviting" for kids.

"We're trying to be the best children's ministry in western Kentucky," Martin declared. "On Sunday mornings, we think if families get there ... and the kids have a good time, the parents will come back."

Martin, who has two young children of his own, said he believes getting families to attend The Journey is crucial for student members.

"As we've gotten more families there ... (the college students) feel more comfortable being in that place, because it's not just them," he said.

Even with the emphasis on families and children's ministries, Johnson pointed out that The Journey is focused on keeping church "as simple as it can possibly be." Aside from small groups that meet during the week, the church is centered around Sunday mornings. And as Johnson put it, "that's the best thing we have going for us."

"We said early on, 'Let's get the worship service great,'" Johnson noted. "The way we define a win for our Sunday morning worship service is this: When they walk out of there and say, 'That did not feel like church, that was awesome.' ... We celebrate those stories because I think that's what it's all about."

Even with the church's success on Sunday mornings—with as many as 200 in attendance during the school year—Johnson said he understands that there are thousands more people in the area who The Journey Church needs to reach.

"We look and realize there are still 30,000 people in this county who aren't in church," Johnson said. "So we have a long way to go and a lot of work ahead of us."

THE JOURNEY CHURCH AT A GLANCE

Location:
Murray

Pastor:
Matt Johnson

Launch Date:
Sept. 11, 2005

Sponsoring Churches:
First Baptist Church, Benton;
Northside Baptist Church, Mayfield

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TRENNIS HENDERSON
Editor

DREW NICHTER
News Director

THOMAS C. TOWNSEND
Marketing & Business
Manager

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

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Don't let 'buildings' blur your vision

By Keith Manuel

Alexandria, La. (BP)—I love the view of a sanctuary from the platform. It's a view most people never get, at least not when the building is occupied.

It's pretty funny what people think you can't see. I get to see the youth text messaging from their seats, slumping down to be less obvious. There's the businessman who thinks he turned off his cell phone, only to realize after the 15th ring that the phone going off actually is his. In the back, there is a whole family filling a pew. It's a great time together, grandma tossing peppermints to the grandchildren, grandpa dozing off, grandkids giggling at grandpa. What a view.

One of the things I do to get comfortable preaching to a new congregation is to find friendly faces in the audience. You know the ones. They nod approvingly at the right time. They laugh at your worst jokes. They

take notes as you share the truths of the Bible. They clap or "Amen" when you reach a crescendo in your sermon. I love those kinds of folks.

FIRST PERSON

My problem is that sometimes I become spiritually nearsighted.

I can see clearly in the building but I lose clarity further out. I focus so much of my attention on the people in the building that I miss seeing the needs of people outside of the building.

When I change my focus, God gives me great blessings.

One Saturday afternoon, I took both of my sons to a restaurant close to our home and met one of those blessings. When we got our drinks and appetizer, I asked the waitress how we could pray for her because we were going to pray before we ate our food. I guess my question was much different than "didn't I ask for extra pickles?" because all she could say was, "What?" After I repeated my offer, she asked for prayer for a deci-

sion she needed to make.

That prayer broke the ice. She became our friend and took extra good care of us.

On one of her stops, I asked her a more spiritual question: In your opinion, what do you think it takes for a person to go to heaven? Her answer was a typical works answer. I asked her if I could share with her how the Bible answered that question. To my boys' amazement, she said yes. In just a few minutes, she heard what Jesus did for her and she prayed to surrender her life to Him.

Not only did I get to be a part of God's work that day, but my sons were able to see that God can work outside the walls of the church too. My oldest son looked at me with wide eyes and said, "Dad, I couldn't stop shaking. I was so excited."

The blessings of God come much quicker when we "compel them to come in" instead of waiting for them to show up.

Keith Manuel is an evangelism associate on the Louisiana Baptist Convention's evangelism and church growth team

Negative implications

I recently read several articles from the Los Angeles Times, Associated Press and even the Western Recorder. The focus was on the prayers of one particular pastor and his views on dealing with one's enemies. Several issues in these articles and this pastor's approach are very troubling.

First, praying for the destruction and death of one's enemies is inconsistent with the New Testament instructions of Jesus Himself. Matthew 5:43-48 instructs us to "love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." Romans 12:20, "If your enemy is hungry, feed him." Of course, the ultimate example is Jesus Himself praying for the forgiveness of those conducting His crucifixion (Luke 23:34).

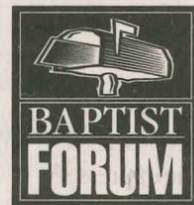
Second, our Baptist Faith and Message calls for the separation of church and state. We are mandated to uphold the laws of the land while at the same time remaining faithful to scriptural mandates. The freedom to worship and the tax benefits all churches receive could be jeopardized by those who violate the principles we claim to live by.

Third, the implication that this prayer position is held by all Southern Baptist churches is totally inappropriate. Though this pastor does not make that

claim, he does in fact identify his association as a former officer of the convention. I for one do not appreciate such a connection.

I have a deep concern for the damage done to the public perception of California Southern Baptists. We only see news coverage when the impact is negative. We are doing so many positive things in our communities and state that never get told. I believe it is time to tell our story to the world to overshadow the negative words of one outspoken, publicity-hungry pastor.

Tom Stringfellow
Beverly Hills, Calif.



What are you thinking?

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

Cooperation in action at Hays Fork

Hays Fork Baptist Church in Richmond has experienced incredible results from cooperation among Baptist churches in Kentucky and across several states.

The congregation has just moved into a beautiful new sanctuary, fellowship hall and remodeled classrooms/offices in the former sanctuary. Located about six miles south of Richmond on Highway 421, and with suburbs nearby, the church has great opportunities for growth and development.

Help to build the new facilities came from all over. Volunteers came with "New Faith Baptist Builders" from Alabama, Georgia, Missouri and South Carolina to do framing and electrical work. The Builders for Christ of Acworth, Ga., did roofing. Volunteers from Sunset Road Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C., did brick work. Pleasant Dale Baptist Church of Lancaster, S.C., installed drywall. First Baptist Church of Hartselle, Ala., helped with painting, landscaping, framing and drywall. Providence Baptist Church of Winston,

Ky., did trim.

Key individual volunteers included Lermon Willis of Bethlehem Baptist Church, Waco (electrical); David Epperson of Whitehall Baptist Church, Richmond (electrical design); Mitchell Smith of Peytown Baptist Church, Richmond; and Bob Magel of Calvary Baptist Church, Danville.

At the recent building dedication, 34 professionals, contractors and suppliers were recognized for their cooperation and discounts on services and materials, including an elevator.

Pastor Vincent Carman served as the general superintendent for the construction, in addition to his other duties.

Building Committee Chair Brad Black said the insurance company wanted to insure the building for \$1.6 million. The church spent about \$600,000, which is a huge savings due to the volunteers.

During the dedication service, volunteers commended the Hays Fork members for their hospitality, friendship and participation in

the construction. Several local men who are not members of the church were also recognized for outstanding service.

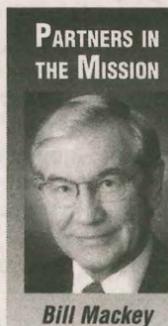
During the past 18 months the church has given about \$130,000 to the building fund, and at present, the loan is for \$520,000. It is obvious that the pastor and members have sacrificed in order to keep their jobs going and do construction at night and on weekends.

Although pressed financially with the cost of the new facilities, the church has remained strong in Cooperative Program and missions support. The church is active in partnership missions through Tates Creek Baptist Association and disaster relief through KBC. Carman currently serves as moderator of the association and has served in several leadership roles.

It was gratifying to hear testimonies of how God has been at work in guiding the process to completion. These stories will be told at Hays Fork and in all of the communities represented for years to come.

This is another example of cooperation and what God can do when people work together!

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention



Bill Mackey

FAMILY

Which financial activities qualify as investments?

By Jeremy White

Clients often ask me, "What do you think the market will do next month or next year?" My tongue-in-cheek response usually is, "Well, my crystal ball is broken, so I'm not sure."



Perhaps I should just buy one of the nostalgic Magic 8-Balls. You simply think of your investment scenario or question, say it aloud, and then turn over the Magic 8-Ball. Through the blue ink-like liquid, you can see the answers from the 8-Ball, such as "It will happen" or "Not in the short-term" or "It depends on the Fed."

