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# Birthplace of a president's faith

*Spiritual journey of Abraham Lincoln continues to fascinate*

By **Dannah Prather**  
*Partnerships Editor*

**Hodgenville**—As Kentucky launches a nationwide two-year bicentennial celebration of the birth of Abraham Lincoln next week, some Lincoln enthusiasts are sharing their views on the president's spiritual journey—a journey that, like the man, began in the commonwealth.

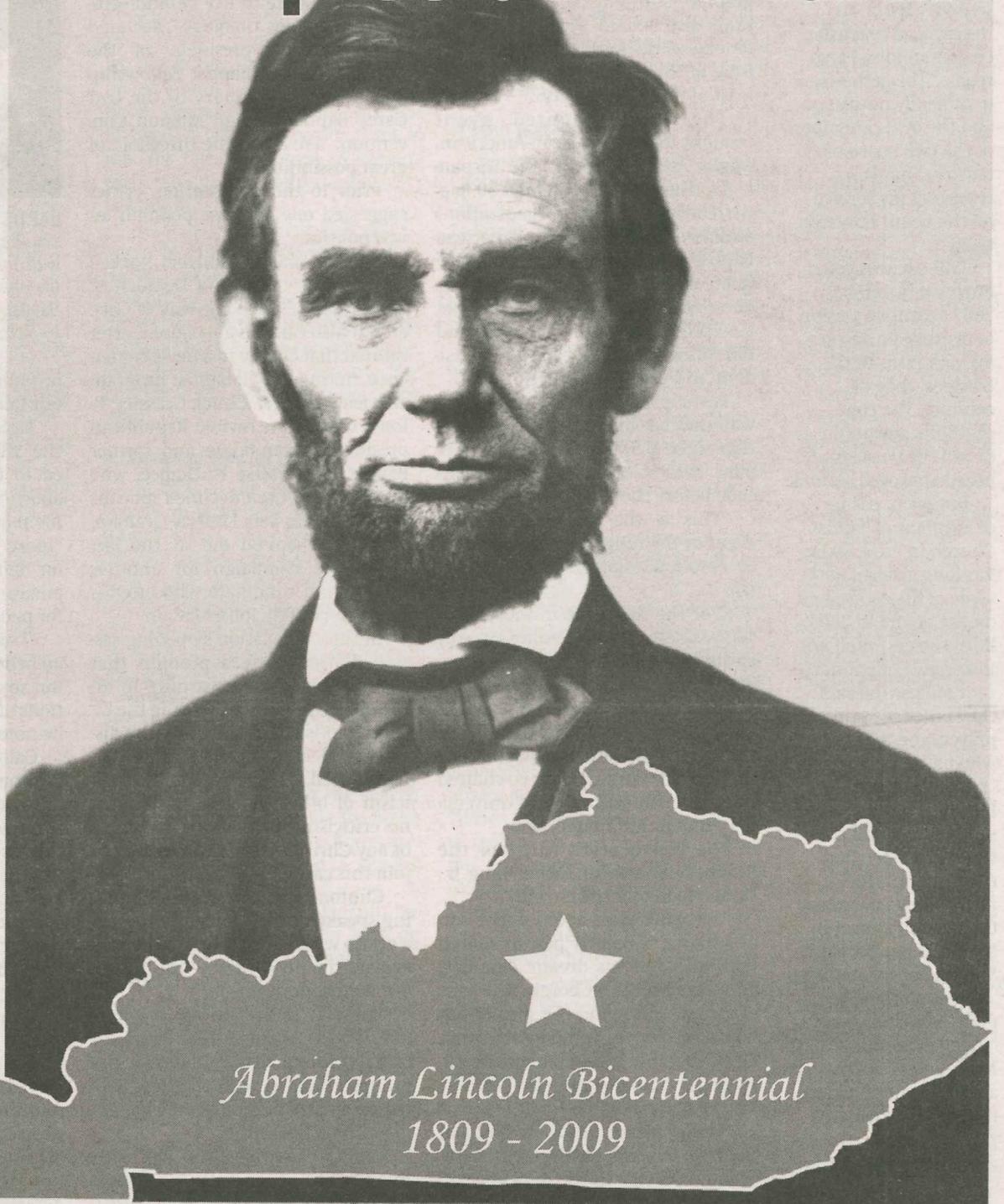
Born three miles south of Hodgenville on April 12, 1809, Lincoln was only 2 years old when the family moved about seven miles northeast to a farm along Knob Creek. It was here that the future president's parents, Thomas and Nancy, took the family to Little Mount Baptist Church.

