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WMU Kentucky Notes



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# 'Tis the season

*Advent celebrations help believers keep focus of Christmas*

By **Dannah Prather**  
*Partnerships Editor*

Louisville—With Christmas decorations often arriving in stores on the heels of back-to-school sales, many people seem depleted of celebratory energy long before Dec. 25 arrives.

By contrast, Kentucky Baptist churches from Pikeville to Henderson use the ancient observation of Advent to help believers maintain their focus on the Christ of Christmas.

Advent—from the Greek word “adventus” which implies an arrival—commemorates Christ’s birth and the promise of His second coming.

Perhaps the most common image of Advent is a wreath with colored candles representing hope, peace, love and joy. One candle is lit each of the four Sundays prior to Dec. 25. Many wreaths also feature a large white candle that is lit on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day or the Sunday after Christmas to represent Jesus’ arrival.

It is unclear when Advent began but a commemoration centered on Dec. 25 suggests it probably started sometime in the 4th century when the date was set aside to celebrate Christ’s birth.

Associated most often with Catholic, Anglican and other liturgical faiths, many evangelical congregations observe Advent to celebrate anew the Savior’s arrival.

“It’s a time of reflection and renewal,” explained David Platt, pastor of Deer Park Baptist Church in



Louisville. “We do not neglect the issue that we, as believers in Christ, have already received Him by faith,” he added. “It’s not as though we have to do this every year.”

Platt said members and visitors to Deer Park have expressed appreciation for the observance. “They seem to really respond beautifully to it. ... It’s a way to remind us of the full story. It enriches the whole tapestry of the Christian message.”

Two Kentucky Baptist music ministers agreed that the four-week emphasis on personal spiritual preparation provides unique worship opportunities.

“We have incorporated Advent as a way to broaden the congregation’s

scope of Christmas,” said David Johnson, minister of music at Campbellsville Baptist Church. “It helps them to think of Christ as more than just a little baby in a manger. ... (He is) the hope, peace, joy and love of the world.”

The theme of preparation is an important one, Johnson said, noting that college sports fans will spend time and money “decking out our cars and painting our faces blue for a UK ball game. ... How much more should we prepare our hearts for one of the biggest events in all eternity?”

According to Johnson and Steven Skaggs, minister of music at Imman-

□ *See Advent helps believers ... Page 3*

## British Baptists offer apology for role in slave trade

Swanwick, England (ABP)—Baptists in Britain have apologized for their role in the slave trade.

The Council of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, observing the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade, passed an apology resolution at its recent meeting in Swanwick, England.

“We offer our apology to God and to our brothers and sisters for all that have created and still perpetuate the hurt which originated from the horror of slavery,” the resolution stated.

The transatlantic slave trade brought millions of kidnapped and captured Africans as slaves to the Americas in exchange for money, guns and other goods. It was officially abolished by the British in 1807, but slavery in the British colonies was not abolished until 1838.

The Baptist council further repented “of the hurt we have caused, the divisions we have created, our reluctance to face up to the sin of the past, our unwillingness to listen to the pain of our black sisters and brothers, and our silence in the face of racism and injustice today.”

Neville Callam, general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance and a Jamaican descendant of African slaves, said the apology brought him a “deep feeling of relief.”

“By this single action, the (Baptist Union of Great Britain) has taken a giant step in restoring the special place it once enjoyed in the affection of many Baptists around the world,” he said.

## IMB missionary couple commit to plant churches in ‘cold’ country

By **Shawn Hendricks**  
*SBC International Mission Board*

Ivanovo, Russia (BP)—Southern Baptist missionary Mel Skinner keeps an empty whiskey bottle somewhere in his family’s apartment in central Russia.

In the fall of 1999, local women at a restaurant gave whiskey and chocolate to Skinner and his family as a gift to welcome them to Ivanovo. At the time, the Skinners had just moved from Moscow, where they had been church planters for several years. Though he later dumped out the whiskey, he still tears up at the memory of the gift.

“They came up to the table and said, ‘Excuse me for interrupting your meal,’” Skinner recalled. “We just wanted to say thank you for

coming to our café. We noticed that our day was better after you’ve been into our café than it was before you came in.’ God used all that to just confirm to us this is the place He wanted us to be.”

Since 1992, Skinner and his wife, Nancy, who have two children—Sarah, 16, and Anna, 13—have lived and ministered among the people of Russia. They have lived there longer than any other International Mission Board missionaries since the fall of communism. Though they have struggled to make the impact they had hoped for, they have not wavered in their call to the country.

Skinner has been offered other missionary jobs throughout the region, but said he believes he is called

□ *See Couple remains ... Page 6*



**LONG-TERM MISSIONS** Mel and Nancy Skinner were appointed as Southern Baptist missionaries to Russia with the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. For 15 years, they have served among a post-Soviet people first in Moscow and then in Ivanovo. Today, the Skinners live and work in St. Petersburg, Russia. (BP photo)

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2007 LOTTIE MOON CHRISTMAS OFFERING



## Jennings, veteran Baptist journalist, dies at age 83

**Germantown, Tenn. (ABP)**—Veteran Southern Baptist journalist Roy Jennings died Nov. 22. He was 83.

Jennings is best known in Southern Baptist circles for his work as news editor in the newsrooms at Southern Baptist Convention annual meetings. He was also instrumental in helping Southern Baptist journalists gain the respect of their secular counterparts.

"Roy Jennings was the consummate news professional, a model citizen in his community, a loyal churchman, devoted to his family, and a personal friend whose memory I shall cherish all of my days," said W.C. Fields, the retired director of Baptist Press.

Fields said Jennings' work as copy chief in the SBC newsroom was well-known and respected.

A native of Oklahoma, Jennings earned a journalism degree from the University of Oklahoma. After working on the staff of the Memphis (Tenn.) Commercial Appeal, he joined the staff of the former Southern Baptist Convention Brotherhood Commission in 1959.

In 1981, Jennings began work to establish a communications and public relations program at Baptist Memorial Hospital in Memphis.

Dan Martin, a former news editor for Baptist Press, said Jennings was a "solid professional" during the SBC's turmoil in the 1970s and 1980s.

Marv Knox, editor of the Texas Baptist Standard, said Jennings demonstrated that Baptist journalists had the same quality and professional standards as journalists at major daily newspapers and wire services.

Jennings was a president of the Memphis chapter of Public Relations Society of America and the Baptist Public Relations Association.

He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Marye, and a daughter, Gail Jennings of Roswell, Ga.

## Baptists address child abuse, hate crimes

By Tammi Ledbetter  
Baptist Press

**Nashville (BP)**—Southern Baptists in six state convention annual meetings addressed issues related to protecting children from victimization. Four conventions passed resolutions expressing concern that recent hate crimes legislation will threaten religious freedom.

Messengers to state conventions in Kentucky, Alabama, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana and Ohio offered a variety of ideas for preventing child victimization. In most cases churches were encouraged to perform background checks on employees and volunteers who work with children.

Messengers in Alabama, Indiana, Louisiana and Oklahoma expressed opposition to any hate crimes legislation that potentially criminalizes speech and beliefs, threatening First Amendment rights. Ohio Baptists encouraged boldness in the face of hostility toward "our Christian heritage and values."

### Issues include gambling, abortion

Expanded gambling is an issue addressed virtually every year in several state conventions and this year it prompted action in Kentucky, Alabama, Arkansas, Maryland-Delaware and Missouri.

Various pro-life issues addressed included messengers in Louisiana opposing partial-birth abortion, in Maryland-Delaware opposing embryonic stem cell research, in Missouri on a "cures without cloning" campaign, and in Oklahoma on the sanctity of human life.

Use of alcohol was addressed in five state conventions, with messengers in Florida approving a bylaw revision requiring trustee nominees to

## Calvinist views growing among seminary grads

**Ridgecrest, N.C. (BP)**—Nearly 30 percent of recent Southern Baptist Convention seminary graduates now serving as pastors identify themselves as Calvinists, according to data presented during a recent conference on Calvinism and the Southern Baptist Convention.

By contrast in the SBC at large, the number of pastors who affirm the five points of Calvinism is around 10 percent, said Ed Stetzer, director of LifeWay Research, in reporting various findings by LifeWay Research and the North American Mission Board Center for Missional Research.

Such data, Stetzer noted, gives an indication why a conference such as "Building Bridges: Southern Baptists and Calvinism" was taking place. The three-day gathering Nov. 26-28, with approximately 550 participants, was co-sponsored by Founders Ministries and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary at LifeWay Ridgecrest Conference Center in North Carolina.

Stetzer, who also is LifeWay's missiologist in residence, noted that the research showed that among pastors of Southern Baptist churches who are recent SBC seminary graduates, 29 percent indicated they are Calvinists. Stetzer said 27 percent of 1,234 recent seminary graduate respondents serving in SBC church leadership positions "somewhat agree" or

agree to abstain from drinking alcoholic beverages and using any other recreational drugs. Southern Baptists of Texas Convention messengers changed a bylaw to replace the word "drunkenness" as it appears in several instances to "the use of alcohol as a beverage," stipulating that such practice is unacceptable for employees and members elected to the Executive Board, committees and offices of the SBTC.

Legislation that protects traditional marriage was encouraged by Indiana Baptists and the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention. Missouri Baptists encouraged the practice of family worship.

Alaska Baptists urged prayer support for members of the U.S. armed forces from their state while West Virginia Baptists expressed similar appreciation and prayer. Ohio Baptists also honored the nation's veterans.

Indiana, Louisiana and Oklahoma Baptists encouraged personal and corporate repentance. The Georgia resolution specifically addressed blogging with "divisive and destructive rhetoric" that causes division and disharmony and asked that "personal attacks" cease immediately.

Messengers in both Ohio and the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention expressed concern for biblical literacy, with Ohio Baptists urging parents to assume responsibility for training children in a biblical worldview while expressing appreciation for Christian teachers who have chosen to be spiritual salt and light in the public school system.

Various resolutions focused attention on increased evangelistic and mission activity, with North-

west Baptists encouraging participation in the convention's Jericho outreach event next year and Arizona Baptists committing to influence their communities, state and nation.

Oklahoma Baptists affirmed the SBC's "conservative resurgence" which "returned us to our historic roots of commitment to the Bible as the infallible and inerrant Word of God."

### Messengers affirm associations, CP

Alabama and Arkansas Baptists recognized the 300th anniversary of Baptist associations. Alabama and California Baptists spoke to the value of the Cooperative Program.

Arkansas Baptists encouraged ministry to children at risk and disabled people. Oklahoma Baptists encouraged ministry to all people, noting that recent state legislation related to illegal immigration should not cause churches to "screen or profile individuals" before ministering to them in Jesus' name.

Discussion of the SBC's Baptist Faith and Message statement arose in California where messengers declined to require churches to adhere to the "most recent" BF&M, and in Tennessee where the BF&M was affirmed for the second year and is referenced when questioning prospective trustees and committee members.

Two state conventions noted their participation in the New Baptist Covenant meeting in Atlanta, with Baptist General Association of Virginia messengers encouraging participation by leaders while urging the meeting planners to "honor its promise and pledge for a nonpartisan gathering."

minority of congregations in the SBC, but their numbers are steadily growing, particularly as recent seminary graduates take the reins of leadership.

Perspectives from other speakers at the conference included:

■ David Dockery, president of Union University in Jackson, Tenn.: "We cannot say there is one stream that has made us. We find ourselves shaped by fundamentalists, by revivalists, by evangelicals and by Calvinists. We are at a time when we need to understand who we are, where we have been and where we are going. By and large, we don't understand our heritage."

■ Tom Nettles, professor of historical theology at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville: "Calvinism has within it a core of doctrinal beliefs not unique to Calvinism, but enthusiastically espoused by Baptists who may yet have some misgivings about the other doctrines."

■ Nathan Finn, instructor of church history at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.: "The Calvinism issue is not going to go away, so Southern Baptists must be willing to openly discuss and debate the doctrines of grace in an effort to be biblically accurate and, just maybe, come to a greater theological consensus in the years to come."

## Warrens declare AIDS battle needs dedicated leaders

**Lake Forest, Calif. (BP)**—After too long a silence, the worldwide church has realized its responsibility as a leader in the fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic, said Rick Warren, pastor of Saddleback Church, during the third annual Global Summit on AIDS and the Church.

"The church was nowhere to be found in the 1980s, and we had to repent. I had to repent," Warren noted. "But I want to tell you that the church has come to the table, and the church is not going to flake out. The church is here to stay."