Through my years of experience and hearing people's investment tales, I've heard some people rely on predictions and forecasts about as strange as the Investment Crystal Ball. Something about the mixing of investing, greed and the wiring of our brains and hearts causes us to make strange decisions with investments.

Investing, or an investment, is an activity undertaken with the hope of making a profit. In other words, an investment is something that is purchased with one or two expectations: growth in value and a yield or return. An investment is something that can and will be sold when it has accomplished its purpose, or when it can't and won't accomplish its purpose.

We see biblical examples of investing from a wise woman investing in land and selling it for a higher price (Proverbs 31) to farmers planting seeds to the parable of wise servants increasing the master's allotment.

With this discussion of a definition in mind, we can see that the following do not qualify as investments: home, car, jewelry, furnishings, second homes.

Investments are tools one uses to accomplish financial objectives. They are not an end in themselves. Many things may have "investment value," but they are not in reality an investment. Jewelry has value, but doesn't provide a yield or return on an ongoing basis. It might grow in value, but just try selling your wife's wedding ring. It's not going to happen.

Investing is best done with a long-term viewpoint while understanding that market ups and downs are normal. I can only predict that the market will go up and down in a random sequence over the next year.

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

Coping with abandonment requires self-care, support

Q: My husband recently abandoned our marriage for a relationship with someone else. One complication is that he was in the ministry. Another important factor is that we are the parents of a young child. How should I cope with this crisis?

You are correct to sort out all of the complicating factors. Reconciliation with your spouse becomes much more difficult when your spouse chooses to be in a relationship with another person.

MARRIAGE

While it might seem obvious that your spouse will have a crisis of identity in this situation, it may not be as obvious that you will as well. You may have spent your whole adult life in the role as a ministry spouse. Your grief and recovery will include finding a new identity as a single person. Other people might not know how to relate to you.

Getting into a divorce recovery workshop can be extremely helpful. Surround yourself with a support group that understands your situation. You might also seek out supportive family members who can provide assistance and encouragement.

Remember self-care. Just as the passengers on an airline are instructed to put on their own oxygen mask first in case of an emergency before attempting to help their children, you must take care of yourself in order to help your child.

Consider counseling. There are some excellent marriage and family therapists and pastoral counselors who can help you process the parts of your life that are broken and help you put your life back together again. One important thing about recovery is that you recover yourself. But the process of getting there takes time, support and patience.

Remember that God says, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." God's abiding presence can get you through many tough days and nights. But whether it is in the form of a church support group, a supportive family member or a skilled clinician, find ways to process this pain with others and shore up your strength.—James Stillwell

Q: A recent column focused on whether families are losing the ability to focus on what truly matters. How can families learn to effectively do so?

My previous column on this issue posed the possibility that due to busyness, today's families may be losing the ability to focus on what truly matters—specifically our relationship with God and our relationship with each other. Determining what can be done to correct the problem is the next logical step.

PARENTING

According to author Eugene Peterson, "If there is no Sabbath, we become totally absorbed in our own doing and saying, and God's work is either forgotten or marginalized. We lose God-consciousness, God-awareness. If we are going to honor the Father, we must keep the Sabbath. We must stop running around long enough to see what He has done and is doing."

Robert Parham, executive director of the Baptist Center for Ethics, seized this idea several years ago when he suggested that we make sabbath our No. 1 family value. Parham challenges Christian families to draw boundaries around work and to prioritize time to be together.

We are not just talking about church attendance here, although church at its best encourages and enables us to be still and know God. We are talking about sabbath as a lifestyle—a distinctively Christian lifestyle that knows how to focus on what really matters; a lifestyle that prioritizes times of stillness and silence, times of "not doing."

In the context of today's culture, a culture that has most children and families as busy as a three-ring circus, we may need help to make that kind of change. However, I am convinced that such a change will make a huge difference in our families and in the lives of our children.—David Garrard

Family Forum writers are:

David Garrard, minister to children at St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville. E-mail: dgarrard@smbclouisville.org.

James Stillwell, minister to singles at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington. E-mail: james@ibs-lex.org.

Valerie Vincent, Christian counselor with Hardy Associates in Louisville. E-mail: dr.vincent@insightbb.com.

Scott Wigginton, associate professor of pastoral ministries and counseling at Campbellsville University and minister of counseling at Campbellsville Baptist Church. E-mail: sewigginton@campbellsville.edu.

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



Are you willing to 'Fast One to Feed One'?

Remember when your mom used to tell you to eat all the food on your plate because there were poor, hungry children starving to death in Africa (or China or India or Appalachia)?

What if you could have taken that food and handed it directly to a malnourished person? Now you can—sort of.

As Southern Baptists observe World Hunger Sunday on Oct. 14, Kentucky Baptist Convention leaders are highlighting an innovative emphasis dubbed "Fast One to Feed One: Turning the Table on Hunger!"

Designed to coincide with the Southern Baptist Convention's annual hunger relief focus, the KBC campaign challenges individual believers to commit to a year-long effort to help relieve hunger at home and around the world.

In a cover letter mailed with "Fast One to Feed One" packets to pastors throughout the commonwealth, Eric Allen wrote, "If I told you there was a way to help you strengthen your relationship with God while helping someone in need at the same time, would you be interested?"

Allen, director of the KBC's mission service and ministries department, explained that Kentucky Baptists can "get involved in feeding the hungry in a very personal way" by fasting one meal each month and donating what they would have spent on that meal to the SBC World Hunger Fund.

"The fasted mealtime can be used to pray for needs in the community and around the world," he added. "And the slight amount of hunger we will feel can help us to appreciate what many people contend with on a daily basis."

The emphasis is based on the words of Isaiah 58:6-7, "Isn't the fast I choose: To break the chains of wickedness, to untie the ropes of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and to tear off every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, to bring the poor and homeless into your house, to clothe the naked when you see him

and to not ignore your own flesh?"

According to Allen, "Last year, more than 30,000 decisions for Christ were made in our world as a direct result of Southern Baptist hunger relief ministries. Imagine how many more people would be physically and spiritually fed if every Kentucky Baptist gave above their regular tithe and offering the cost of one meal each month to world hunger.

"One of the beautiful things about the Southern Baptist World Hunger funds is that 100 percent of the funds are used to alleviate hunger," Allen emphasized. "Because the Cooperative Program and other missions offerings cover the costs of putting missionaries in the field, no administrative costs are deducted from hunger fund gifts."

How extensive is the need? According to "Fast Facts about Hunger and Poverty in Kentucky and North America":

- 13 million children in the U.S. (approximately 17.8 percent) live in poverty. Kentucky's rate of 18.4 percent remains above the national average.

- More than \$1.4 million in domestic hunger funds was distributed to 1,900 hunger ministries in the U.S. in 2006, including more than \$52,000 in Kentucky.

- Hunger funds provided 58,000 meals for the hungry in Kentucky last year.

So what do you think? Is it worth it to you to skip one meal a month to help make a physical and spiritual impact in the lives of people in need around the globe? It is for me.

To get into a routine that's easy to remember, my personal goal is to fast one meal on the first day of each month and make a contribution to the World Hunger Fund the following Sunday.

Will you prayerfully consider doing the same? It should prove a lot more effective than boxing up that liver or broccoli your mom occasionally served and trying to mail it to Africa.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

Diverse City offers teen a place to belong

I went to the mall, which is not my favorite place to go, to check it out. I had heard lots about it from several youth ministers who kept telling me, "Joe, you've just got to come and check it out."

I sat there for about 40 minutes watching teenagers come and go. They would spend some time playing video games, trying their skills at "guitar hero" or "Madden," or trying out the Nintendo Wii. Some would just hang out for a while and then take off. One was even taking a nap on one of the couches. I had not seen anything like this before in a mall.

In the middle of all this madness was Jack Daniel Taylor, the associate pastor to students at the Bridge Community in Elizabethtown. Their website explains, "We call ourselves a 'connecting church,' because like a 'bridge' we long to connect two objects that are separated by an impassable barrier. The first connection that will happen at the Bridge Community is between people and God. The second 'connection' that will happen at the Bridge Community is person to person." As I sat there, Taylor unpacked the story of Diverse City.

Diverse City is a youth center in the Towne Mall in Elizabethtown. It is a place for students in grades 6-12 to hang out. The center is open seven

days a week.