It was a Separatist congregation whose "main clergy was an abolitionist," said Gary Talley, pastor of Magnolia Baptist Church and retired chief of operations at Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site.

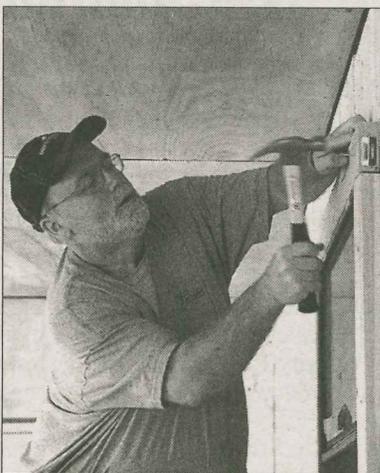
"There's always been a wide range of speculation about (Lincoln's) faith since he was not really affiliated with a particular church," noted Talley, who worked at the birthplace nearly 30 years. "But I really think his life seemed to reflect someone God was able to use for a purpose."

According to Ronald Rietveld, professor emeritus at California State University in Fullerton, Lincoln's lack of church affiliation, and the controversial writings of one of his former law partners, paint an incomplete picture of the president's views about God, the Bible and the gospel message of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

□ See *Birthplace of ... Page 3*



## NAMB missionary transforms hearts, lives through World Changers



**HANDY MAN** Jon Hodge, who manages a large chunk of NAMB's World Changers summer projects, installs a new window while helping to renovate a house in southeastern Mississippi. (NAMB photo by William Starling)

By **Mickey Noah**  
*SBC North American Mission Board*

**Bartlett, Tenn.**—For nine years now, Jon Hodge has been in the neighborhood-changing business, and while he is changing neighborhoods, he is also working—with God's help—to change hearts, minds and souls.

Based out of Bartlett, Tenn., northeast of Memphis, Jon and Linda Hodge are national missionaries with the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, an assignment that takes Jon to middle Tennessee, Mississippi, Arkansas, southern Illinois and Alaska.

Hodge manages a large segment of NAMB's nationwide World Changers ministry. Established in 1990, World Changers is a pre-packaged mission experience that enables

students—middle schoolers to collegians—and adults to donate a week of their summers to rehabilitate substandard housing and share Christ.

Last summer, some 25,000 World Changers participants partnered with 1,100 churches in 88 projects across the United States, which resulted in 900 decisions for Christ and the repair and renovation of 1,700 homes.

The Hodges are two of more than 5,000 missionaries in the United States and Canada supported by the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions. This year's goal is \$61 million, 100 percent of which is used for missionaries like the Hodges.

Responsible for planning and coordinating more than a dozen dif-

ferent World Changers projects in the five states he represents, Hodge spends many months picking cities, meeting with city and school officials, economic leaders and homeowners to choose the renovation projects. He also must ensure that World Changers participants have a place to stay, get fed, serve and share.

Hodge also selects and trains about 25 college students who serve as summer staff volunteers for as many as five World Changers projects which are in lower-income neighborhoods of cities both large and small.

Each volunteer has a different role—office manager, music leader, audio-visual person and a missions communication specialist responsible for alerting local media to World

□ See *Hodge leads World ... Page 6*

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, Feb. 6.



## Wade Burleson resigns position as IMB trustee

Gainesville, Fla.—Oklahoma Baptist pastor and blogger Wade Burleson resigned Jan. 30 as a trustee of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board.

Burleson's one-sentence letter of resignation to trustee chairman John Floyd reads: "This letter is to officially notify you and the other members of the IMB board of trustees that I am resigning my service on the board effective today."

IMB trustees voted during a November 2007 executive session to censure Burleson for violations of the trustees' code of conduct. The code prohibits any public dissent by trustees of board-approved actions.

Burleson, pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Enid, Okla., has long clashed with some of his colleagues on the board. In 2005, IMB trustees voted not to appoint missionary candidates who said they practice "private prayer language" or who have not received "biblical baptism."

Burleson protested, saying the board should not create doctrinal requirements for missionaries narrower than the strictures in the SBC's Baptist Faith and Message statement. Burleson said he plans to write a book "to tell everything that has not been told" about recent disputes in the denomination.

Compiled from Baptist Press and Associated Baptist Press

# Covenant event attracts 15,000 participants seeking unity

By Marv Knox  
Texas Baptist Standard

Atlanta (ABP)—An estimated 15,000 participants in the New Baptist Covenant convocation arrived in Atlanta Jan. 30 seeking unity in Christ and departed Feb. 1 wondering where their quest will lead.