Warren and his wife, Kay, described their own wakeup call to the HIV/AIDS crisis. Mrs. Warren said she was confronted by the problem in 2002 through a news report on HIV/AIDS and could no longer ignore her responsibility in the struggle. Through the Saddleback HIV/AIDS Initiative, established in 2003, the Warrens are challenging leaders to increase their own awareness and knowledge of HIV/AIDS so that through their influence, the communities and churches they lead will be dedicated to solving the global crisis. The first step, they added, is awaking to the challenge.

"I challenge you as you sit in your chair today: You are a leader. You have a voice. You can lift it on behalf of someone who has no voice," Mrs. Warren declared. "You can learn to focus it so that it makes a difference."

"My conviction is that it's not enough to manage HIV/AIDS," she said. "We aim too low when that's our goal. When we choose the harder goal to stop it, we'll have the willpower and the passion to push forward and not be satisfied with millions of people being infected or affected."

Maureen Mwanawasa is the First Lady of Zambia, where one in six people are living with HIV/AIDS. She leads the Organization of African First Ladies' Fight Against HIV/AIDS, a group dedicated to AIDS prevention and education on the African continent.

Mwanawasa echoed the Warrens' challenge for people to work toward the end of HIV/AIDS, rather than just managing the epidemic.

"To reverse the global spread of HIV, we make a special call today for a unique kind of leadership... a leadership that will not give up until the battle is won," Mwanawasa said.

Jeannette Kagame, the First Lady of Rwanda, agreed with Mwanawasa, urging leaders toward a "relentless" commitment to solving the problem.

"Now, more than ever before, we have all the tools we need to turn despair into hope for millions of people around the world," Kagame said. "The most important tool is leadership."

## Henard appoints chairs for '07-'08 KBC committees

Louisville—Kentucky Baptist Convention President Bill Henard, who served the past three years as chairman of the KBC Mission Board's administrative committee, has named immediate past KBC President Darren Gaddis to succeed him as administrative committee chairman. Gaddis is pastor of Central Baptist Church in Corbin.

Henard also appointed chairs for seven other Mission Board committees as well as eight KBC committees.

Others chosen to head Mission Board committees are:

**Art Beasley**, pastor of Central Baptist Church in Winchester, Leadership Development.

**Bennie Bush**, pastor of Faith Baptist Church in Corbin, Church Development & Evangelism.

**James Jones**, pastor of Pleasant Hill Baptist Church in Campbellsville, Nominating.

**Chip Pendleton**, pastor of Westport Road Baptist Church in Louisville, Agencies & Institutions.

**Delores Spears**, a member of Lone Oak First Baptist Church in Paducah, Missions Growth.

**Jerry Tooley**, director of missions for Daviess-McLean Baptist Association and a member of First Baptist Church of Owensboro, Business & Finance.

**Bill Wright**, pastor of Main Street Baptist Church in Williamsburg, Resource Development & Communication.

Kentucky Baptists appointed by Henard to chair state convention committees are:

**Skip Alexander**, pastor of Campbellsville Baptist Church, Committee on Order of Business.

**John Chowning**, pastor of Saloma Baptist Church in Campbellsville and vice president for church and external relations at Campbellsville University, Committee on Public Affairs.

**Adam Greenway**, interim pastor of the Church at Andover in Lexington and an instructor and associate director of professional doctoral studies at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Committee on Nominations.

**Farrell Isenberg**, pastor of Crosspointe Baptist Church in Owensboro, Committee on Arrangements.

**Russell Moore**, a member of Ninth and O Baptist Church in Louisville and dean of Southern Seminary's school of theology, Committee on Resolutions.

**Floyd Paris**, pastor of Unity Baptist Church in Ashland, Committee on Credentials.

**Ronny Raines**, pastor of First Baptist Church of Cold Spring, Committee on Constitution and Bylaws.

**John Mark Toby**, pastor of Beacon Hill Baptist Church in Somerset, Committee on Committees.

## Bell brings message of 'peace' to Louisville

By Drew Nichter  
News Director

Louisville—Beginning with the first civilizations, humans have come to the conclusion that their survival depends on "forces that they cannot control" and that "we have to keep the forces on our side so that things will go well for us," according to Rob Bell.

"What do I have to do to make peace with the Divine?" was the question Bell posed during the Louisville stop of his "The gods Aren't Angry" speaking tour Nov. 29.

Through Jesus' death and resurrection, Bell answered that question.

"You have to understand that this God has offered that of utmost value to humanity," he explained. "Peace has been made so that no one ever has to go back and ask those questions again."

Bell, the founding pastor of Mars Hill Bible Church in Grand Rapids, Mich., as well as the creator of the NOOMA video series and author of two books, offered his message of "exploring how humans invented religion to make themselves feel better," according to the tour website.

Reaching back to the beginning of humanity, Bell explained that humans have seen successes and failures as a result of "divine forces" being with or against them. As a result, he added, ancient civilizations began to name these "primal deities" as a way to "better understand them (and) get them on our side."

Out of this, "you find the emergence of the first centralized places of religion," Bell noted, adding that these became altars.

Bell pointed out, however, that "the altar brought with it a fatal flaw."

"The vicious cycle that the altar produced in the primal human con-



Rob Bell

sciousness ... is it created a certain primal anxiety," he said. "If things go really well, you need to offer more. If things go poorly, you need to offer more."

"You don't know where you stand with the gods."

Bell noted that over time, humans resorted to showing their devotion to these primal deities by offering that which was "more and more valuable" including the shedding of their own blood and the sacrifice of children.

Through the death and resurrection of Jesus on the cross, Bell pointed out that the writer of Hebrews says, "He offered Himself ... (as) a sort of sacrifice that renders the whole idea of the sacrifice ... obsolete."

"This is God reconciling to Himself all things," Bell added. "Making peace with all things in heaven and on earth."

But he noted that everyone in modern society continues to bow down to gods.

Bell recalled a dinner he had with a businessman who was virtually killing himself working hours and hours each day simply to prove to

his wife's parents that he was good enough for their daughter.

"Here is somebody bound down to the gods of achievement ... and acceptance and validation," Bell said. "There are these idols that are never satisfied that he has to keep killing himself for, yet there never seems to be any peace."

"Do we, in some very significant ways, have the same old primal deities; we just call them by different names?"

Discussing the nature of religion, Bell noted that the system of sacrifice set forth in Leviticus and rendered obsolete by Jesus' death and resurrection never "actually changed anything," according to the book of Hebrews.

"The writer of the book of Hebrews connects the blood to human need," Bell explained. "The ritual, this offering of the blood, was to help humans deal with the primal anxiety that has been in the bones of humanity since the very beginning."

He added that this idea also raises questions about repentance, saying it "is not the new list of what you need to do so that the Divine will look upon you with favor. Repentance is what happens when your heart is awakened and your eyes are opened to the peace that has already been made."

Bell also noted that a ritual is not Christian if it "piles on the ... same old guilt and shame. The only proper Christ-centered ritual is one that reminds you, refreshes you and re-grounds you in the peace that has already been made," he added.

Bell closed by urging the audience to trust in Jesus and His peace and reconciliation.

"May you come to believe that this God is not angry because this God is love."

*"Do we, in some very significant ways, have the same old primal deities; we just call them by different names?"*

Rob Bell

## Advent helps believers keep focus on Christ of Christmas

Continued from page 1

Advent slows the hectic pace of the cultural holiday, enabling believers to celebrate the spiritual holy day with a fresh sense of awe.

Advent "can teach us to anticipate Christ's coming in a healthy and spiritually rewarding way," Skaggs said.

The ministers said Advent guides Christians to scriptures not directly associated with Jesus' birth.

"There is still an emphasis on the events recorded in Luke 2 and Matthew 1, as there should be," Skaggs said, "(but) the proper use of the celebration challenges us to not get so wrapped up in this event that we forget why the baby was born."

In addition to Scripture readings during the lighting of each candle, the ministers said they often use, or write, responsive readings to support Advent themes.

Johnson said preparing for Advent "helps me incorporate more Scripture into the services and in my life."

The commemoration requires a careful selection of songs, the ministers agreed.

"It's often tough to find enough 'Jesus is coming' songs to balance out the 'Jesus is born' songs," Johnson noted. "I usually try to save the 'birth' songs for the last Sunday before Christmas and our Christmas Eve service."

Because of Advent's liturgical roots,

Southern Baptists "really don't have a history of celebrating the season and do not know what to look for," Skaggs said. The 1991 Baptist Hymnal has "a short section ... under the heading 'Advent.'" Many traditional hymns not found in the section can be used during Advent, he added.

"Joy to the World" is not a Christmas hymn," Skaggs noted. "It mentions nothing about the Matthew or Luke stories of Jesus' birth." The first stanza references preparation, and makes it ideal for the first Sunday in Advent. Skaggs also recommended:

- "O Sing a Song of Bethlehem."
- "Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne."
- "The King of Glory Comes."
- "Who Is He in Yonder Stall?"

"'Soon and Very Soon' is a good chorus for Advent and easy to make up more words for," Skaggs said.

Both ministers advise fellow Kentucky Baptists to "be creative" when planning Advent observances.

"Do more than just go out and buy an Advent wreath and light it each week without understanding the symbolism in the colors," Skaggs encouraged. Sometimes a close review of favorite choruses and hymns can provide "a fresh understanding to apply to Advent," he said. For example, the classic Bill Gaither chorus, "The King Is Coming" works well during Advent.

Johnson said he enjoys the challenge.

"It's fun to take a service, or an element of the service, from the early church and have people think it's the newest thing. Little do some of them know that believers have been celebrating this way for hundreds of years," he said.

Skaggs composes Advent choruses and songs he describes as "intentionally simple so that everyone can sing them the first time they see them. ... In 2005 we used a poem written by a lady in the congregation that was perfect as a sung response."

Advent transcends worship styles, the ministers noted. "I believe the use of responses and other Advent-specific worship aids should work well in relaxed and contemporary (worship) settings," Skaggs said. "'Liturgical' doesn't necessarily mean cold or irrelevant."

Campbellsville Baptist's 8:30 a.m. Sunday service uses a contemporary style of worship; the 11 a.m. service is described as traditional/blended. Johnson said Advent is marked in both services but added that in contemporary settings some adjustments should be considered.

"The Bible tells us to 'be still and know that I am God,'" Johnson said. "Sometimes the drums, guitars and keyboards need to remain silent. ... The projector needs to be powered down and a single voice needs to float through the candle-lit sanctuary singing, 'O come, Desire of Nations, come.'"

## WESTERN RECORDER

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

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## Differences, defamation &amp; grace

By Marv Knox

A thoughtful reader recently sent me a letter lamenting the landslide of personal attacks and the torrent of abusive language that characterize Baptist life these days. He specifically cited the tone of several blogs. But he also could have pointed to many church business meetings, e-mail and telephone gossip about individuals and events in our convention and far too many Baptist dinner tables where "roast preacher" is served up as if it were a local delicacy.

The problem, friends, is a growing inability to disagree agreeably. People no longer seem to understand they can disagree with each other without being angry at each other.

I understand this phenomenon all too well. Almost every week, I hear from people who have severe problems with disagreement. They generally fall into two categories. One group seems to love disagreeing, and hostility gets their juices flowing. They relish a good fight. The other group absolutely detests fighting and just wants everybody to get along. Problem is, they're so conditioned by the other crowd that they now think disagreement equals fighting. So, they dysfunctionally

avoid expressing honest differences for fear of fighting. Both groups can't seem to comprehend that people, especially Christians, can disagree passionately and yet continue to love one another, care for each other, pray for the other.

## FIRST PERSON

Multiple factors account for this, but I blame talk radio. Call it the "Limbaughization" of America. Talk radio hosts practice "ritual defamation," explains former Texas pastor Bruce Prescott. It's a calculated political strategy—"defamation in retaliation for the real or imagined attitudes, opinions or beliefs of the victim, with the intention of silencing or neutralizing his or her influence, and/or making an example of them so as to discourage similar independence." They also like it because it's good for ratings. Americans have become so coarse and desensitized they're titillated by the pain and humiliation of others. Many bloggers unwittingly (or maybe not) have picked up on this. After all, outlandish rhetoric drives up the hits. Never mind if the tone is so extreme it casts doubt upon the truthfulness of the content.

Putting up with all of this is bad enough in the secular media in an election year. But it is tragic with-

in the church of Jesus Christ. We wound the body of Christ when we tear at one another in anger and vengeance. We also harm the name of Christ before a watching world when we denigrate one another.

Of course, since we're human and thus sinful, the temptation toward anger is strong. I know: For years, I harbored anger and bitterness toward brothers and sisters I believed (and still believe) caused harm to our national and state Baptist conventions. But one day (I remember the moment vividly) God told me to give up my anger. I'd savored it like a sweet, righteous dessert, and it was hard to push away. But I realized this was spiritual cannibalism, because I was chewing on another part of the body of Christ, His church.