"We have already seen stories unfold of students being surprised as they walk in asking, 'This is free?' and it is all free," Taylor noted. "Donations from local businesses, churches and individuals have made that possible. Many parents thank us for providing such a good place for their children to belong."

It was amazing the number of students who came through in the short time I was there. But there is more to this place than just video games. There also are opportunities for students to take music and art lessons, participate in one-on-one dialogue and discussion groups facilitated by adults about issues that are relevant to today's students. Taylor said there also are karaoke nights, movie nights, game tournaments and more. "We hope to add Internet/computers station as well as after-school tutoring in the near future," he said.

This started as an idea for a summer ministry when students were just hanging out at the mall. But the success of the ministry has inspired them to continue it year round. "In October," Taylor said, "we hope to move into the old H&R Optometrist space directly across the corridor from where we are now. We are excited about this move. It will more than double the space. It will

also have space for two large party or hangout rooms.

"This is a real opportunity for Diverse City to take it to the next level," he emphasized. "However, it is not without its challenges. For instance, we need to have some professional electric and heating and air work done ... as well as some renovation of the walls and flooring."

While the ministry is the brainchild of Taylor and the Bridge Community, they want it to be a place where churches of the community come together to build relationships with students.

"If I could highlight anything, it is that I hope this can be a place for all youth workers and churches to come and be involved and invest in students' lives," Taylor said. "The field is white for harvest. So many students need to know that there is something bigger than themselves and that they can really find a safe, loving place in true and real community."

At Diverse City, the hope is to provide teens a place to belong. "So many students look in so many wrong places to fill that void that can only be filled by Christ and the fellowship of His body," Taylor noted.

He said it has provided a great opportunity to talk to students about their relationship with Christ and to encourage them to get involved in church.

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

Support the Southern
Baptist World Hunger Fund

Fast One TO Feed One

Turning the Table on Hunger!

"Isn't the fast I choose ... to share your bread with the hungry?" Isaiah 58:6-7

The Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund is one of the vital links between Kentucky Baptists and a world in need of both physical and spiritual nourishment.

Fast One to Feed One is a great way to focus on prayer for your community while helping the hungry here in Kentucky and around the world. Here's how it works:

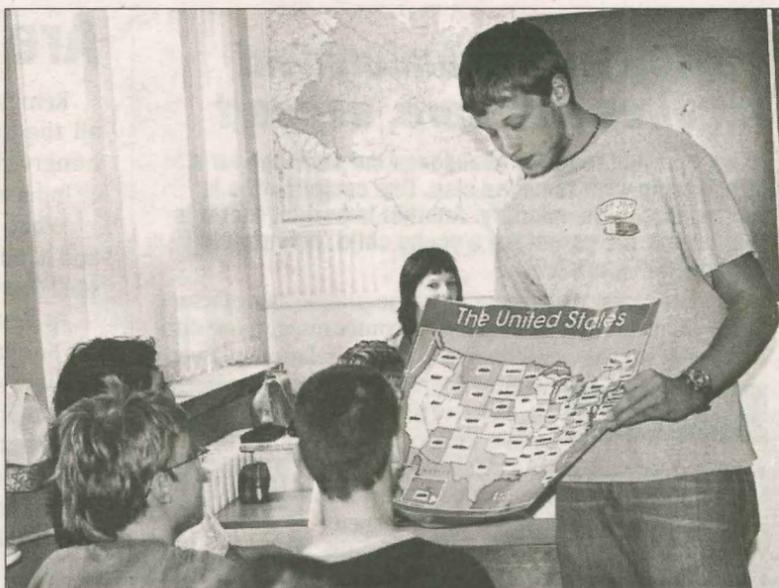
1. **Fast one meal a month. Use the meal time to pray for needs in your community.**
2. **Give the amount you would have spent on the meal through your church to the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund.**

World Hunger funds are used solely for the purchase of food that is distributed in Jesus' name by approved food ministries and by Southern Baptist state, North American and international missionaries.

Find out more about hunger, download free resources for your church or give online at www.kybaptist.org/hunger.



October 14
World Hunger
Sunday



STUDENTS ON MISSION Kentucky Wesleyan College student Kyle Nance teaches English at a public elementary school in Opole, Poland. Nance was part of a missions team sent by Baptist Campus Ministry to assist the BCM's ongoing work with Second Baptist Church in Wroclaw, Poland. (Photo courtesy of Scott Newman)

Kentucky college students make a difference in Poland

By Erin Roach
Kentucky Baptist Convention

Owensboro—College students are taking ownership of missions endeavors through a partnership the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Baptist Campus Ministry has with a church in Poland where Christian witness is desperately needed.

The idea for the alliance stemmed from the KBC's partnership with Poland when a group from the BCM at Kentucky Wesleyan College in Owensboro traveled to Wroclaw in 2004.

"At that time, we just felt God's calling and leadership in making it more of a long-term partnership," said Cindy Pelphrey, campus minister at Kentucky Wesleyan.

Second Baptist Church in Wroclaw had a particular need for mission work because it is located in an impoverished area with gangs, prostitution and drugs, Pelphrey said.

Because the need for student volunteers in Poland was more than Kentucky Wesleyan alone could supply, campus ministers throughout the state got on board in making the three-year partnership a statewide BCM effort.

"Our challenge is responding to the overwhelming awareness of needs around the world," said Keith Inman, director of the KBC's collegiate/young adult ministry group.

"When our students go on mission, they experience God's presence and return to their campuses with a desire to be obedient to the Great Commission," he added.

During spring breaks and summers, the KBC sends teams of college students to conduct kids' clubs and small group Bible studies with teenagers and young adults in Wroclaw.

Part of the partnership agreement was that the collegiate/young adult ministry group would help fund a missionary couple to stay and work in Wroclaw throughout the year. Jeremy and Laura Vincent were the first couple to stay.

"Basically on their own, without any promise of a supporting affiliation, they went as our missionaries to serve for a year," Pelphrey said.

Now that the Vincents have

sensed a call to career missions, they are studying at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville while another couple, Scott and Jackie Newman, serve in Wroclaw as BCM-sponsored missionaries. BCM students throughout Kentucky give money to support the missionaries in Wroclaw.

The Newmans are Kentucky Wesleyan graduates, and Scott Newman was one of Pelphrey's interns.

"Scott had never been abroad until I took him to Poland the first time. He just fell in love with the place, and now their primary responsibility there is collegiate ministry," Pelphrey said.

"The people in the church are very open and warm," she added. "The pastors in the church have such a heart particularly for people who are troubled and in poverty, and (they have) a desire to see them come to know Christ as their Savior and to have a sense of hope."

"They've only been a free country for 17 years, so it's a relatively new democracy. They love Americans because we were a part of helping them become free."

Pelphrey said the work the Newmans are doing is an evangelistic, relational ministry. Some students have made professions of faith while others are pondering the difficult questions of life that easily lead to a gospel presentation, she said.

During spring break this year, a group of Kentucky BCM students helped the university with American culture workshops and provided more opportunities for students to practice speaking English, Pelphrey said.

A team of KBC summer missionaries then spent six weeks working with the Newmans, leading VBS and teaching conversational English and cultural workshops to students.

Lizzi-beth Spence, KBC collegiate ministry specialist, said the Poland partnership is one of three ongoing international mission projects that also include Costa Rica and Thailand.

"Our goal is that every student would have a missions opportunity," Spence said.

What is a planned gift?

Giving tool plays significant role in charitable donations

I am sure you have been hearing a lot lately about planned gifts or planned giving. Guess what? You are going to continue to hear about this well into the future. It's because of the convergence between the ever-growing financial challenges of the charitable community and the largest generational transfer of wealth in the history of the world.

The charitable community consists of 1.5 million organizations registered with the IRS. Groups are classified among 27 categories including religion, which is by far the largest category. However, the 1.5 million does not include most churches because churches are not required to register with the IRS.

The largest generational transfer of wealth in history is estimated to be \$41 trillion. If you gave away \$10 million a day, it would take more than 11,000 years to give away \$41 trillion, and yet, that is the estimate of how much will pass from one generation to the next over the next two decades.

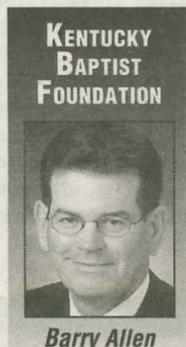
Planned giving provides an effective means by which those who hold the \$41 trillion in assets in

varying amounts can leave a legacy through the missions of the various charitable organizations with which they affiliate, including their churches.