Recognizing this truth does not mean forfeiting our right to disagree. But it does mean adopting a spirit of humility and grace. It means accepting the possibility we might be wrong. It means refusing to treat brothers and sisters in Christ as objects to be vilified and ridiculed. It means grace over law. It means people over power.

Jesus said it best: "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you."

Marv Knox, editor of the *Texas Baptist Standard*, is a former editor of the *Western Recorder*

## Transforming culture

The Nov. 20 article on the "troubling results" of the recent discipleship study caught my attention.

In this culture, a major reason people do not believe and live out the Christian truths is a lack of belief in truth itself. Postmodernism has definitely infiltrated the church. Not only do many of our church people not believe in absolute truth, their mindset simply does not "allow" them to.

In a nutshell, postmodern culture, from the secularized education establishment to the media industry, has downplayed linear, logical, propositional thinking and replaced it with fuzzy, disjointed, emo-

tion-oriented truth claims more interested in how one feels about a particular issue than what the reality is about it. For instance, movie producers make their point not by rational argumentation, but by manipulating emotions and getting us to believe a truth claim without considering the ramifications. A constant diet of experience-driven media robs the mind of its ability to logically ascertain truth from error.

But the gospel of Christ is full of propositional realities. God exists. He is Creator and therefore sovereign. Man rebelled. The atonement. Salvation entails repentance. Without salvation a person is doomed. The gospel's logical flow is unmistakable—unless a mind has

been trained to not think in rational, linear terms.

The best antidote to this problem is training in Christian apologetics which stresses propositional truth and begins with absolutes. In recent years the church too often has left this issue in the proverbial dust in its desperation to be relevant to the culture. The fallout is Christians whose minds aren't really transformed by the truth of Jesus. And untransformed minds belong to untransformed people who remain pretty much like the culture. They may be connected to the culture and relevant to the culture, but they are not lovingly and persuasively confronting and transforming the culture.

David Meredith  
Crestwood

## Celebrating a family Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving break provided a wonderful time for my wife, Kay, and me to be with our daughters and their families. We traveled to the home of our oldest daughter, Anonda, and her family in Raleigh, N.C. Our youngest daughter, Beth, and her family joined us for Thanksgiving from Charlotte.

I had not been with the families since the late July vacation at the beach. Each of the grandchildren had grown in gratifying ways.

It isn't easy to keep up with the four older ones either at home or away from home on a field trip. During the visit to the Marble Museum, a participation play area, the grandchildren used costumes and equipment to become pirates, firemen, postal workers and medical personnel. I am grateful that Kay was with me.

There was also a form of T-ball

in the backyard and swing sets to keep Granddad busy pushing one or more. I am trying not to anticipate the time when they are older and I have to try to keep them together!

Anonda and her husband, A.J., have two boys: Will, who is 5, and Zach, who is three and a half. It is becoming obvious that Zach has an active imagination. In one of his accounts of a family outing to the mountains, Zach had bears jumping over the car. It seems he is also becoming the class clown at play school, with some affinity for timeout.

Will is a people person. It is not unusual for him to roll down the car window when stopped at a traffic light to speak to the person in the adjacent car. He then complains to his mother if the person does not speak in return. He is also known to visit other tables in a restaurant. He

## STEWARDSHIP

## Beware of scams that sound too good to be true

By Don Spencer

Too many people are taken in today by scams—some on the Internet and some by face-to-face scam artists. If you hear any of these lines, your fraud alarm should start buzzing:

**"Don't tell anyone else about this opportunity."** The main reason con artists don't want you to tell others is so they cannot have the opportunity talk you out of it.

**"You're guaranteed a 12 percent annual return."** To get high returns, you have to take high risks. The stock market's long-term return is about 10 percent per year and that is not guaranteed in any year. Any deal that "guarantees" a higher-than-normal return is a scam.

**"Cash this check."** Con artists often win trust by sending what looks like a real check. They may even ask you to cash it and return all or a portion of it to them to cover fees or an overpayment. The check invariably will bounce and you will be out some money.

**"Only a few lucky investors can get in, so you must act right away."** Con artists like to give the impression that the deal has a deadline so you do not have time to investigate their claims. Resist their pressure. Make sure you get complete information and understand the product before you make a decision.

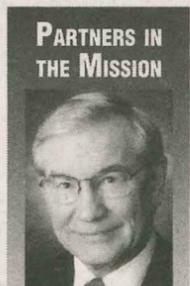
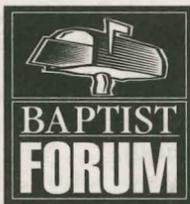
**"I'm contacting you from (a foreign country)."** Any time a stranger offers you money from a foreign country, be suspicious. Scammers love to operate outside the United States where it is more difficult for authorities to prosecute them.

**"Just wire the money."** Wiring funds is the most common way con artists get cash from their victims. Unlike credit cards, you have no way to stop payment or recover funds. The scam artist is sure to get your money.

Remember the old adage, "If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is." If an offer sounds attractive to you:

- Be sure to investigate the claims thoroughly.
- Do not feel pressured by time.
- Make sure you understand the product before acting.

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



Bill Mackey

## Seek to strengthen authentic relationships during holidays

**Q: I dread seeing some of my family during the holidays. I am truly glad it is only once a year. One in particular is so negative, critical, pessimistic and downright unpleasant to be around. What can I do other than completely skip the visit?**

You are not alone with these sentiments. Virtually all of us know someone who is practiced in the vocal art of complaining, criticizing and negative, even hurtful conversation.

### CHRISTMAS

On one end of the continuum is verbal abuse, which indeed is to be avoided. To be healthy it is necessary to remove yourself from the presence of such abuse if possible. On the other end of the continuum are those individuals who look for and constantly see that which is bad, unpleasant and disliked. It can feel like a diseased presence has entered our spirit and is slowly taking over.

One of my wise mentors from childhood, Mr. Rogers, said, "If you could only sense how important you are to the lives of those you meet; how important you can be to the people you may never even dream of. There is something of yourself that you leave at every meeting with another person." I really like that last line. People leave something of themselves with others after every encounter.

It is clear what your family member has left with you. To speak the truth in love is to take a big risk and share with your family member how he or she is affecting you with his or her negativity. Ask for a change. Initiate a different kind of encounter. Give a clear choice about your willingness to be in relationship with them but your unwillingness to participate, even by listening or exposure, to their criticism, complaining and pessimistic comments. May God bring blessing to any risk you take to be in authentic relationship.—Valerie Vincent

**Q: Many of our friends who are single parents find the holiday season to be an especially difficult time. What are some ways married couples can help make a difference for them?**

This a situation in which the division between in-reach, outreach and mission action are somewhat arbitrary. Our culture constantly bombards single folks with not-so-subtle messages that this is a time for love, romance and family. Be sensitive to this in word and deed. Follow the leading of the Holy Spirit and take action when God nudges you to help someone through this month of "comfort and joy."

Here are a few ideas:

- Invite a single adult or single parent family over for dinner, coffee or lunch and be willing to listen to the struggles of their life.
- Invite a single adult or single parent family to a Christmas event your church or Sunday school class is hosting and help them feel welcome.
- Accompany a single adult in a ministry project such as feeding the homeless or visiting a nursing home where you both can enjoy the joy of ministering to the less fortunate.
- Do "random acts of kindness" for single adults or single parent families such as dropping off a care basket at their door or treating them to a meal.
- Sponsor a single parent family who can't afford Christmas presents this year.
- Network with your church or class to care for a single parent family who struggles with paying rent, utilities, medical bills or transportation costs.

Jesus' half brother, James, reminds us that "pure religion and undefiled is this: to care for widows and orphans in their distress (James 1:27)." Today's single parent families sometimes feel like neglected widows and orphans desperately needing the touch of those who can help and who are sensitive to the Spirit of God to do so.—James Stillwell

Family Forum writers are:

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



## Sharing the gospel in former Soviet Union

I grew up during the Cold War era, when political tensions between the United States and the former Soviet Union dominated global diplomacy. Missile silos and bomb shelters reflected the paranoia of a massive military conflict between the communist bloc and the free world.

I remember praying for people behind the Iron Curtain, isolated and barred from religious freedom. We heard stories of persecution, secret believers and accounts of Bible smuggling. No one living at the time can forget the amazement and elation when the Berlin Wall came down, and a short time later the megalithic USSR disintegrated into 15 autonomous republics.

The new openness to the West enabled Southern Baptists and other Christians to flood into this formerly restricted part of the world. We were delighted to find far more believers than we had dared to imagine. They persevered in their faith and welcomed Christians from abroad to partner with them in proclaiming the gospel, training leaders and planting churches.

For a few years, chaos and competition seemed to define mission strategy, but God prevailed, and many who had been in bondage to hopelessness and despair embraced the gospel. Even though restrictions on foreign workers began to return and opposition from the Russian Orthodox found government support, the momentum could not be deterred.

It has been 15 years since God's sovereignty over the nations provided the opportunity for a new mission thrust in the former Soviet Union. Your Southern Baptist missionaries are still there, working faithfully with national Baptists in evangelism and discipleship. Thousands of volunteers continue to seize the opportunity to make a personal impact on this part of the world.

While places like Russia and Ukraine continue to reflect an amazing response to the gospel and church growth, other republics have reverted to totalitarian

control not unlike in the communist era. Islam has reasserted its legacy, along with opposition to a Christian witness, in the central Asian republics to the south.

Gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions will enable more missionaries to go to the former Soviet Union. Many unreached people groups remain. Vast areas of this territory, stretching across 12 time zones, have yet to be touched with an evangelical witness. The tenuous political climate indicates that opportunities may be limited and doors could close anytime. Will we be faithful to press forward and finish the task?

Last year Southern Baptists gave a phenomenal \$150 million to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. One hundred percent of this offering is used in the overseas budget to provide support for more than 5,200 missionaries worldwide who have gone out from Southern Baptist churches in obedience to God's call to places like the former Soviet Union.

This year's Southern Baptist Week of Prayer for International Missions, Dec. 2-9, focuses on missionaries who serve in the former Soviet Union as well as churches partnering with them, exemplifying the global outreach supported by gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

This year, the goal of \$165 million will allow many more missionaries to go work among remote people groups like the Udmurt and to take the gospel to places like Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Moldova. In the Caucasus Mountains, people groups like the Chechyns are creating ethnic tensions in a struggle for autonomy. But we know Jesus is the answer. Your generous and sacrificial gifts to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering can help assure that someone will tell the story of Jesus to all the peoples and republics of the former Soviet Union.

Jerry Rankin, president of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board since 1993, is a former missionary to Indonesia

### GUEST EDITORIAL



Jerry Rankin

## Sharing the Christmas spirit all year long

My favorite Christmas story, outside of the original one in Scripture, is "How the Grinch Stole Christmas."

I prefer the original animated version over the live action one with Jim Carrey. But either way, it is my favorite. The lyrics declare:

You're a foul one,  
Mr. Grinch.

You're a nasty, wasty  
skunk.

Your heart is full of  
unwashed socks.

Your soul is full of gunk,  
Mr. Grinch.

The three words that best describe you are as follows, and I quote: "Stink, Stank, Stunk."

It reminds me that all around us every day are people who are hurting—people like the Grinch who need a heart change. Maybe that is why at Christmas time we as a society get more charitable and pay more attention to the "down and out" around us than at any other time of the year. The soup kitchens have plenty of help; we collect food for the hungry in our community and deliver it to their door. These same people have the same needs the rest of the year. We just tend to notice it more this time of year.

So I thought: What could we do to help keep the Christmas spirit alive the other 11 months of the year? What can we do to make a difference in our communities with our youth ministries that last beyond the holiday season?

We need to make plans now to make missions in our community a

priority. I know it is easier to recruit mission volunteer if we are going to some exotic location. But all around

us there are needs to be met and people who need a touch from Christ.

One of the best things we did while I was the youth minister at Edgewood Baptist Church in Hopkinsville was to participate in the Kentucky Changers week held in Hopkinsville. We paid our money, slept on our own gym floor and worked in

neighborhoods in our own community. I didn't have the largest number of participants that year, but it greatly impacted those who dared to work in their own hometown.

Another example happened over fall break this year. The youth ministries of six churches in Hopkinsville came together as a network to impact Hopkinsville. Steve Coleman, pastor to youth at New Work Fellowship, explained, "We try to give students different experiences in missions, to get the students outside their comfort zones and to impact others. We can charge students hundreds of dollars and travel for hours on the road just to pick up trash. This year we as a network decided to charge less, travel just minutes from our church buildings, but to still get outside the comfort zones. To pick up trash in neighborhoods where you may know people is a humbling experience."