Your Kentucky Baptist Foundation offers a full array of planned giving services to assist you in your overall family philanthropy to demonstrate both your love for Christ and His mission in this world and your love for family.

The best definition I know of a planned gift was provided in the March 1988 issue of "Give & Take." It stated, "A planned gift is any gift of any kind for any amount given for any purpose—operations, capital expansion or endowment—whether given currently or deferred if the assistance of a professional staff person, qualified volunteer, or the donor's advisors is necessary to complete the gift. In addition, it includes any gift which is carefully considered by a donor in light of estate and financial plans."

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



Barry Allen

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For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



Church of the Covered Dish

Thom Tapp



Bible Crosswords

By Janet Kennedy

Across

- 1 "Though they be red like _____, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18)
- 6 "Thou shalt also make a laver of _____" (Exodus 30:18)
- 10 Omissions excepted, abbr.
- 11 A long period of time
- 12 "And thou shalt make a veil of _____, and purple" (Exodus 26:31)
- 13 Lead, chem. symbol
- 14 Upper case, abbr.
- 15 Association of American Railroads, abbr.
- 16 Californian city, abbr.
- 17 "Lydia, a seller of _____" (Acts 16:14)
- 19 Academy, abbr.
- 20 _____ out: barely making a living
- 22 Kiloliter, abbr.
- 23 Elevated railroad
- 24 "And in the place of the boil there be a ... spot ... somewhat _____" (Leviticus 13:19)
- 28 Consumed
- 29 Actress McGraw
- 30 "They had on their heads crowns of _____" (Revelation 4:4)
- 32 Base hit (baseball), abbr.
- 33 "A dove ... her feathers with _____ gold" (Psalm 68:13)
- 34 6, Romans num.
- 35 "He ... saw a publican, named _____ and said unto him, Follow me" (Luke 5:27)
- 38 A liquid adhesive
- 40 "Of the tribe of _____ were sealed twelve thousand" (Revelation 7:6)
- 42 "The same came therefore to Philip, ... saying, _____, we would see Jesus" (John 12:21)

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42	43			44		45		46	47
48					49				50
51				52					53

- 44 "Lie down in _____ pastures" (Psalm 23:2)
- 47 Bear, Sp.
- 48 Estimated time of arrival, abbr.
- 49 "Neither knoweth _____ man the Father, save the Son" (Matthew 11:27)
- 50 Uncooked
- 51 "But let your yea be yea; and your _____ ..." (James 5:12)
- 52 But
- 53 "Let not the _____ go down upon your wrath" (Ephesians 4:26)

- 12 Sound of sheep
- 18 "Though they be _____ like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18)
- 21 An interjection of surprise
- 23 And, Lat.
- 25 "One _____ is with the Lord as a thousand years" (2 Peter 3:8)
- 26 Able, suffix
- 27 "Peter said, _____ and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee" (Acts 3:6)
- 28 Those who give counsel
- 30 "I saw seven _____ candlesticks" (Revelation 1:12)
- 31 "_____ no man any thing, but to love one another" (Romans 13:8)
- 32 "He made for the altar a _____ grate" (Exodus 38:4)
- 36 Southern state, abbr.
- 37 "I will pass through ... removing ... all the _____ cattle among the sheep" (Genesis 30:32)
- 38 "Yea, _____ hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not" (Hosea 7:9)
- 39 Repulsive to the eye
- 41 Jacob's brother
- 43 Independent T.V. Authority, abbr.
- 45 Take food
- 46 Empire state, abbr.

Last week's solution

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R	U	N	A	C	R	E	A	M	O	N
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Larnelle Harris among inductees into Gospel Music Hall of Fame

Nashville (RNS)—Christian vocalist Larnelle Harris, a member of Maple Grove Baptist Church in Louisville, is among this year's inductees to the Gospel Music Association's Gospel Music Hall of Fame.

He will be joined by Christian musicians Phil Keaggy, The Winans and the Statler Brothers as well as association board member and author Joe Moscheo at an Oct. 29 induction ceremony in Nashville.

Harris, a tenor who has received five Grammys and 11 Dove Awards, has recorded modern classics such as "How Excellent Is Thy Name" and "Amen." After the fall of the Soviet Union, Harris performed in the Kremlin. He currently performs 75 to 100 concerts for churches and Christian organizations every year.

Keaggy, who has recorded more than 45 albums, began his musical career in the late '60s when he and a friend founded Glass Harp. Keaggy recorded his first solo album, "What a Day," in 1973, followed by his first instrumental album, "The Master and the Musician," in 1978. He is

known for his songwriting and guitar-playing abilities.

The Winans—brothers Marvin, Carvin, Ronald and Michael—released "Introducing The Winans," their first record, in 1981. They then recorded two R&B albums before returning to gospel music with "Heart & Soul." In 2002, they released "The Very Best of the Winans" with their siblings, BeBe and CeCe.

The Statler Brothers—Harold Reid, Phil Balsley, Jimmy Fortune and Don Reid—released their first record, "Flowers on the Wall," in 1975. The prominent country music group won Grammy Awards, Country Music Association awards, and earned gold and platinum records. After retiring, they recorded "Amen," a gospel album.

Over his four-decade career, Joe Moscheo has gained recognition as a singer, musician, manager and executive and has won Grammy and Dove Awards. He is a permanent board member of the GMA. This year he published a book, "The Gospel Side of Elvis."

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Spiritual Emphasis Week

Staff, Kentucky Baptists help students understand God's plan of salvation

By Michael Spencer, assistant to the president

Sept. 16-19 was OBI's first "Spiritual Emphasis Week" of the school year.

Worship leader Rich Cowan and pastor David Head, both from Victory Baptist Church in Lexington, led daily chapel and evening evangelistic services. Mark and Judy Palmieri led one of our worship teams in a time of musical worship on Sunday evening.

Spiritual Emphasis Weeks are the next step beyond traditional revivals. Many of our students have no context for understanding a revival, but they do understand that we want to talk with them about spiritual matters.

While students are required to come to daily chapel services, the evening services are voluntary and still have very good attendance.

Our goal is to present the gospel clearly and invite students to place their faith in Christ as Savior and Lord. Those who wish to be baptized at Oneida Baptist Church can do so, but some of our students who become Christians have a church at home where they will be baptized.

Others have questions, and members of our staff talk with them about the "next step" in trusting Christ. For the past two years, we have provided a weekly "Open Question and Answer" group after Sunday morning worship. This especially is helpful for our many international and non-Christian students who do not have an evangelical Christian background. Q&A permits them to ask whatever they wish. Two ministry-trained staff members respond to their questions.

We also spend time before Spiritual Emphasis

Week training our staff in evangelism. Our gospel presentation of choice is the "Two Ways to Live." Many members of our teaching and houseparent staffs have been trained in using this tool to present the plan of salvation clearly to students who are unfamiliar with traditional evangelical language and concepts.

OBI does not use manipulation of any kind in presenting the gospel. We believe our students are obligated to participate in chapel, but we do not require non-Christians to participate as Christians. We believe God's Spirit is at work with our students always. This confident attitude allows real evangelism to take place instead of "decisions" made under emotionalism or manipulation.

This term's Spiritual Emphasis Week saw one young man who has been involved in drugs and rebellion for a very long time come to renew his faith in Christ. A message on the sacrifice of Jesus touched his heart and he shared with many people his new discovery that Jesus died to save him.

It is rewarding to see this kind of fruit, but we leave the ultimate accounting to God. For now, we will encourage, evangelize and build relationships, as ambassadors for Christ, with each student He has sent to us.

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



W.F. Underwood

Televangelist Rex Humbard dies at 88

Atlantis, Fla. (RNS)—Rex Humbard, a pioneer Southern gospel minister who launched what would become a worldwide empire of broadcast evangelism from Akron, Ohio, in the 1950s, died Sept. 21 at age 88.

Born to traveling evangelist parents, Humbard developed a folksy, storytelling revival style that drew millions of listeners and viewers to his radio and television sermons.

At the height of Humbard's popularity and influence, in the 1960s and early '70s, his down-home messages of faith and re-

demption were syndicated on more than 600 television stations and he claimed viewers worldwide of almost 20 million.

One of Humbard's loyal viewers was Elvis Presley. Upon the singer's death, Presley's father asked Humbard to officiate at the funeral service.

U.S. News & World Report in 1999 called Humbard one of the 25 Shapers of the Modern Era for his influence in redirecting Christian evangelism into television and incorporating entertainment features into the broadcast of sermons.

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Committed to our core values

Trips emphasize priority of evangelism, missions

Evangelism and missions are among Clear Creek's core values. Faculty live that out by hitting the road with our students on mission trips. This summer was a busy one.

I worked with a group of eight to repair a home in Waveland, Miss., that had been destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. The homeowner was saved through the witness of a local church that reached out to those in need. Our work reinforced the reality of God's love to this man.

Nine students and faculty/staff members helped a new church in Bozeman, Mont. Led by Academic Dean Malcom Hester, students helped Higher Definition Baptist Church improve its facilities. Students who went on the 2,000-mile road trip saw their dean work with his hands for the Lord's glory. They now know that a Ph.D. does not disqualify anyone to be effective outside the classroom.

Professor Richard Bartels took another group to Medaryville, Ind., to link with Clear Creek graduate Jonathan Paugh and his wife, Michelle. The Paughs recently were called to join Leisure Time Gospel Ministries to serve the homeless.

Koffman Cove, Alaska, is more than 3,000 miles from our Pineville campus, but God made a way for Dr. John Ditty and our students to minister there. They reported an amazing statistic. They told us that 100 percent of the senior class at Koffman Cove High School was saved. Then they added that one young lady was the entire class.

This was still a victory for Jesus!

Clear Creek faculty Dan and Elli Gillum traveled with students to the Eurasian country of Turkey, and found the Muslim population there hungry for the gospel. One young woman, after reading from the Gospel of John, said a great light had come into her life.

Our core value states: "We are a community of individuals redeemed from sin by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit. We affirm He died for the whole world and commissions each believer to take the gospel into the world. We commit ourselves to the priority of personal evangelism and world missions."

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.cccb.edu; e-mail: dfox@ccb.edu

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Donnie Fox

50 years later, 'In God We Trust' still mints controversy

By Adelle Banks
Religion News Service

Washington (RNS)—It has been 50 years since "In God We Trust" first appeared on U.S. paper currency, and those four little words have proven to be the source of big debate in the courts.

Michael Newdow, the California atheist known for trying to strip "under God" from the Pledge of Allegiance, has asked the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to declare "In God We Trust" an unconstitutional mingling of church and state. In Indiana, the American Civil Liberties Union has gone to district court, arguing that it's unfair for the state not to charge administrative fees for "In God We Trust" license plates when a plate advocating for the environment carries extra fees.

Why, decades after the words were made the nation's official motto and printed on our dollar bills, do they still spark debate?

"A great many Americans are angry ... when the government promotes religion and a great many other Americans believe that this is not promoting religion—they're

just representing who we are as a nation," said Charles Haynes, senior scholar at the Freedom Forum's First Amendment Center.

Long before the words were printed on paper money, they first appeared on coins after a Pennsylvania minister wrote to the secretary of the treasury in 1861, suggesting God's name should be featured on U.S. coins.

It wasn't until 1956 that Congress declared those words to be the national motto. On Oct. 1, 1957, they began appearing on the back of dollar bills under the words "The United States of America."

Newdow, whose case was dismissed by a lower federal court last year, said the words referring to a deity divide society by making non-believers "second-class citizens."

"The issue is not one of people who believe in God versus people who don't believe in God," he said. "It's people who believe in equality

versus people who don't believe in equality. That's what this litigation is about."

Jay Sekulow, chief counsel of the conservative American Center for Law and Justice, has filed a brief opposing Newdow on behalf of dozens of members of Congress.

"It reflects the heritage of the country," he said of the debated motto. "It's something the founding fathers recognized, that our rights and liberties were endowed by a creator. You recognize the source of these rights."

A 2003 Gallup Poll found that 90 percent of Americans approve of the inscription "In God We Trust" on U.S. coins.

A survey released earlier this month by the First Amendment Center found that 65 percent of Americans think the nation's founders intended the country to be a Christian nation and 55 percent think the U.S. Constitution establishes it as a Christian country.



Kentucky cases prompt lethal injection review

Washington (BP)—The U.S. Supreme Court announced Sept. 25 it will hear an appeal concerning the constitutionality of lethal injections, specifically the three-drug concoction used in 36 states to put inmates to death.

A Kentucky case will be used to issue a ruling by next summer on whether the current protocol can be deemed "cruel and unusual punishment," violating the Eighth Amendment. Ralph Baze and Thomas Bowling, two death row inmates, have filed the appeal, claiming the concoction could cause "unnecessary pain."

Both men were convicted of double homicides and given the death penalty in Kentucky. Baze killed a Powell County deputy and sheriff, while Bowling murdered a couple with a young son.

According to Baze and Bowling's attorneys, at least half of those sentenced to lethal injection and facing imminent execution in the last two years have challenged the use of the tri-chemical cocktail. Sodium thiopental, pancuronium bromide and potassium chloride are used together to render the inmate uncon-

scious, interrupt the breathing process and, finally, stop the heart.

The central issue is whether the possibility of unnecessary pain calls for the use of other drugs in the process. "All of the current lethal injection chemicals could be replaced with other chemicals that would pose less risk of pain," states the petition filed by Baze and Bowling's attorneys.

Barrett Duke of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission said, "Merely the risk of suffering is inadequate to require the use of another means of execution, but I don't think we should inflict pain unnecessarily."

The convicts' petition claims sodium thiopental, used as an anesthetic, "begins to wear off almost immediately," allowing the condemned to feel pain. Pancuronium bromide is a paralytic that would prevent any "outward signs of pain or consciousness." Potassium chloride, the drug used to stop the heart, is described as "road salt used to melt ice."

The Kentucky court rejected these claims, and the respondents to the petition maintain "the risk of any condemned inmate being con-

scious during an execution (is) extremely remote."

Another question to be resolved is whether states should be required to provide measures to revive an inmate in the event that a stay of execution is issued after the drugs have already been administered.

"States should make every effort to be able to halt an execution before it is completed, but once the final drug is administered, I think the state should consider that its obligation to (resuscitate) no longer exists," said Duke, ERLC's vice president for public policy and research.

Although a "crash cart"—equipped with a defibrillator, medication and other supplies used in the resuscitation process—and a doctor are now available during executions in Kentucky, the inmates' petition describes these as insufficient for sustaining life after the injection of the three-drug concoction.

Until a decision is reached by the Supreme Court, scheduled executions in other states by lethal injection could be postponed, although Texas executed an inmate by lethal injection hours after the high court agreed to hear the case.

Senate extends hate crime protection to homosexuals

Washington (BP)—The U.S. Senate voted Sept. 27 to add homosexuals and transgendered individuals to the classes protected under hate crimes laws.

Supporters of the controversial measure gained its passage as an amendment to the Department of Defense authorization bill, purportedly to make it difficult for President Bush to veto. The White House, however, has promised a veto by the president, even if it is part of the Defense bill.

The president has the upper hand in the battle over hate crimes expansion. The Senate and House of Representatives each would have to achieve a two-thirds majority to over-

ride a veto.

Current hate crimes law protects traits such as race, religion and national origin, but the bill's opponents argue the new legislation would grant protection based on lifestyle. They also warn it would move federal law toward punishing thoughts and beliefs, since the motivation of a person charged with a hate crime would have to be evaluated. Some critics warn it could lead to suppression of speech that describes homosexual behavior as sinful.

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

Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council, said in a

written statement, "Congress needs to remember that preserving equal justice under the law is more important than scoring points with advocates of homosexual behavior. Congress should represent all Americans, not give special protections for some."

The Human Rights Campaign, the country's largest homosexual activist organization, hailed the Senate's action.

"For over a decade our community has worked tirelessly to ensure protections to combat violence motivated by hate and today we are the closest we have ever been to seeing that become a reality," HRC President Joe Solmonese said.