It is amazing how working in our own "Jerusalem" makes us aware of

the ministry needs all around the world. Not only did it make the participants more aware, it also impacted the people in the neighborhoods where they were working. Coleman said.

"One student was picking up trash in a neighborhood and a man sitting on his front porch saw the students in front of his own home," Coleman noted. "He got up and went inside his home and emerged a few minutes later with an empty garbage bag and started cleaning up his own area."

"The community was impressed by the students giving up their fall break from school, paying money so they could stay home and pick up trash, clean up around homes, and basically work giving back to the community," Coleman added.

All summer long, Coleman and his youth ministry at New Work Fellowship had worked in the inner city with real people, building relationships, leading Bible studies, eating in the local eateries and just engaging in daily life with people.

"Because we had such a great time working with men, women, boys and girls in the neighborhood, our network said, 'Let's give it a try,'" Coleman said. "It was a success for our students, culminating with a worship time in the local park where others could see what was going on."

Mission trips are not always across the country, state or even across the street. Sometimes missions occurs on your own street.

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

# "Well done..."

MATTHEW 25:21



Visit the  
GuideStone booth at  
your state convention  
and pick up a copy of  
Dr. O.S. Hawkins' new  
book, *Antology*

## Let the leader be your guide

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**MAKING PROGRESS** Although the work in Ivanovo, Russia, is slow, believers at Resurrection Baptist Church there gather each week for worship and prayer. (BP photo)

## Couple remains committed to serving Russia after 15 years

Continued from page 1

to reach Russia by starting churches.

"Our second term, I was that strategy coordinator guy over a large area," he said. "And that was just enough for me to realize God hasn't put me together to do that (type of work). All I want to do is impact a population or a people—a city."

Skinner helped start a church in Ivanovo that averages 150 to 200 people each Sunday. Out of that group a smaller church group started. Skinner subsequently began Bible studies in other parts of the city, hoping to start more churches. Now he uses that same strategic approach to plant churches in St. Petersburg.

Reception to the gospel in the cities can be as frigid as a typical Russian day in January. But in the middle of a welcomed Russian summer, Skinner brushes off any thoughts about the harsh winters or the struggles to spread the gospel.

### Finding hope amid struggles

His wife, however, remembers dark times when they first moved to Russia. Nancy struggled with depression and the desire to pack up everything and go back to the United States.

"Only God's grace keeps me here," she said. "It's His gracious hand upon us, because there have been times it would have been so easy to leave. Somehow God always got us through that. He's faithful, and His grace is very sufficient."

"The first thing in my thoughts when I get up is to thank the Lord for a new day ... regardless of how it is outside," she acknowledged. "There is true joy in the Lord."

Skinner and local missionaries visit areas of Russian cities where they hope to start Bible studies. A self-proclaimed introvert, Skinner appears to have a natural gift for sharing his faith as crowds of young people gather around him at an apartment complex.

A couple of boys quickly dismiss his efforts and walk away, but the rest crowd around him. They seem to listen intently as Skinner shares the gospel in their Russian language. After finishing his presentation, a few in the group ask Skinner for an autograph since he is the first American they have met. No one seems all that interested in the message. Unfazed by the response, Skinner moves to

another area of the complex.

"Somebody once talked about the number of times somebody needs to hear the gospel to be saved, to make that rational decision to trust your life to Christ," Skinner recalled. "I don't know what that number is, but most of these people have never had any kind of gospel access."

Many cling to the Russian Orthodox Church, which Skinner and local believers contend is more about tradition and obligation than true faith.

### Orthodox nation

"Russia is an Orthodox country, but ask them what it means to be Orthodox, and they don't have an answer," noted a local believer who accepted Christ after developing a friendship with Skinner.

"Why go to the church and light a candle when no one can tell you why they light a candle?" he asked. "They light a candle, go get drunk and don't remember lighting the candle."

Rumors about Baptists—and any other group besides Russian Orthodox—often circulate in Russia. Baptists are seen as a cult, Skinner noted. Some believe they even kill and eat their young, he added.

"Generally, I laugh," Skinner said. "I basically say, 'You know if that were true, they would have closed all the Baptist churches. They would have thrown all Baptist people in prison ... or executed them.' Generally, when (people in Russia) hear the truth, they know the truth."

Whether through walking their dog or running errands, the Skinners make friends and have seen signs of spiritual growth. One friend credits the family with helping her get through a difficult, lonely time.

"I had no friends, no one," recalled a missionary from a neighboring country. She describes her friendship with the Skinners as a "miracle."

Skinner is optimistic great things will happen in Russia's cities—he just doesn't know when. He looks around his home for that old whiskey bottle to remind him why he is there.

"What I want is for (God) to be honored and glorified in my life," he said. "That's all I want. It's really not about us. It's about God and His glory for eternity."

# KENTUCKYNOTES



A quarterly publication of Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union  
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Supplement to Western Recorder

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**Tell Me the Story of Jesus**  
Season of International Missions

Week of Prayer: Dec. 2-9, 2007  
Focus: Unreached People in the Former Soviet Union

National Goal for the  
Lottie Moon Christmas Offering  
\$165 million

Kentucky churches gave  
\$4,262,409.42 to LMCO  
during 2006-07—the largest  
ever from Kentucky!  
Can we top it this year?!!?

Winter 2007



## Walk Worthy 2008 Kentucky Annual Meeting March 28-29, 2008 Parkway Baptist Church, Bardstown

*Walk worthy of the  
Lord, fully pleasing  
Him, being fruitful in  
every good work, and  
increasing in the  
knowledge of God.*  
Col. 1:10 NKJV

### For 2008: A New Schedule & Hands-on Ministries

#### Thursday evening—Pre-Annual Meeting Event:

Kentucky WMU Hall of Fame Party at My Old Kentucky Home  
Honoring Kentucky WMU "Covergirls" (Missions Mosaic) & Executive Board  
(current & former members). Everyone invited. Registration fee includes  
house tour and refreshments.

**Friday: Morning Session: Walk Worthy of the Lord** (10-12 noon)  
Heritage Fund Luncheon (12-1:30 p.m.)

**Afternoon Session: Fully Pleasing Him** (1:30-3:00 p.m.)  
Ministry Projects / Missionaries (3-6 p.m.)  
Some projects will be in the community  
Missionary speakers at church / ministry project at church

**Evening Session: Being Fruitful in Every Good Work** (7-9 p.m.)  
Special Emphasis: Families on Mission  
Everyone, especially local participants, is encouraged to bring families,  
including children and youth, to the Friday evening session.  
Program will include features/speakers related to Families on Mission/FamilyFEST

**Saturday: Baptist Nursing Fellowship Breakfast**

**Morning Session: Increasing in the Knowledge of God** (9-11:30 a.m.)  
Ministry Projects (12-2 p.m.)

Special Guests: Ken & Beth; Rick Brenny; Claudio Torro, and other missionaries!  
Theme Interpretations by Sisterhood Christian Drama Ministry

*From the opening song to the closing challenge,  
you will not want to miss a minute  
of the 2008 Kentucky WMU Annual Meeting*

Additional information will be sent to WMU directors in early 2008



Sisterhood

### 2008 Annual Meeting Lodging Information

#### Hampton Inn

985 Chambers Boulevard  
502.349.0100  
Cutoff date: March 7, 2008  
Rate: \$89.00 + tax (with 2 breakfasts included)  
Group Name: Kentucky WMU  
Group Code: KWG

#### Best Western

411 W. Stephen Foster Avenue  
502.348.3977  
Rate: \$68.00 + tax  
Cutoff date: February 1, 2008  
Use Code: Kentucky WMU

#### Quality Inn & Suites

1875 New Haven Road  
502.348.9253  
Cutoff date: March 1, 2008  
Rate: \$69.00 + tax (Single/Double)  
\$79.00 + tax (Triple/Quad)

#### Other accommodations without blocked rooms:

Comfort Inn  
984 Frost Avenue  
502.349.9400

### A Personal Word

Would you jump rope for a goat? Collect loose change in an empty food container for world hunger? Collect shoes and pack school supplies for other needy children? Teach children and turn them loose to meet missions needs, and ministries like these will take place.



**Joy Bolton**  
Executive  
Director-  
Treasurer

When children's missions organizations explain a need or give children the opportunity to get involved, great things happen. Project MOST, a ministry to provide goats, sheep, pigs, or cows to families in war-torn Croatia was featured in the February 2007 materials for WMU's Girls in Action and Children in Action organizations. Through the materials, girls and boys not only learned about missionary Robert Jordan\* and his ministry, but also how they could

make a difference through Project MOST.

The response was extraordinary. GA, CiA, and other children's groups were more than \$250,000 in just five months (February - June 2007). Through missions education children did more than learn about a ministry, they became a part of it. The children learned about the culture and ways to share the gospel. A number of children accepted Christ through their participation in this ministry learning experience.

Acteens at Bethlehem Baptist Church in Louisville learned about World Hunger and asked if they could collect loose change. Using empty food containers, they collected about \$300. Children in Action members at Clayvillage Baptist Church packed school supplies for needy children this fall. One child told the leader, "This is the best thing I've ever done." This comes from a child whose family has limited resources, so it meant a great deal to her to help children in another city. Children in Action at Victory Baptist Church in Shepherdsville used an IMB Bible Storying Cloth. Then they traveled to McCreary County this fall to share the Bible stories and hold a "Back to School Bash" benefiting needy children in the area.

During our International Missions emphasis, I challenge you to include your children. Teach them that God loves all the children of the world but not every child knows of God's love. Teach them that missionaries are going to remote places of the world as well as big cities to teach boys and girls, moms and dads about Jesus. Explain how the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions helps to send missionaries and provide resources for telling people about Jesus. And then let your kids dream up ways they can be a part of the offering and praying for missions. You will be amazed at what will happen.

And then keep teaching and involving children in missions. Mission Friends, Royal Ambassadors, Girls in Action, Children in Action, Acteens, and Youth on Mission are all approaches that you can use. The materials will help you teach and include mission action project ideas that will give your children and youth hands-on ministry experiences that will change their lives.

2006-07 was a great year for missions giving in Kentucky. We had both the largest Eliza Broadus Offering for State Missions and the largest Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions ever given. I pray that 2007-08 will see the largest offerings ever for state, national, and international missions. During our Season of Prayer for International Missions, may we remember that around the world there are still people asking us to "Tell Me the Story of Jesus." May we also be faithful to teach our children right here in Kentucky.

—Joy Bolton

## Churchwide



WMU  
Directors:

Have you planned something only to find out it conflicts with another event in your church? Nothing says "uh oh" like the right and left hands not knowing what each is doing. We may have good intentions, but miscommunication or non-communication can lead to mess-ups and embarrassment. We just get so excited about what we are doing we fail to let folks who need to know ... know! Here are a few things to keep in mind:

1. Pray about what God wants you to do to lead your church to understand, embrace and live the call through missions
2. Work with your church and ministry leadership teams. Remember to include all age levels organizations in events. Connect with everyone!
3. If you are unsure about what to do or have questions, contact your associational WMU Director, state WMU resource team member or a state staff person. These persons are listed in the Kentucky WMU supplement.

Events on the horizon include Week of Prayer for International Missions, Focus on WMU and the Hispanic Event for Women (February 23 in Elizabethtown).

As we enter the time of celebrating our Savior's birth, may you experience the peace, joy and blessings He gives.

—Wanda Walker

## Adults

What a year 2007 has been! It does not seem as though we are here preparing for 2008. Did you make the retreats this fall? If not, you missed an abundance of blessings. The guest speakers, workshop leaders, music and missionaries were inspirational. As you can see in the photos, the crowd enjoyed more than the inspiration, they also enjoyed the fellowship and fun!



Having the opportunity to meet and talk with adults across the state, I am always in awe of how women are involved in contributing to the growth of the Kingdom through serving others. Here is a list of some projects: goodie bags for incoming college students, adopt a senior adult, adopt a senior from high school, recycle household items for crafts to give to patients, using old sheets for bandages to send to countries that need medical supplies, making dolls for missionaries, collections (shoes, school supplies, nonperishable items, socks, new undergarments, books for read-

ing programs), prayer walking local schools, baskets/apples for teachers, free yard sales, meals for the holidays for less fortunate, lap quilt making, door-to-door visitation, baby bottle ministry, Baby Boot Camp, cookies for community leaders, Worldcraft parties, hunger dinners ... the list goes on and on.

Keep on keeping on!

You are always in my thoughts and prayers as you serve through adult missions and missions education. God bless you.



Peace this Christmas  
and New Year!