NATIONAL NOTES

Divided Maryland high court rules against gay marriage. Maryland's highest court has delivered the latest setback to supporters of same-sex marriage rights, narrowly ruling that the Maryland Constitution does not confer upon homosexuals the right to marry each other. A sharply divided Maryland Court of Appeals ruled Sept. 18 that a 1973 state law that bans gay marriage does not violate the Maryland Constitution's equal-rights provisions. The decision disappointed some advocates of same-sex marriage, who thought Maryland provided the best chance for expanding same-sex marriage rights. Part of the case was based on Maryland's Equal Rights Amendment, which has some of the nation's strongest protections against gender-based discrimination. Similar lawsuits are pending in several other states, including California and Iowa.

N.J. revokes tax-exempt status for Methodist group. State officials have revoked the tax-exempt status of a Methodist-run seaside pavilion that church officials have said is off-limits to gay and lesbian civil union services. Lisa Jackson, who heads the state's Department of Environmental Protection, withdrew the Green Acres program tax exempt status because "it is clear that the Pavilion is not open to all persons on an equal basis." Several lesbian couples were denied when they asked to hold civil union ceremonies in the boardwalk gazebo overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. The Methodists call the open-sided structure a chapel, and contend civil unions conflict with Methodist doctrine. The lesbian couples filed a complaint with the state civil rights agency, claiming discrimination. The Camp Meeting Association, in turn, filed a federal lawsuit, claiming its constitutional rights would be violated if it were required to allow civil unions.

Bureau of Prisons changes course on banning religious texts. After receiving criticism from religious leaders and Capitol Hill, the Federal Bureau of Prisons announced it will scale back its effort to ban religious texts from prison libraries. The New York Times reported that the bureau sent an e-mail message Sept. 26 about its change in plans concerning its Standardized Chapel Library Project. The newspaper previously reported that chaplains were directed to remove books and other materials from prison shelves that were not on a list of approved resources. Mark Earley, president of Prison Fellowship, applauded the response. "We appreciate the bureau's commitment to keeping the small number of materials that incite violence out of prison chapel libraries," Earley said. "By returning to the common-sense approach of getting rid of only those materials that incite violence, they ensure that prisoners have access to a wide range of quality religious materials that will help them become productive members of society when they are released back to our communities."

HOW TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

By Rusty Ellison

I serve as pastor of a church that is in the midst of a major transition in our children's ministry. At Walnut Street Baptist Church, we're moving to a model of children's ministry that includes children's worship in a children's worship center in children's style of worship.

The vision behind such a move comes from my personal perspective that we're just not "getting it done" with regard to reaching children and young families. I told our congregation two weeks ago that I'm not into mass evangelization of kids, but I do want to see masses of kids evangelized.

The title of a recent article by Ed Stetzer on LifeWay Christian Resources' Web site caught my attention: "Not Just Playtime: Insights from Evangelistic Churches Reaching Children." Stetzer noted that "baptisms among children between the ages of 9 and 11 are at a 30-year low and continuing to drop." Evidently Walnut Street is not alone!

Stetzer asserted that most evangelistically effective churches are intentionally active in children's evangelism. "An overwhelming majority (98 percent) believe that children age 9 and younger do indeed have the capacity to understand and believe the gospel message and commit their lives to Christ."

Do you believe that?

The Apostle Paul's words in Ephesians 2 speak clearly: "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast."

The good news of Jesus Christ is intended to be good news for all generations. Let's not make our children behave and think like adults before they hear and respond to the good news.

Rusty Ellison, former president of Kentucky Baptist Assemblies, is pastor of Walnut Street Baptist Church in Louisville

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **BARDWELL**—Joe Bagwell recently resigned as pastor of Moscow Church.
 ■ **BURGIN**—Burgin Church recently called Carl McCray as pastor.
 ■ **CADIZ**—Trigg County Church will hold a tent revival Oct. 3-6. For more information, call (270) 522-5839.
 ■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Saloma Church will hold fall revival services Oct. 12-13, 7 p.m., with James Jones as evangelist, and Oct. 14, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m., with Joseph Owens as evangelist. For more information, call (270) 789-0082. John Chowning is pastor.
 ■ **EDDYVILLE**—First Church ordained Brandon Knott and Kent Murphy as deacons Sept. 23. Tim Perdue is pastor.
 ■ **FULTON**—Crutchfield Church will hold revival services Oct. 7, 11 a.m., and Oct. 8-10, 7 p.m., with Donnie Smith as evangelist. Wallace Smith

is pastor.

■ **GREENSBURG**—Marshall Eastham recently resigned as pastor of Pleasant Valley Church due to health reasons.

Mike Akridge recently resigned as pastor of Greensburg Church.

New Salem Church will hold revival services Oct. 12-14 with Timmy Glass, pastor of Macedonia Church in Greensburg, as evangelist. For more information, call (270) 932-7772.

■ **HAMPTON**—Rosemary Pope Dunning, a member of North Livingston Church, died Sept. 25. She was 81. A native of Livingston County, she was a member of Woman's Missionary Union. She is survived by two daughters, four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

■ **HARRODSBURG**—Mercer Associa-

tion recently called James Harley as director of missions. He and his wife, Judy, were honored Sept. 30 with a special day of recognition for 29 years of service to Fellowship Church in Harrodsburg.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Cloverleaf Church will host a women's conference Oct. 13, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., with Lois Jane as guest speaker. The church will hold revival services Oct. 14-17, 7 p.m., with Joe Mobley as evangelist. For more information, call (502) 367-0218. Geoffrey Lacefield is pastor.

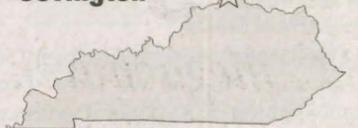
■ **MOUNT VERNON**—First Church will hold revival services Oct. 14-17 with Rick Clark as evangelist. For more information, call (606) 256-2922. Edward Nation is pastor.

■ **PADUCAH**—Heartland Worship Center recently called Nathan Joyce as pastor effective Oct. 14. Joyce, who previously was pastor of Gilead Church in Glendale, succeeds Don Young who retired in August after 47 years as pastor.

■ **PIKEVILLE**—Island Creek Mission

Spotlight on ...

Covington



South Side Church will host its 100th anniversary celebration Oct. 7 with services at 10:45 a.m. and 2 p.m. and a noon meal. David Foley is pastor.

will hold revival services Oct. 7-11 with Dave Hammond, pastor of Faith Baptist Church in Myra, as evangelist and Lois Jane providing special music. Troy Tackett is pastor.

■ **SYMSONIA**—Clarks River Church will host its annual Homecoming Oct. 7, 11 a.m., with Aubert Rose as guest speaker. Activities will include a noon meal and a 1:30 p.m. concert by the Galloways.

CLASSIFIED ADS

AVAILABLE: Experienced pastor. Any place, any time frame, any size church, any pay. Call Ben Render, (502) 368-3067.

AVAILABLE: Minister in 30s seeking to pastor a new, emergent church plant or core group. Call (606) 365-8468.

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.

SEEKING: Pastor for Ashland Avenue Baptist Church. Resumés will be accepted until Nov. 1 at 2735 Ashland Avenue, Covington, KY 41015.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor, Rock Lick Missionary Baptist Church, Somerset, Ky. Mail resumés to: Billy Callahan, 122 Ashurst St., Somerset, KY 42501.

SEEKING: Part-time worship leader for Thornhill Baptist Church (www.thornhillbaptist.org) in Frankfort, Ky. Send resumés and videos to: Thornhill Baptist Church, 1142 Holmes St., Frankfort, KY 40601, Attn: Personnel Committee.

SEEKING: Interim youth minister. NKY missional church seeks leader (up to half time) for existing outreach to urban teens, mostly straight-edge. Start now. latoniabaptist@insightbb.com.

SEEKING: Minister of worship. An innovative and contemporary church with a proven track record of being on the edge is looking for a minister who will work with our senior pastor to lead our worship to the next level. Responsibilities include planning, leading, coordinating and organizing a comprehensive worship ministry that is relevant to our community. A high value is placed upon the use of creative arts. The ability to coach and develop a number of gifted worship leaders in the church will be helpful. Experience using technology (audio, lighting, projection, computer) is a plus. Reports to the senior pastor. Send resumés to: Nikki Heiserman, administrative assistant, New Work Fellowship, 1611 S Main Street, Suite 3, Hopkinsville, KY 42240; nikki.heiserman@newworkfellowship.org.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Evergreen Baptist Church, a diversified congregation located in a well-populated rural community. Forward resumés: Pastor Search Committee, Evergreen Baptist Church, 2698 Evergreen Road, Frankfort, KY 40601. www.evergreenbaptistchurch.us.

SEEKING: Bivocational youth minister for church with 165 in worship attendance. Church is 25 miles south of Cincinnati, Ohio. Candidates should be of conservative theological background, have a college degree or experience with youth ministry in the church. Send resumés to: Rev. Page and Personnel Team, Crittenden Baptist Church, PO Box 132, Crittenden, KY 41030.

SEEKING: Full-time manager for The Christian Shelter for the Homeless, London, Ky. This is a non-denominational, non-profit shelter. If interested, call Darrel Beck, president of the board, at (606) 330-0785, or 309-5321 for more information; or send resumés to Christian Shelter for the Homeless, PO Box 1465, London, KY 40743-1465.

SEEKING: Part-time youth/children's minister. Send resumés to: Youth Search Committee, Palomar Baptist Church, 2190 Ft. Harrods Drive, Lexington, KY 40513. For information, contact Kim Goard at (859) 963-1400.

SEEKING: God-called bivocational pastor for traditional Southern Baptist church in south-central Kentucky. Must be willing to work well with all age groups, willing to become personally involved in all programs of the church (such as visitation, outreach, fellowship, etc.), and lead as God directs to grow the church spiritually and otherwise. If God is leading you in this direction, please mail your resumés to Lyndell Graven, 6299 Louisville Road, Bowling Green, KY 42101-8409; or e-mail to Lgravenbg@aol.com.

SEEKING: Senior pastor. Signal Mountain Baptist Church (www.signalmtbaptist.org), Signal Mountain, Tenn., is accepting resumés until the end of October for a full-time, energetic spiritual leader. Please send resumés to: Pastor Search Committee, c/o Rob Philyaw, 101 Plaisades Drive, 37377. psc@signalmtbaptist.org.

SEEKING: Full-time children's minister. Training in 252Basics preferred. Send resumés to: Pastor, Clarksburg Baptist Church, PO Box 327, Clarksburg, WV 26302.

SEEKING: Pastor for Highland Baptist Church in Tullahoma, Tenn. E-mail resumés to dktatum@charter.net; or mail resumés to PSC, 808 West Hickory St., Tullahoma, TN 37388.

SEEKING: New Hope Baptist (Springfield) is seeking a Christ-filled individual or couple to serve as part-time youth pastor. If interested, please contact Pastor David Kizziah at (859) 284-5202.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor who loves the Lord and has a passion for His work and a devotion to missions/outreach. Whitley City First Baptist Church is a small but growing church in rural south-central Kentucky. If God so leads, please send resumés to: Pastor Search Committee, WCFBC, PO Box 670, Whitley City, KY 42653; e-mail to fbwc@highland.net; or call Amy at (606) 376-2418.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of students/recreation for Red House Baptist Church in Richmond, Ky. Please send resumés to the church secretary: dawn@redhousebc.com. For more information, contact the church office at (859) 623-8471, or Duane Cornett at (859) 623-0785. RHBC Web site is www.redhousebaptistchurch.org.

SEEKING: Part-time music minister for Second Baptist Church in Madisonville, Ky. Motivated, Christ-centered individual to work with adult and youth choirs. Traditional and contemporary music styles. Send resumés to: Music Minister Search Committee, Second Baptist Church, 633 Bishop St., Madisonville, KY 42431.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of youth and administration. Position includes youth ministry and administrative duties. Resumés must include experience and/or education in areas of youth ministry and church administration. Applicant must be active member of a Southern Baptist church for the past three years or more. Please submit resumés to: Search Committee, Oak Ridge Baptist Church, 6056 Taylor Mill Road, Covington, KY 41015.

SEEKING: Full-time senior pastor for First Baptist Church in New Tazewell, Tenn. Masters degree and experience preferred. Please send resumés with sermon tape, CD or DVD to: FBC Pastor Search Committee, PO Box 248, New Tazewell, TN 37824. Resumés accepted through Oct. 15.

SEEKING: Senior pastor for High Street Baptist Church, Somerset, Ky. Located in south-central Kentucky, 30 miles west of I-75, HSBC is a thriving congregation with a healthy mix of age groups that work well together. We average 200 in two morning services, and have several full- and part-time staff members. Resumés will be received through Oct. 15 and should be sent to: HSBC Pastor Search Committee, 102 Bourne Ave., Somerset, KY 42501. Submissions via e-mail should be addressed to: HSBC@windstream.net.

SEEKING: Part-time children's minister (preschool-6th grade). Send resumés 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: 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. Prefer seminary graduate and 3-5 years prior experience in youth ministry. Compensation includes salary, vacation, insurance, SECA and retirement. Send cover letter, resumés, salary history and available starting date to: Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 425 Eastern Bypass, Richmond, KY 40475; or via e-mail to richard.landars@firstbaptistnet.com.

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Burgers & baptisms

S.C. megachurch tailgates prior to mass baptism

By Erin Roach
Baptist Press

Anderson, S.C. (BP)—The idea of tailgating before a baptism celebration might seem unusual, but at NewSpring Church, it's part of an effort to reach people with the creativity and relevance found in the Bible.

The fast-growing Southern Baptist congregation baptized 562 believers during a celebration in its parking lot with more fanfare and excitement than most churchgoers typically expect.

"We invited people to come tailgate before the baptisms like they would before a football game," said Tony Morgan, chief strategic officer at NewSpring in Anderson, S.C.

"People brought their RVs and set up tents. There were televisions going with people watching football games before the baptism service started," Morgan told Baptist Press. "People brought grills and they were making food for themselves and sharing with others. It was pretty fun."

The church, which is about 20 minutes from Clemson University, set up three above-ground swimming pools in the parking lot. Two pastors in each pool baptized 562 people in about 90 minutes, Morgan said.

Because baptism is an ordinance worth celebrating, Morgan said he believes a party beforehand is appropriate.

"It's acknowledging a commitment that someone has made with Christ, and it's something to be celebrated," he said.

The Sept. 8 event was the culmination of a five-week sermon series by NewSpring's pastor, Perry Noble, titled "Illuminate." In it, he com-



THREE POOLS, 90 MINUTES Members and guests of NewSpring Church in Anderson, S.C., gather for the baptism of 562 people. It took two ministers in each pool 90 minutes to baptize all the candidates. The church hosted a tailgating party prior to the service. (Photos courtesy of NewSpring Church)

pared a life without Christ to a life with Christ.

"Through that series we had around 800 people receive Christ," Morgan said. "So the final Sunday of the series, Perry preached a message about baptism. In each of our four services, we baptized someone during the worship part of the service and then Perry taught about that."

NewSpring began as a Bible study for college students in Noble's home in 1998, and soon a core group of people cast a vision for the church plant.

In January 2000, 115 people gathered for NewSpring's first Sunday morning service on the campus of Anderson College. Six years later, the congregation completed con-

struction of a 2,500-seat auditorium and saw more than 900 people accept Christ and nearly 800 follow in baptism last year alone.

"All I can say is that Perry has committed to making the name of Jesus famous," Morgan said in assessing the rapid growth. "That's the sole focus for his ministry and for the ministry of NewSpring Church, in that everything we do in our worship services, everything we do through our ministry programming, everything we try to communicate to our community reflects that focus. I think God is honoring that."

The philosophy of the church's leaders is that creativity is necessary to accomplish the Great Commission.

"The Apostle Paul said in Scripture that Christ must be preached," the pastor wrote in a recent weblog entry. "But you also have my promise that church will never be boring. We do not have a boring God—His bride should not be boring either. The Bible is the most exciting book that has ever been written ... and we will present it in its totality, with passion, sincerity and creativity."

The baptism service and preceding tailgate party is just one example of how the congregation is pursuing creative ministry.

"I think it's a great thing when people in the church can come together and celebrate the transformation that Christ is making in people's lives," Morgan said.



TIME TO CELEBRATE A woman wipes her eyes after being baptized in one of three above-ground pools in the parking lot of a South Carolina church. NewSpring Church in Anderson, S.C., has 5,000 members. It began in 1998 as an in-home Bible study for college students.

Amish community shows world how and why to forgive others

By Daniel Burke
Religion News Service

Nickel Mines, Pa. (RNS)—Religious sects across the globe wage wars of endless retribution. Revenge fantasies fill American movie theaters. Legal courts are crammed with people seeking settled scores.