—Wanda Walker

## Youth



Plans are well underway for Exalt 2008 at First Baptist Shelbyville. The theme is "Unmasked." Lorie Keene will be our speaker. Lorie is a Bible study leader for high school girls, a writer, the Associate Director of Women's Programs at the seminary and has served as a missionary in Poland. Britt Nicole will be in concert on Friday evening and you won't want to miss that. Information will be mailed out at the beginning of January.

KALEO is a conference for students high school through seminary age who are considering a career in ministry. This conference is held at four locations across the country and is coming to Kentucky on February 22-23, 2008. It will

be held at Southern Seminary. For more information, go to [www.kaleoconference.com](http://www.kaleoconference.com).

The Creative Ministries Festivals will be held February 29- March 1 at Southern in Louisville and March 7-8 at First Baptist in Bowling Green. The festival is a great place for youth to learn how to serve the Lord in creative ways.

Paradise is an exciting movement across the country. Christians from numerous denominations and ministries are working together for this one day event May 25, 2008. You will want your youth to be there. For more information, go to [www.paradise08.com](http://www.paradise08.com).

We have the discussion boards up and run-

ning on the Kentucky WMU Web site. There's a board for youth leaders. To post a topic or response, you need to register on the site.

We also have a Kentucky Acteens group on Facebook open to all friends of Kentucky Acteens.



On a personal note, you might notice that my name is a little longer now. I married Jeff Rice on November 17. If you are interested, you can visit our wedding web site, [www.jeffandlaraine.com](http://www.jeffandlaraine.com).

—LaRaine Dail Rice

## Preschool and Children

PRESCHOOL —



Preschoolers can learn more about Jesus and His mission through Mission Friends! During the winter quarter:

- Involve preschoolers in the **International Mission Study** in December. The study, which focuses on missions in Moldova, can be found in the *International Missions Study 2007 Teaching Guide for Preschoolers*.

- Observe **Focus on WMU**, February 11-17, to help your church recognize Mission Friends as a part of WMU. Plan with the church WMU director for this special emphasis using suggestions in *Start* and the *2007-08 WMU Year Book*, pages 39-40.

- Begin preparing for the **North American Mission Study** coming up in March! The March unit in *Start* focuses on literary missions in North America.

Online training is now available for Mission Friends leaders as an individual or group study. Check it out at: [www.missionfriends.com](http://www.missionfriends.com).

CHILDREN —

Girls in Action and Children in Action continue to learn what it means to Live the Call through the theme "Action"! Make sure to include these highlights:

December marks the emphasis for International Missions. Provide the opportunity for the children in your church to participate in the **2007 International Mission Study for Children**. Children will learn about missions in Moldova and how missionaries reach out to share God's love there. Encourage members of Girls in Action, Royal Ambassadors, and Children in Action to attend. Use this special time to invite boys and girls who are not involved in missions education.

**Children's Ministry Day** is February 16, 2008! This special day, sponsored by national Woman's Missionary Union, is for all children in the church to get involved in hands-on ministry. Children and leaders across Kentucky, as well as throughout North America, are encouraged to participate in ministry projects to meet needs in their own communities. Think about what impact thousands of children's groups can have when they reach out to others through acts of compassion. Visit [www.childrenmissions.com](http://www.childrenmissions.com) to learn more about the special day and the resources available.

—Brenda Price

## President's Perspective

I've had busy but great times since my last article. Many of you came to World Missions Unlimited and received training for the new year in WMU organizations—it was good to see you. I have been to several associations to train Mission Friend leaders. I love talking about preschoolers—thanks for the opportunities!



**Pat Reaves**  
Kentucky WMU  
president

I appreciate all of you who worked so hard promoting the Eliza Broadus State Missions Offering for 2006-07. Can you believe Eliza was almost a millionaire? The total offering was \$992,696.00. In September, we again observed the Week of Prayer for State Missions and are taking the offering. Hopefully next August we will be able to say we made our goal of one million dollars.

Joy and I attended the NABWU (North American Baptist Women Union) meeting in Arlington, Virginia in September. We had a wonderful time with Baptist women from all over North America. One of the speakers was Marian Wright Edelman, President of the Children's Defense Fund. Her challenge to us as Baptist women was for our churches to care for and nurture the children and their families in our church neighborhoods.

The WMU Executive Board met in October. Three women from each of the eight regions of Kentucky serve as your representatives. In addition, Sandra Duguid serves as Vice President and Cheryl Hatfield as Recording Secretary. Jessica Childers, Baptist Nursing Fellowship President and Twyla Sheffield, Development Specialist also serve as ex-officio members. We spent the last weekend of October at Cedarmore. This annual board meeting is when most of the decisions pertaining to WMU are made. The committees meet, the whole board meets and things happen! I appreciate all who serve—they take time away from their families and jobs to be on the board. Thanks too to all the staff. They spent a lot of time preparing for the meeting. Our prayer is that all we do will be pleasing to God.

We are making plans for the annual meeting that will be held in Bardstown in March. It is going to be great! Make plans now to be there.

Walk worthy!

Working together,

Pat

## Kentucky WMU Heritage Fund June 1 - August 31, 2007

The following persons were honored or remembered through gifts to the Kentucky WMU Heritage Fund during the fourth quarter of the 2006-07 fiscal year. Our thanks to each person who gave to the Heritage Fund in honor of or in memory of someone significant to you and WMU. At the 2007 Kentucky WMU Annual Meeting we launched the 1000<sup>2</sup> Campaign to enlist 1000 WMU donors (individuals or groups) who will give \$1,000 between 2007-2010. Please note the pledge gifts in our report each quarter, which may also be given in honor or memory of someone.

### In Honor of:

Christa Hatfield  
Paddie Stipp  
William & Marilyn Lamkin  
Kyle Hatfield  
William & Marilyn Lamkin  
Bill & Kathryn Akridge  
Bettye Anne Williams  
Estella Brashear  
Jay Hatfield  
Lincoln Co. Assoc. WMU  
Pat Reaves  
Breckinridge Assoc. WMU

### In Memory of:

Lois Williams  
Deceased WMU members

Lucille Wilder  
Alice Thomas  
Beulah Parman  
Ruth Haddix  
Doris Miller  
Ruth Haddix  
Ruth Haddix  
Ruth Haddix  
Ruth Haddix  
Joyce Thompson  
Christine Mitts & Ruby Glass

### Donor:

Cheryl Hatfield - towards pledge  
Grace Baptist Church  
Mr. & Mrs. Gary Triplett  
Cheryl Hatfield - towards pledge  
Joy Bolton - towards pledge  
Brenda Price  
Cathy Brandon WoM, Versailles  
Rev. & Mrs. James Castlen  
Cheryl Hatfield - towards pledge  
Irma Woodrow  
Salem Assoc. WMU  
Pat Reaves

### Donor:

Cash Creek WMU  
Harrodsburg WMU - 1000<sup>2</sup>  
contribution  
Marcia Ballard  
Davies-McLean Assoc. WMU  
FBC London WMU  
Buck Grove WMU  
Kathi Sparks - 1000<sup>2</sup> contribution  
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Renfrow  
Mary Jenkins  
Salem Assoc. WMU  
FBC Brandenburg WMU  
Cheryl Hatfield - towards pledge  
Mr. & Mrs. Garry Mullins

### 1000<sup>2</sup> Campaign Contributions (includes \$1,000 gifts and pledge payments)

Mr. & Mrs. Dale H. Wilkerson  
Twyla Sheffield  
Anna White  
Ruth Hinkle  
Central Baptist Church WMU  
Mr. & Mrs. Bruce Walzer  
Jo Pelham  
Blackford Association WMU  
Anna Cook  
Kentucky WMU Staff Members  
Irma Woodrow  
Dry Ridge WOM - night group  
Central Baptist Church - Life Changers Mission Group  
Joy Bolton  
Beacon Hill Baptist Church

## Calendar

### December

2-9 Season of Prayer for International Missions & Lottie Moon Christmas Offering

### January 2008

25-26 Women on Mission Regional Retreat, Laurel Lake, Corbin

### February

11-17 Focus on WMU  
16 Children's Ministry Day  
23 Hispanic WMU Event, Louisville, Elizabethtown  
29-3/1 Creative Ministries Festival & Youth Missions Workshop, SBTS, Louisville

### March

2-9 Season of Prayer for North American Missions & Annie Armstrong Easter Offering  
7-8 Creative Ministries Festival & Youth Workshop, First Baptist, Bowling Green  
27 KY WMU Executive Board Meeting, Bardstown  
28-29 KY WMU Annual Meeting, Parkway BC, Bardstown

### April

18-19 Exalt, FBC, Shelbyville  
4:GO, Shelbyville  
25-26 KY WMU Resource Team Training, Baptist Building, Louisville  
27-5/3 MissionsFEST, Boones Creek Association

## 2008 WMU Winter Retreat

Lake Laurel Baptist Camp  
January 25-26

Directionally Challenged?  
How to Find and Follow  
God's Course for Your Life

For more information, contact the  
Kentucky WMU for a brochure.  
E-mail: [kywmu@kybaptist.org](mailto:kywmu@kybaptist.org)  
Phone: (502) 489-3534 or (866)  
489-3534 (toll-free in Kentucky)



Exalt 2008

## Unmasked

April 18-19  
First Baptist, Shelbyville

\$20 registration fee  
includes a private concert  
by Britt Nicole

## Camp 2008!

### Mission Safari at Mission Adventure Camp

Make your plans now to attend Mission Adventure Camp at Cedar Crest! This summer campers will discover missions in a whole new way through Mission Safari. They'll learn about missions in Africa. Campers will also be challenged to find their own place in missions.



This year, Mission Adventure Camp has exciting new camping opportunities!

- ❖ Girls and their church leaders can attend three night camps.
- ❖ Teen girls and their church leaders can be involved in a two-night camp, featuring mission projects in a nearby community.
- ❖ Girls, boys, and their church leaders will have two opportunities for express camps.

#### Camp Dates

#### Girls and Leaders—3rd–6th grades

June 1–4  
June 4–7  
June 9–12  
June 23–26  
June 30–3

#### Cost\*

\$122

#### Teen Girls and Leaders—6th–10th grades

June 18–20

\$82

#### Girls, Boys and Leaders—3rd–6th grades

June 12–14  
June 15–17

\$82

#### Mother/Daughter Overnights—1st–3rd grades

June 20–21  
June 27–28

\$48

\* Early Bird Rates

All rates are per person.

### “Finding My Place” at Jonathan Creek

Find your place in missions this summer at Overnights at the Creek!  
Learn how to use your gifts and talents to spread God's love!

#### Date June 20–21

Mother/Daughter Overnight  
(grades 1–3 and moms)

\$35

GA Overnight  
(grades 4–6 and chaperones)

\$41

Acteens Splash  
(grades 7–12 and chaperones)

\$47



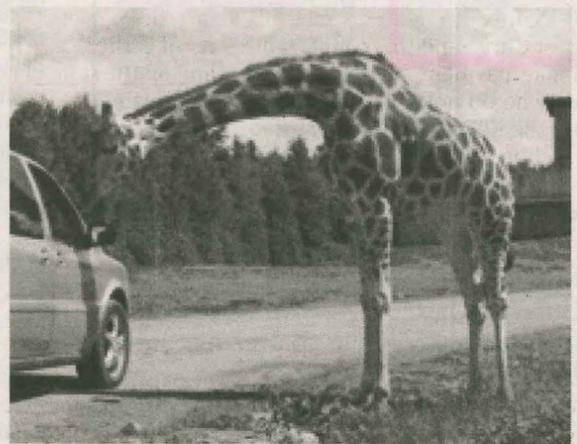
\* Early Bird Rates

All rates are per person.

To find out more about missions camping, call the Kentucky WMU office at (866) 489-3534, (502) 489-3534 or go to our Web site at [www.kywmu.org](http://www.kywmu.org).

## College Women:

ARE YOU LOOKING  
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SERVE GOD NEXT  
SUMMER?



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Mission Adventure  
CAMP STAFF!

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and youth in Bible Study,  
worship, crafts,  
recreation, and  
MISSIONS!

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[Stacy.Nall@kybaptist.org](mailto:Stacy.Nall@kybaptist.org)  
502-489-3454  
Visit our Web site at  
[www.kywmu.org](http://www.kywmu.org)

### Dehoney legacy

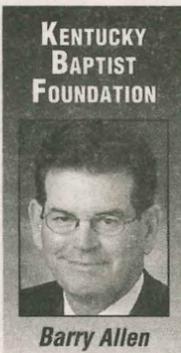
#### Endowment provides funding for Dehoney Center ministry

The recent deaths of Lealice and Wayne Dehoney prompted me to share the story of the 1996 establishment by the late Ed Carlisle of an endowment to provide perpetual funding for the mission of the Dehoney Center for the Study of the Local Church at Southern Seminary.

Wayne was the beloved pastor of Louisville's Walnut Street Baptist Church from 1967 to 1985; Lealice was his wife. Both were influential in Baptist life in Kentucky and around the world. Ed Carlisle was a lay member of the church who wanted to demonstrate his love for Christ and this couple, and to make payment on his debt to those who do not know Christ. He chose the KBF as the fiduciary and the Dehoney Center as the beneficiary of the endowment he established during his life, the funding of which he completed through a provision in his estate plan.

The mission of the Dehoney Center is to be an international center in research, training and consultation on the growth, development and competence for the local church. The scope of the center is to provide an integrating organi-

zational focus for research, training and consultation on the local church with the result that the relevant study resources of the seminary and other available resources can be mobilized to generate growth, development and competence in the local church.



Barry Allen

The seminary provides the KBF an annual accounting for the use of these funds. In the most recent report Southern Seminary Dean Chuck Lawless stated, "We believe it is our responsibility to provide cutting-edge research that assists the local church in reaching North America and the world for Christ. ... This year we utilized the funds for research projects on the personal evangelism habits of pastors of growing churches and on the state of the church in urban settings. ... We pledge again our commitment to use these funds to provide resources to grow healthy, biblical churches in North America and the world."

This Dehoney legacy is worthy of consideration of your support, and the Carlisle model is worthy of your consideration to emulate.

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

### For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



### Church of the Covered Dish

Thom Tapp



### Bible Crosswords

By Janet Adkins

#### Across

- 1 Engrossed
- 5 "In God will I praise \_\_\_ word" (Psalm 56:10)
- 8 "The Lord came to ... Gad, David's \_\_\_" (2 Samuel 24:11)
- 12 "Wilt thou \_\_\_ destroy the righteous with the wicked?" (Genesis 18:23)
- 13 "Of \_\_\_, the family of the Erites" (Numbers 26:16)
- 14 "He would not spend the time in \_\_\_" (Acts 20:16)
- 15 Seriously wound
- 16 "But it \_\_\_ thou" (Psalm 55:13)
- 17 "Rejoicing, so that the city \_\_\_ again" (1 Kings 1:45)
- 38 Chemical suffix
- 20 "Let my last \_\_\_ be like his!" (Numbers 23:10)
- 22 "There is nothing \_\_\_ for me" (1 Samuel 27:1)
- 25 "It is \_\_\_ a spiritual body" (1 Corinthians 15:44)
- 29 "They are vanity, and the work of \_\_\_" (Jeremiah 10:15)
- 30 "A soft \_\_\_ turneth away wrath" (Proverbs 15:1)
- 31 American Institute of Electronics, abbr.
- 32 Mine product
- 33 "His hands were \_\_\_ until the going down of the sun" (Exodus 17:12)
- 37 Girl's name
- 40 Exam taker
- 41 "It \_\_\_ fire and brimstone from heaven" (Luke 17:29)
- 42 Hot and cold beverage
- 43 "... bore his ear through with an \_\_\_" (Exodus 21:6 nkjv)
- 44 "I will speak but this \_\_\_" (Judges 6:39)

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- 47 Agent, in other words, abbr.
- 49 Greek god of love
- 53 "Where the body of Jesus had \_\_\_" (John 20:12)
- 54 Confederate general
- 55 "And they \_\_\_ upon horses" (Jeremiah 6:23)
- 56 "Exceeding in \_\_\_ attire upon their heads" (Ezekiel 23:15)
- 57 "\_\_\_, of the Gentiles also" (Romans 3:29)
- 58 Spit out
- Down
- 1 "The \_\_\_ of consecration" (Exodus 29:27)
- 2 In the manner of, Fr.
- 3 Greek letter
- 4 Love apple
- 5 "Let them be \_\_\_ of wood" (Joshua 9:21)
- 6 "And \_\_\_ also the Jairite" (2 Samuel 20:26)
- 7 The captain of Jabin's army (Judges 4:7)
- 8 "Unto Thyatira, and unto \_\_\_" (Revelation 1:11)
- 9 That, Sp.
- 10 One, Ger.
- 11 Old piece of cloth
- 19 The father of Abner (1 Samuel 26:5)
- 21 Girl's name
- 22 "Ye shall slay the \_\_\_" (Leviticus 20:15)
- 23 A descendant of 13-Across
- 24 "I see men as \_\_\_, walking" (Mark 8:24)
- 26 "For they had \_\_\_ with all their heart" (2 Chronicles 15:15)
- 27 Inspiring fear
- 28 "\_\_\_ not, nor be dismayed" (1 Chronicles 22:13)
- 34 "\_\_\_ unto my cry" (Psalm 17:1)
- 35 River in Scotland
- 36 "And this man went up out of his city \_\_\_" (1 Samuel 1:3)
- 37 "For our vines have tender \_\_\_" (Song of Solomon 2:15)
- 38 "There is one \_\_\_ for them" (Leviticus 7:7)
- 39 Tankers for refueling ships
- 44 "And a nourisher of thine \_\_\_ age" (Ruth 4:15)
- 45 "\_\_\_, my son, let us not all now go" (2 Samuel 13:25)
- 46 Business house, Fr. abbr.
- 48 Shoe width
- 50 "And \_\_\_ up their women with child" (2 Kings 8:12)
- 51 Poem
- 52 "Woe to the women that \_\_\_ pillows to all armholes" (Ezekiel 13:18)

#### Last week's solution

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## New resource assists small-church, bivocational pastors

### Leadership program offers pastors useful strategies for growth

By Mark Kelly  
Baptist Press

**Nashville (BP)**—Leading a smaller-membership church can be a lonely, difficult job. A pastor often mediates chronic tension between members and wrestles with church traditions that prevent new outreach efforts—all the while working an outside job to provide for his family.

In a congregation of several dozen people, a pastor rarely feels he can turn to anyone in the church in times of frustration or discouragement, said Mitch Martin, bivocational ministry specialist for LifeWay Christian Resources.

Because his congregation is not large, a pastor may feel his local association or state convention staff is busy with “more important” issues and cannot be bothered by the problems of one pastor in a “little” church.

“A group of bivocational pastors was on their way to a meeting at their Baptist state convention office,” Martin said. “As they approached the front door, one of them stopped and said, ‘You mean we can just walk right in there?’”

Martin claimed that misperception is disappointing. “Most of our state conventions have someone on staff whose ministry is focused on helping pastors,” he noted.

“These pastors need to know that their churches and ministries are not substandard. They need to understand how to lead their congregations into the significant, effective ministry God created them to have.”

That’s why LifeWay is collaborating with state conventions and local associations across the country in a new initiative called “Significant Church FOCUS,” a leadership development process designed to help pastors find the unique strategy that will breathe new life into a congregation.

Smaller-membership churches are not inferior ministries; they are actually the norm in Southern Baptist life, explained Ray Gilder, bivocational ministries specialist for the Tennessee Baptist Convention. Their problems, he said, are the entire convention’s problems.

“Only 1 percent of Southern Baptist churches averages more than 1,000 in Sunday School. About 75 percent of them average less than 100,” Gilder noted. “Most of the churches that are plateaued or declining are bivocational and smaller-membership churches.”

#### Most SBC churches are small

“Helping bring new life to these struggling congregations is strategically very important for building the Kingdom of God throughout Southern Baptist life,” he added.

Pastors and their wives from several smaller-membership churches got a sneak peek at Significant Church FOCUS during a weekend pilot project workshop at Cookeville, Tenn., in mid-September. Similar workshops were held in Louisiana; others are planned for coming months in several other states.

Significant Church FOCUS introduces a simple process called “The Leader’s Cross,” which guides a pastor in evaluating his church’s situation and its values and priorities, planning to achieve a few key goals and engaging the congregation in the work of ministry.

“Pastors basically do three things: lead, care and proclaim,” Martin said. “My research indicates that pastors feel their greatest need is knowing how to be more effective leaders.”

“Too many pastors find themselves in the situation of being ‘Lone Ranger’ ministers. Although they don’t talk about it openly, many are quietly unhappy in their ministries.”

Martin noted that the subtitle of the initiative is FOCUS, which stands for Finding Our Church’s Unique Strategy. “I want pastors to know how to develop ministry teams in their churches and work together under God’s leadership to discover their unique ministry approach,” he said. “I want these pastors and teams to have a tool they can use to continually and indefinitely lead their churches forward.”

Many pastors mistakenly believe that preaching by itself will solve a church’s problems, noted Billie Friel, interim director of missions for Wilson County Baptist Association in Tennessee.

“After the conference, one pastor told me he had thought he could preach his way out of pastoral needs and problems,” Friel recalled. “You won’t get there just by preaching; you have to be a leader.”

Friel pointed out that Significant Church FOCUS “helps you understand that church leadership is a team effort between the pastor and his people. The only Lone Ranger in the Bible—Jonah and Samson—did not have effective, happy ministries.”

Dysfunction in smaller-membership settings is a problem that has been camouflaged far too long, lamented conference participant Dan Wilson, pastor of Grace Baptist Church in Bethpage, Tenn.

“Significant Church FOCUS brings us back to the basics of scriptural truth and the practical spiritual application of those truths in doing God’s work God’s way,” Wilson said. “If these principles of church mechanics are followed through, I believe it will completely change how we ‘do church.’ We will have healthier churches and ultimately see explosive results in all areas of church life.”

**Seeking to revitalize churches**

Noting that Significant Church FOCUS has great potential to revitalize congregations, Martin added, “There are approximately 30,000 Southern Baptist churches that average 125 or less in Sunday School. If all those churches started just one new Sunday School class with an enrollment of 10, that would mean 300,000 new people reached for Bible study. If they baptized just three additional people next year, that would mean almost 100,000 souls for the Kingdom.”

“Smaller-membership churches are not only the backbone of the Southern Baptist Convention, they are the heart and soul, arms, legs and feet of our work,” Martin declared. “When God renews the leadership of 30,000 churches, we’ll see lives and communities transformed all across this country.”

## Reservations for 288, please

### Oneida’s annual Thanksgiving feast helps make holiday season special

Thanksgiving at Oneida is special for many reasons. For one thing, it is with great pleasure that we are able to provide a very tasty Thanksgiving meal for our students who are not able to go home for the holiday. While most are able to either go home or be the guest of another student, we always have 75 to 100 students here on Thanksgiving. Some simply live too far away to go home for the four-day break. Others may not be able to afford the transportation, especially since Christmas is just around the corner and all students must leave our campus. We know we cannot make our Thanksgiving meal just like home, but we do our best to make it the next best thing.

A second reason Thanksgiving is special is because we always have some international students with us, most of whom have never experienced this unique American holiday. I am not sure those who are here for their first Thanksgiving actually understand what this day means to Americans, but they certainly agree with the idea of “pigging out” on all the food.

A third reason this is a special event is that it is not only an opportunity for our faculty and staff to enjoy the meal with our students, but also an opportunity to have family and friends of our staff join us for the holiday. With our staff’s very limited incomes, they often elect not to travel to family gatherings, especially with high fuel costs. I don’t know how many guests were on our campus for Thanksgiving, but it was a lot!

Every year it is a bit of a guess about the amount of food we need to prepare. You can un-

derstand that this is very important. What kind of Thanksgiving would it be if we ran out of food? The guest list grew every day. We had to not only prepare food for our students, staff and their guests, but also for a lot of parents of our students who joined us for the feast.

Yes, it was a feast. Our cooks always do an outstanding job of preparing the meal. Since the food is placed on the tables family-style instead of on the serving lines, the cooks keep the bowls covered until everyone is seated. And yes, we had reservations for about 288 people. For the first time in years we had to set up tables in our second dining room. It is a good thing we did because we needed every table that had been prepared.

It was quite a challenge to keep everyone in the foyer until it was time to enter the dining room. Faculty, staff and their guests were seated first, followed by our students. This was my 24th Oneida Thanksgiving, so I have seen this happen many times. But honestly, I thought they would never stop coming in. I admit that at one point my faith began to be tested. I asked our food service director how many place settings she had prepared. She told me the number kept changing every day, so she took the highest number and added a dozen or so additional place settings. Boy, am I glad she did!

Well, we had a wonderful Thanksgiving and I hope you did, too. Please know how thankful we are for our many friends who make all that we do possible, including a delicious Thanksgiving meal for nearly 300 people.

W.F. Underwood is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, Box 67, Oneida, KY 40972; [www.oneidaschool.org](http://www.oneidaschool.org); e-mail: [president@oneidaschool.org](mailto:president@oneidaschool.org)

#### THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

## Give to Lottie Moon

### Campus participates in helping support international missions

The months of November and December are always an exciting time around our campus. These times always bring a reminder to everyone just how thankful we are for God’s blessings that He bestows upon us. It is always exciting to reflect on the Christmas story at this time and focus on that perfect gift God gave to the world through His Son Jesus Christ.