So last October, when the Amish community of Lancaster County, Pa., immediately offered forgiveness to the family of Charles Roberts, the gunman who murdered five Amish schoolgirls and shot five more, a stunned world had some questions.

What compelled the Amish to forgive the murderer so swiftly? Was it really that easy for them? Were the Amish living up to Christian ideals, or skating dangerously close to naivete? A new book by three scholars of Amish life, "Amish Grace: How Forgiveness Transcended Tragedy," examines these questions in detail.

From interviews with Amish men and women in Lancaster, and through explorations of Amish theology and modern psychology, authors Donald Kraybill, Steven Nolt and David Weaver-Zercher ex-

plain how the Amish practice forgiveness and why it's so central to their lives.

Some things about the Amish are obvious to outsiders—the horse and buggies, the beards and bonnets. But this reserved community, rooted in Europe's Radical Reformation, tends to practice its faith in private.

That all changed when the media glare shone on Nickel Mines, a Lancaster County village. Cameras caught the Amish community in various stages of grief. But as "Amish Grace" reports, they also might have found the Amish putting their faith into action.

Parents of several of the murdered girls invited the killer's family to attend their daughters' funerals. More than half of the 75 mourners at the murderer's own funeral were Amish. They visited Roberts' widow, taking flowers and meals to her home, and donating money to help the family. They visited the Roberts home again to sing Christmas carols.

The authors found that the Amish community's forgiveness of Roberts was

not an isolated incident. Such acts of grace permeate more than three centuries of Amish history. "Forgiveness is woven into the very fabric of Amish life," the authors write. "Its sturdy threads having been spun from faith in God, scriptural mandates and a history of persecution."

The Amish formula of forgiveness, however, flips mainstream ideas upside down, according to the authors. Many psychologists and religious counselors say that forgiveness comes at the end of an emotional journey, when someone finally finds it's the best way to ease the pain, Kraybill said. The Amish, in contrast, start with the decision to forgive and then work on the emotional process afterwards, he said.

"In their culture there is a predisposition toward forgiveness. They've already made the decision—before anything happens to them—that they're going to forgive."

Contrary to mainstream Christian theology, which asserts that Christians should forgive others because God has

forgiven sinners, the Amish believe that people receive forgiveness from God only if they forgive others. The Amish take their cues for this idea of forgiveness from the parable of the unforgiving servant and the Lord's Prayer.

The parable, from the Gospel of Matthew, describes a servant, who, after the king forgives his debt, persecutes a fellow servant who owes him money. Amish ministers read and preach this parable before spring and fall Communion services each year, according to the authors.

Moreover, the Lord's Prayer, with its injunction to "forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," is the first thing many Amish children learn. As adults, Amish men and women hear the prayer in their minds or ears as many as eight times a day. Jesus follows the prayer in Matthew's Gospel with another encouragement to forgive.

"Forgiveness is the only thing that Jesus underscores in the Lord's Prayer," an Amish elder explains in "Amish Grace." "So you see, it's really central to the Lord's Prayer. It's really intense."

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Bill D. Whittaker, editor

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D.M. Aldridge and the Magoffin Baptist Institute

By Bill D. Whittaker

After four years as professor of missions and history at Clear Creek Mountain Preachers School, Dennis Merrill Aldridge became president of Magoffin Baptist Institute in Breathitt County. His leadership during 1950-1954 brought dramatic changes to the co-ed mountain mission school.

Founded in 1905 and operated for many years by the Home Mission Board, Magoffin fell on hard times during The Depression. The HMB could not supply operating funds and sold the property. In 1941 the school moved from Salyersville to Mountain Valley, KY. Isolated at the end of a "two-mile muddy trail" the school had a "woeful lack of adequate buildings and facilities." Without telephones and fifty miles from a hospital, Aldridge looked beyond the inadequacies to an opportunity for service. The Thompson Foundation had recently donated a 1700 acre farm and timber tract. With the nearest church located seventeen miles away and only ten per cent of the population members of a church, the community was a mission field. Education was desperately needed with 58% of children not enrolled in school.

1950 Chairman of Trustees K.S. Clendaniel said Aldridge "projected a challenging and long-range program of development for the school." When Aldridge resigned in 1954 to accept the president's job at Clear Creek, Clendaniel noted Magoffin had "witnessed the accomplishment of all these major objectives."

The state completed a new road by the campus in 1951; the improved accessibility helped boost enrollment. Existing facilities were renovated and a new water pumping station installed. The farm barns were remodeled, the school garden enlarged to three acres, five miles of fencing built and electric milking equipment installed in the dairy barn. New construction included a boys dorm, home economics building and laundry. A classroom and administration building, designed to accommodate an enrollment of 200, was occupied in the fall of 1954.

The school farm transitioned from tobacco to cattle as the chief "money crop." 1951 was the last year to grow tobacco; by 1953 the school had a herd of 14 cows. Additional stock was used in the school kitchen or sold for cash. Royce Dennis served as farm manager.

Each student at MBI worked a minimum of seven hours each week. Work in excess of the minimum received payment at the rate of 20 cents an hour, a rate declared to be "on a scale with the cost of living at Magoffin."



Work assignments included "all phases of the school life: offices, farm, janitorial, repair, building, kitchen, dining hall and dormitories." The work program was seen as a "bridge between student life and self-supporting adult life." An annual event recognized student workers with credit added to the academic record.

Magoffin worked to fulfill their mission emphasis through chapel services and outreach efforts. Rev. Hoge Hockensmith, Jr., pastor of Paintsville Baptist Church, preached the campus revival, March 8-13, 1953.

With morning chapel and evening services, twenty-five decisions for Christ were made during the week. Summer camps and Vacation Bible school also extended the school's witness. During the Aldridge years over 200 students became Christians. Each summer a Preachers School provided area preachers an opportunity for fellowship and growth.

As a state-accredited school Magoffin offered typical elementary and high school subjects. Each student was required to take one year of Bible. A home economics program offered classes in sewing and cooking. The 1952 faculty roster included D.M. and Kay Aldridge, Rev. and Mrs. J.C. Dance, Shirl and Marie Davidson, Mrs. Atness Dunn and Anna Starkey.

Magoffin Baptist Institute closed on August 31, 1961. The property and assets went to Oneida Baptist Institute. For several years the facilities were used for the Magoffin Baptist Assembly, operated by Three Forks and adjoining associations.

(Article based on material in *The Magoffin Messenger*, Vol. IV, No. 5, May 1954; Vol. IV, No. 6, June 1954; *Magoffin Baptist Institute*, n.d.; *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists*, Vol. III, 1971, p. 1818.

Mt. Pleasant Musings

My first impression of a church was that of a small country church named Mt. Pleasant, in Franklin County, KY, on Stedmantown Lane. The building has long since been razed.

Our pastor's name was Bro. E.P. Robinson from Virginia and a student at Southern Seminary in Louisville. Without a car, he either caught a ride with another student or rode a bus to Frankfort every Saturday where one of the church members picked him up and took him to their home for the week-end. He used church members old cars to visit around the community.

In an upper level Sunday school class I first heard about Bible characters. It was called the card class because every Sunday you received a card with a picture and a Bible story on it. At age four my teachers were my sister Ruby and another young lady. On one card was a picture of Paul the Apostle in a large basket being let down over a city wall on Damascus to escape his enemies. Even now, I remember the big word Damascus and the story; it made such an impression. Twenty years later I had the same Bible story in Bible class at Georgetown College! Some things never change.

At Mt. Pleasant I saw and heard my first "real live" missionary. He spoke and made a display of articles from a far off land. To a little girl like me, he may as well have been from outer space. He was some sort of God-man unlike any other.

There is no such thing as a small church. In that quaint little white, green-trimmed building, there were large hearts for the gospel. The message of Jesus and His love was preached; revival services were held; sinners repented; and souls were saved. The baptizings were performed in Elkhorn Creek. Foundations for God's Spirit to build upon were laid in a little girl's heart, who later for fifty-two years was a pastor's wife, and as of this writing, fifty-five years a preacher's wife, serving the Lord.

When I was five years of age, Mt. Pleasant Church closed its doors. The building was torn down, but the church still lives in the hearts of those who went there.

Condensed from *The Lamplighter*, by Anna White, Versailles KY, 2005