This time of year is also exciting because it is a time for our campus family to focus on international missions here at Clear Creek. We always dedicate this time of year for our campus-wide Lottie Moon Christmas Offering that goes to support our Southern Baptist international missionaries. Each year, the campus family sets a campus-wide goal for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and we use our chapel times to share the story of Lottie Moon and the impact she had on international missions. Each member of the campus family is encouraged to participate in the offering.

Every time I hear the story of Lottie Moon, I wonder where we as Southern Baptists would be today in regards to international missions without the dedication and sacri-

fice of this one woman. We have several faculty members who have served on the international mission field and have been recipients of this very offering. I always look forward to hearing them share with our campus family how this offering helped them while they were on the mission field. Their personal testimonies provide additional motivation for our campus family to participate in this offering. It is exciting to know that some of our current students probably will be recipients of this same offering in years to come when they get to the mission field.

This season of the year is a great opportunity for us to teach our students about the importance of the Cooperative Program and how vital it is for each person to share the resources with which God has blessed them. We want that involvement to go with them when they graduate from our campus and go to serve in a local church. May we all pray and seek God’s leadership about how we need to participate in this offering.

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

#### CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Donnie Fox

## Workshop highlights value of new member assimilation

By Dannah Prather  
Partnerships Editor

**Elizabethtown**—Starting a class for new church members isn't about secret handshakes, clandestine initiations or sharing the location of the best parking spots. According to a Southern Seminary dean, nothing short of the spiritual health of churches and believers is at stake.

"We want to accomplish more ... than just church orientation," said Chuck Lawless, dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Church Growth at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. Too many members of Southern Baptist churches do not grasp basic doctrine—and consequently remain on the periphery of church life, Lawless told Kentucky Baptists at a workshop during the recent Kentucky Baptist Convention annual meeting.

The session highlighted research and resources from Lawless' book, "Membership Matters: Insights from Effective Churches on New Member Classes and Assimilation."

Setting aside time for a class is only the first step, he said, noting

that research reveals that, even after attending an orientation class, some new believers still were unaware of basic principles of Christianity and responsibilities of church members.

Data from the book was collected from 1997 until 2002 from about 75 churches, mostly Southern Baptist, from different regions of the U.S.

Lawless said the study revealed that classes for new Christians and/or prospective church members are becoming more common and cover information beyond a "welcome to the church" orientation.

On average, classes surveyed met multiple times for a total of more than five hours. Some congregations opened the course to anyone, including current church members and visitors.

An "open door" approach provided congregations another avenue for evangelism while improving biblical literacy among longtime churchgoers, Lawless said.

"This is not heavy duty, deep doctrine," he said. Step one is teaching the plan of salvation and a discussion of each person's need for a relationship with Christ. Subsequent

topics explore "what it means to be part of the church (and) ... images of the church in the New Testament."

Lawless said among churches that opened their class to a wider audience, many reported that "somebody got saved every time they taught the class."

Only 30 percent of the congregations surveyed made the class a requirement for church membership. Most leaders presented attendance as "highly expected."

Most congregations also created a "grandfather clause" so current members would not be compelled to take the class. Some pastors chose to teach the course to the congregation-at-large through a series of Sunday morning sermons.

In addition to basic doctrine, new members said they learned how to become an active part of the congregation by developing relationships with more mature believers, especially the pastor.

New Christians said they were encouraged to hear "the pastor's story" and learn from him how he prays, studies the Bible and incorporates personal evangelism into his daily life. Through the class, new members said, "The pastor of the church (became) my pastor," Lawless reported.

Research reveals that while congregational leaders find it easier to discuss the benefits of church membership rather than the responsibilities, new Christians are eager to know how they can contribute to the church family.

"If people know what the church expects of them before they join ... they are much more likely to stay," Lawless said. Most congregations expect members to participate "but we don't ever tell people: 'These are the expectations.'" In many cases, churches fail to commit them to writing, he added.

In his book, Lawless includes

the "expectation pentagon" to help leaders and members explore topics such as baptism, tithing, service and church discipline. The sides of the pentagon include:

- Identifying with the church.
- Giving finances.
- Protecting church unity.
- Serving in ministry.
- Attending worship and small groups.

Communicating the importance of service is a major component of new member classes. When helping a member find a long-term ministry niche, Lawless recommends a "placement strategy" that goes beyond a spiritual gifts inventory.

Strategies such as DESIGN by pastor Wayne Cordeiro, SHAPE by pastor/author Rick Warren, and SERVE by BodyLife Journey survey a person's natural abilities, interests, spiritual growth and other aspects when selecting a place of service.

A ministry placement strategy requires time and effort by the church, Lawless said, but the approach reduces the risk of placing someone in an unsuitable place of service, or perhaps placing them in the correct place prematurely.

Like doctrinal teachings from a new member class, the ministry placement strategy can be implemented church-wide, Lawless said, suggesting Sunday evening as a possible venue.

Because believers' spiritual maturity, life experiences and even skills develop over time, Lawless recommends repeating the survey annually.

The placement strategy may take time but new believers can begin serving immediately, Lawless said. All churches need greeters, parking lot attendants, nursery workers and other volunteers. Even a simple task conveys to new members: "We want you here, and if you're not here, we will miss you," he said.



**"If people know what the church expects of them before they join ... they are much more likely to stay."**

Chuck Lawless, dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Church Growth at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary



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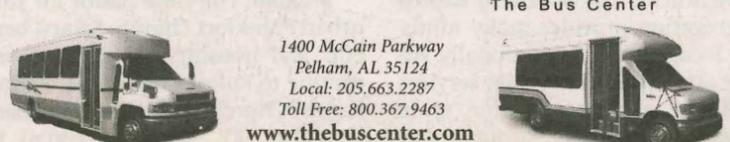
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## HOW TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

By Brenda Price

She was a cultured woman and one of the best-educated in the South. Small in stature, this energetic and fearless woman endured floods, famine and war in a faraway land. She was regarded as a pioneer in Southern Baptist missions. Who was she? Lottie Moon—a name familiar to us particularly during the Christmas season.

What compelled Lottie Moon to spend 40 years as a missionary in China? It was during her teenage years that she accepted the most precious gift she had ever been given—Jesus! From that day on, a singleness of purpose flowed through Lottie. She had to share that “precious gift” with others.

How can you receive the gift of Jesus?

**Repent of sin.** “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

**Believe in Jesus.** “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

**Confess your faith.** “If you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:9).

Christmas is a joyous time of the year. It is a time of giving and receiving gifts. Of all the gifts that have been given or will ever be given, salvation through Jesus Christ is the most precious, the most lasting. Accept this precious gift yourself or share it with someone who does not know Jesus. That’s what Lottie Moon did!

*Brenda Price is associate executive director and preschool/children’s consultant for Kentucky Woman’s Missionary Union*

## MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **BEREA**—Valley Church recently called **Tony Shelton** as pastor. He succeeds former pastor **Greg Lakes** who was called to the mission field.

■ **CENTRAL CITY**—Calvary Church ordained **Chris Skipworth** to the gospel ministry Dec. 2.

■ **EVARTS**—Red Bud Church recently called **Lloyd Ray Burkhart** as pastor. He was ordained to the gospel ministry Nov. 17 at Cloverfork Church.

■ **FORT MITCHELL**—Fort Mitchell Church’s adult choir will present “The Sounds of Christmas” Dec. 8 and 9, 7 p.m. The church’s children’s choir will present “Free Gift” Dec. 16, 6 p.m. **Joby Tricquet** is pastor.

■ **FRANKFORT**—**Jeroline Baker**, a long-time professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, died Nov. 5 at age 75. Baker, a native of Kentucky, retired in Frankfort after serving 27 years at Southwestern Seminary. A member of Crestwood Church in Frankfort, she was a graduate of Cumberland College, Georgetown College, the University of Kentucky and North Texas State University. Memorial gifts may be made to Hospice of the Bluegrass.

■ **HARLAN**—Liggett Church ordained **Brenton Lively** to the gospel ministry Oct. 21.

■ **HENDERSON**—Hyland Church’s adult and youth choirs will present “An Unexpected Christmas” Dec. 16, 6 p.m.

■ **HODGENVILLE**—First Church’s choir will present “There Is Peace in the World Tonight” Dec. 16, 6 p.m.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Boone’s Creek Church’s children’s choir will present “Not a Creature Was Stirring”

Dec. 9, 7 p.m. The adult choir will present the musical drama, “The Love of God at Christmas,” Dec. 16, 7 p.m. **Matthew Perry** is pastor.

**Jan Hill**, a former Southern Baptist international missionary to the Philippines for 38 years, has released her first CD, “Christmas Harp Carols from the Hills.” Hill, who retired in 2001, is a member of Calvary Church.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Cloverleaf Church will host the Southern gospel group **Tribute** from Nashville Dec. 9, 7 p.m. For more information, call (502) 367-0218.

■ **MOUNT VERNON**—First Church’s choir will present “On This Very Night” Dec. 9, 7 p.m. **Eddie Nation** is pastor.

Freedom Church’s adult choir will present “His Very Own Star” during the Dec. 16 morning worship service. **Albert McKinney** is pastor.

■ **OWENSBORO**—Sorgho Church called **Allen Shouse** as pastor effective Dec. 16.

■ **PEMBROKE**—Pembroke Church recently called **Jimmy Stewart Jr.** as youth/associate pastor. He previously was pastor of Lakeview Church.

■ **WILLIAMSTOWN**—Williamstown Church’s choir will present “Imagine a World Without Christmas,” Dec. 15 and 16, 6 p.m. **Darrell Morgan** is pastor.

### What’s going on?

Mail your happenings to Mountains to the Mississippi at Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253. E-mail: wesrec@earthlink.net.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### December

10-11 KBC Mission Board, Baptist Building, Louisville.

### January

17-19 Shepherding the Shepherd, Radisson Plaza Hotel, Lexington.

24 Pastor/Staff Forum, Porter Memorial Baptist Church, Lexington.

24-25 Quarterly Prayer Meeting for Spiritual Awakening, Hartford Baptist Church.

25-26 Preschool/Children’s Ministry Meeting, Baptist Building, Louisville.

For more information, call (800) 266-6477 or visit [www.kybaptist.org](http://www.kybaptist.org)

## Mensers named IMB missionaries

**Springfield, Ill.**—Tim and Jill Menser recently were appointed as Southern Baptist international missionaries to Africa. They were among 82 missionaries appointed last month by the Southern Baptist International Mission Board.

Menser, pastor of First Baptist Church of Leitchfield, will serve in theological education. He previously was headmaster of Leitchfield Christian Academy and pastor of Centerfield Baptist Church in Crestwood and Forks of Elkhorn Baptist Church in Midway. He is a graduate of Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green and Southern Baptist Theo-



Tim Menser



Jill Menser

logical Seminary in Louisville.

Mrs. Menser will serve in community and home outreach. A teacher at Leitchfield Christian Academy, she is a graduate of Western Kentucky University and Vanderbilt University in Nashville.

## 3 G’town students earn Fulbright Awards

**Georgetown**—Three students at Georgetown College have been named Fulbright Award recipients, making the school Kentucky’s top producer of Fulbright scholars, according to the Institute of International Education.

Georgetown’s 2007 recipients of the prestigious teaching-abroad Fulbright Awards are Brittany Pappas of Mechanicsburg, Pa., teaching in Ger-

many; Sarah Sebastian of Lancaster, teaching in Hong Kong; and Jordan Yeager of Somerset, teaching in Spain.

The Fulbright program is sponsored by the U.S. State Department’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. It seeks to increase understanding between people in the U.S. and abroad through educational exchange opportunities.

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**AVAILABLE:** Minister of music, pianist, senior adult leader. Anytime; preferably in the Louisville, Lexington, northern Kentucky area. Salary negotiable. Contact Mark C. Fields at mark121053@yahoo.com.

**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](http://www.reunionhouse.org).

**FOR SALE:** All-brick church building and 3-bedroom, 1-bath parsonage on 1.4 acres in Lincoln County, Ky. Pews, fixtures, piano, fellowship hall and more. For more information, contact Jone Anderson at (606) 669-5223.

**FOR SALE:** Cookware (we stopped doing dinner parties). Beautiful new 17-piece sets; heavy, surgical stainless steel, waterless, lifetime warranty. Previously \$2,000, now \$295. \$149 knife set free with first five orders. [vapoaseal.com](http://vapoaseal.com). (800) 434-4628.

**SEEKING:** Full-time senior pastor for Piner Baptist Church in northern Kentucky. Our Southern Baptist congregation provides many ministries locally and internationally. Average attendance for Sunday services is 400. For more information, go to [www.pinerbaptist.org](http://www.pinerbaptist.org). Resumes may be sent to Wayne Diehl, pastor of ad-

ministration, 15044 Madison Pike, Morning View, KY 41063.

**SEEKING:** Part-time worship/choir leader for two morning worship hours for outreach-driven church. Blended worship, early worship band, late worship choir/ensemble, seasonal cantata. Diverse congregation, long-tenured staff. Interested individuals forward resumes to First Baptist Church, PO Box 296, Carrollton, KY 41008. Phone: (502) 732-4396.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for First Baptist Church of Flatwoods, Ky. Please send resumé to: FBC of Flatwoods, PO box 1005, Flatwoods, KY 41139, Attn: Pulpit Committee; or e-mail resumé to [ffbcmccarty@hotmail.com](mailto:ffbcmccarty@hotmail.com).

**SEEKING:** Teacher for 3-year-old class at Simpsonville Baptist daycare, Monday-Friday, 12 p.m.-6 p.m. E-mail resumé to [adventureclub@bellsouth.net](mailto:adventureclub@bellsouth.net). For questions, call (502) 722-5249, ext. 13.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister to youth and children. Send resumé to Pigeon Fork Baptist Church, 5090 Hickory Ridge Road, Waddy, KY 40076, Attn: Youth Search Committee.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for suburban Frankfort church. Salary, benefits and housing negotiable. Send resumé to Pulpit Committee, Bethel Baptist Church, 8200 Owenton Road, Frankfort, KY 40601; or e-mail to [bethel.Baptist@yahoo.com](mailto:bethel.Baptist@yahoo.com).

**SEEKING:** Southern Illinois Southern Baptist congregation of 200 seeks dynamic, passionate followers of Jesus to lead music, youth and/or children’s ministries. Three part-time positions or full-time combinations considered. Resumes accepted until Jan. 5, 2008, or until positions are filled. Search Committee, First Baptist Church, PO Box 32, Jonesboro, IL 62952; or [infofbcj@yahoo.com](mailto:infofbcj@yahoo.com).

**SEEKING:** Senior pastor for Grace Baptist (Lexington), an older church with a rich history. Applicants must be seminary graduates. If interested, please send resumé to: Pastor Search Chair, 568 Grantchester St., Lexington, KY 40505, Attn: H.S. Durbin.

**SEEKING:** Senior pastor to lead growing, mission-focused church in northeast Nelson County. Church has two other pastors on staff. Worship attendance (two services), approximately 325; Sunday school, approximately 170-plus. Candidates must have earned seminary master’s degree or higher. Send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, Bloomfield Baptist Church, PO Box 217, Bloomfield, KY 40008. E-mail: [bfdbc@bardstown.com](mailto:bfdbc@bardstown.com).

**SEEKING:** Pastor for First Baptist Church, a small Southern Baptist congregation nearing its 200th anniversary. Located in the heart of Newport, Ky. (near Cincinnati), FBC seeks a pastor to lead the church in growth as we continue to be an es-

sential part of our changing community. Applicants should send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, c/o Michael Turner, 141 Ridge Hill Drive, Highland Heights, KY 41076.

**SEEKING:** Part-time children’s minister (preschool-6th grade). Send resumé to Locust Grove Baptist Church, 73 Locust Grove Church Road, Cadiz, KY 42211.

**SEEKING:** Part-time youth minister for Edgewood Baptist Church. Please send resumé and cover letter to Edgewood Baptist Church, 717 S Main St., Nicholasville, KY 40356; or e-mail resumé to [edgewood@qx.net](mailto:edgewood@qx.net).

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, Somerset, Ky. Please send resumé to Pastor Search Committee, 1685 Highway 3091, Somerset, KY 42503.

**SEEKING:** Part-time youth minister for Bellfield Baptist Church. Send resumé to Bellfield Baptist Church, 9980 Highway 136 East, Henderson, KY 42420, Attn: Personnel Committee.

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## Georgia church choir ready to bring Christmas to city hall

By Ken Walker  
Baptist Press

Warner Robins, Ga. (BP)—For the last three Christmas seasons, Westside Baptist Church's choir has sung at shopping malls in Warner Robins, Ga., and in neighboring Macon, located about 80 miles south of Atlanta.

On Wednesday, Dec. 5, they will shift locations to perform a 30-minute concert at noon in Macon City Hall's council chambers.

Gordon Powers, minister of music at the Southern Baptist church, asked for permission to do the concert after learning that Macon Mayor C. Jack Ellis had hosted a Ramadan service at city hall in early October.

Powers pondered how, "with everything said about separation of church and state he (Ellis) was able to do this. I wasn't outraged, but I feel we as Christians give up our rights. Unless we ... stand up more often and say, 'We as Christians have a right to do this,' we lose our voice."

Westside Pastor Wayne Dorsett agreed, saying he isn't intimidated by a Ramadan service being held at city hall, but equal treatment rightly opens the venue to Christians.

"I believe in the freedom to worship," said Dorsett, Westside's pastor since April 2006. "As mayor, I applaud (Ellis) for being a man of faith; I wish it was the Christian faith. But I give him credit for expressing his faith. That gave us the opportunity to express our faith."

"Our members are thrilled," the pastor added. "They see freedom of religion the same way I do. They're not clamoring for other faiths to be shut up. They're clamoring for a chance to express our faith."

Ironically, Ellis, who leaves office Dec. 11, once professed belief in Christ. Several news media outlets, including USA Today, reported that Ellis converted to Islam in December 2006.



**CHRISTMAS SPIRIT** The choir from Westside Baptist Church in Warner Robins, Ga., will present a Christmas concert at neighboring Macon's city hall, requesting the venue after Mayor C. Jack Ellis, a convert to Islam, hosted a Ramadan service there in October. (BP photo)

"There are Muslim women in this community that are afraid to wear the head scarf because they're afraid they'll be ostracized or laughed at or even ridiculed," Ellis told a Macon TV station the evening of the Ramadan service. "We need to get beyond that."

After seeing the televised report, Powers said he e-mailed Macon's city hall to request permission to use the chambers but didn't obtain it until after following up with a phone call two weeks later.

Westside's Dec. 5 choir program will include the familiar carol, "Joy to the World." However, the music minister said it will span Christ's birth to His resurrection, including the song, "I Believe in a Hill Called Mount Calvary."

"God did so many things to make (the city hall concert) happen; it's neat to see what God did," Powers acknowledged. "I hope people come out of there feeling God's love. My church is pumped up about it."

Among those who are excited is longtime choir member Marilyn Vance, business manager at West-

side Baptist Academy. Vance said it isn't often that a church has this kind of opening.

"I think the fact we have been given an opportunity in a secular situation ... it still feels different to me," noted Vance. "That's unusual."

The concert has allowed staff members at the church's school to invite students' parents—some who are not Christians—and to explain the concert's importance, Vance added.

"The fact we have an opportunity in a government setting is the thing," she said. "They look at it in a different light."

Choir member Bob Smith noted that the choir has appeared in other public arenas, such as malls, the Georgia State Fair and retirement homes, so the Dec. 5 city hall concert isn't "out there" like it would be for some churches.

Smith, the son of former missionaries to Bolivia, where the government is cracking down on Christian activity, said it is important that Westside take advantage of the opportunity it has been afforded.

"We've been given an opportunity to be a voice," noted Smith, a civilian employee at an Air Force base in Warner Robins. "It is important I be obedient to the opportunity."

Powers hopes to see a crowd flock to the service. He has invited SBC President Frank Page, officials from the Georgia Baptist Convention and nearly 100 churches in the area.

Powers also promoted the event during the choir's appearance on a local TV station Nov. 25 and advertised it in a monthly Christian newspaper.

The music leader said he hopes so many church members show up that the chambers will be packed and the overflow can form a prayer circle around city hall.

"Christmas is about Christ," Powers declared. "We do a lot of things around this time of year, but I hope people will see an outpouring of Christ. I also hope it will provide an awareness of what we can do if we just will."

Tim Millwood, director of missions for Rehoboth Baptist Association, sees excitement brewing among the 57 member churches.

Twenty-five pastors who attended the monthly pastors' luncheon Nov. 20 pledged prayer support for the concert, said Millwood, who will offer the closing prayer at the concert.

"We can't push our way into these opportunities," he added. "They're rare. But when they come up, we should walk through that door."

Dorsett, Westside's pastor, said he hopes news of the concert will generate support not just from numerous congregations but also of a church's right to express faith publicly.

"I also hope to see us demonstrate to the people there—the mayor, officials and all the people who work there—Christian love and support," Dorsett noted. "We want to be good citizens. Good citizens support and encourage their local government."

## Giving to homeless proves divisive for Americans

By Heather Donckels  
Religion News Service

Washington (RNS)—Every day, La-waune Stockton stands with her cup in front of a downtown Washington McDonald's, jingling the change inside as customers come and go. She cinches the strings on the hood of her sweatshirt to keep out the damp air.

Stockton, who's only been homeless for four months, knows some passersby think homeless people ask for money to buy drugs and alcohol, but the stereotype does not stop her.

"You can't judge a book by its cover," said Stockton, who makes about \$20 a day in change.

As winter sets in, increasing numbers of Americans will be confronted with the harsh reality of homelessness: bundled, shivering souls, hands held out for loose change. But many people are unsure how to respond: Show a little charity with a dollar or two, or risk funding someone's drug or alcohol habit?

Herb Smith, president of the Los Angeles Mission, has an easy answer: Just don't give. Money given straight to the homeless "generally goes toward supporting a drug or alcohol

habit," he noted.

What is more important than money, he said, are the few seconds it takes to spend a little time treating the homeless as human beings.

Joe Little, a spokesman for the New York City Rescue Mission, agreed.

"Yes, they're looking for money; yes, they're hungry ... but what they're really after ... is acceptance and some variation on intimacy."

Unlike Smith, Little does not object to someone giving a dollar to a homeless person. Sure, you do not know where the money will end up, but neither do you know what anyone will do with anything, he pointed out.

Not all homeless are looking for money or a handout, however.

Lamar McCoy, for example, had parents who raised him to support himself. Even though the former machine operator has been homeless for 17 years, he says he never asks for money.

"Just because you're homeless doesn't mean you have to lose your principles," said McCoy, 60.

Once, he said, he found a wallet full of money and turned it in

to a pharmacy instead of keeping it. He sometimes feels belittled and demeaned when people offer him cash.

Offering money and food is not going to solve homelessness anyway, some say. Joel John Roberts, the CEO of People Assisting the Homeless (PATH) in Los Angeles, wants to teach the homeless what McCoy's parents taught him: how to support themselves.

"Our goal is not to provide 'three hots and a cot,'" he said, referring to the traditional work of soup kitchens and shelters. Instead, Roberts' agency provides job training and tries to help homeless people secure permanent housing.

David Sefton, a junior at Chicago's Moody Bible Institute, said he and 25 or 30 other students try to build relationships with the homeless.

Sometimes the students pass out sandwiches, but Sefton said the focus of their work is less on providing physical needs and more on rebuilding shattered self image.

After being ignored and avoided, Sefton added, "your dignity gets pretty shot."

## NATIONAL NOTES

**Oral Roberts University president resigns.** Richard Roberts, the embattled president of Oral Roberts University, resigned Nov. 23 amid intense scrutiny over allegations of financial, political and other wrongdoing at the charismatic Christian university in Tulsa, Okla. Roberts' resignation came just days before the school's board of regents was scheduled to hear the results of an outside investigation of allegations against him. Roberts had placed himself on an indefinite leave of absence Oct. 17.

**First Baptist, Dallas, robbed on Thanksgiving.** Gun-wielding robbers entered First Baptist Church of Dallas Thanksgiving night and bound three security guards with rope while they stole eight plasma televisions valued at \$5,000 and a cell phone from one of the guards. No one was reported injured in the heist. Police have arrested one of the suspects and recovered one of the stolen televisions. Pastor Robert Jeffress told those attending services Nov. 25 that the church should avoid a vengeful attitude and instead pray for the robbers.

**N.J. church makes good on \$1 million pledge.** Fountain Baptist Church in Summit, N.J., now has the distinction of being one of the few nationwide ever to raise \$1 million for a specific charitable cause. Members of the congregation pledged \$1 million to the Hurricane Katrina recovery effort in May 2006. The members recently met that goal and celebrated the achievement Nov. 25. The Center for Philanthropy at Indiana University, which monitors large donations from American nonprofit organizations, said it knows of only one instance in which a single church has made a larger charitable gift.