In the meantime, they demonstrated racial, theological and geographic harmony as they prayed, sang, listened to sermons and attended workshops focusing on ministry to the people Jesus called "the least of these" in society.

The unprecedented event brought together African-American, Anglo, Asian-American and Hispanic Baptists. They represented 30 Baptist conventions and organizations affiliated with the North American Baptist Fellowship, the regional affiliate of the Baptist World Alliance. They also heard from two former U.S. presidents, Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton, and a former vice president, Al Gore—all Baptists.

Participants scaled a 163-year-old wall that has divided the denomination since U.S. Baptists parted company over slavery more than a decade before the Civil War.

"This is the most momentous event of my religious life," declared an emotional Carter, a lifelong Baptist.

"For the first time in more than 160 years, we are convening a major gathering of Baptists throughout an entire continent, without any threat to our unity caused by differences of our race or politics or geography or the legalistic interpretation of Scripture," said Carter, who co-chaired the gathering with Mercer University President Bill Underwood.

The convocation fulfilled the prophecy of Martin Luther King Jr., Underwood told the crowd.

"Forty-five years ago, a native son of Atlanta, a Baptist pastor, shared with all of us his dream: One day, on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners would be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood," Underwood said to sustained applause.

"Today, here on those red hills of Georgia, Baptists have come together to take a step in the long and difficult journey toward achieving Dr.

King's great dream. After generations of putting up walls between us—separation, division by geography, by theology, but most of all division by race—a new day is dawning. ... Today, we all sit down together at the table of Christian brotherhood and sisterhood."

"Never before have Baptists on this scale sought to cross the boundaries we choose to live behind—ethnicity, ideology, theology," declared David Goatley, president of the North American Baptist Fellowship and executive secretary of the Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission Convention. "We are at the threshold of great possibilities."

Prior to the convocation, critics suggested one of those possibilities was politics.

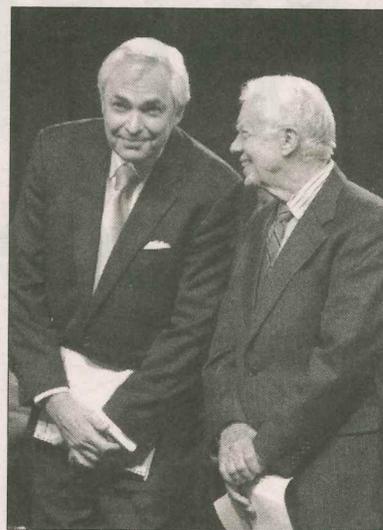
They claimed organizers stacked the program in favor of Democrats, citing the presence not only of Carter, but also Clinton and Gore. Carter refuted that charge in a news conference, noting the all-Baptist program also featured Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa. Organizers invited Republican presidential candidate and former Baptist pastor Mike Huckabee, who accepted and then declined months ago, as well as Sen. Lindsay Graham, R-S.C., who bowed out at the last minute to campaign for another presidential candidate who attends a Baptist church, John McCain.

In the convocation's opening session, Carter made a promise that also sounded like a warning to all the other speakers. Imploring the diverse Baptists to make unity the distinctive element of their gathering, he pledged, "There will be no criticism of others—let me say again—no criticism of others or exclusion of any Christians who would seek to join this cause."

Clinton, the convocation's closing speaker, called for unity toward a group with which many of the other participants disagree—the Southern Baptist Convention.

The SBC pulled out of the Baptist World Alliance—the organizational common denominator for the groups affiliated with the New Baptist Covenant—several years ago, citing alleged liberalism.

Clinton described the rift with the SBC as competing interpretations of the New Testament Epistle



**BAPTIST CELEBRATION** Mercer University President Bill Underwood (left) visits with former President Jimmy Carter at the opening of the Celebration of a New Baptist Covenant in Atlanta. (RNS photo by Bob Mahoney)

of James, "that people would know our faith by our works."

Baptists who gained control of the SBC focused on "works" related to issues such as opposition to abortion, the Equal Rights Amendment and gay rights, he noted, while "more progressive Baptists" focused on fighting poverty, protecting the environment and providing housing for poor people, he said.

"I say this in good conscience: We all believe we are doing what we can. But so do they. They read the obligations of Scripture in a different way," he noted.

Calling for humility and respect, Clinton urged, "We should not let our response to the people who disagree with us be dictated by what they say about us or even how they treat people we care for. If there is any chance that this covenant can become an embracing one, that there can be a whole community, then there has to be a chance that we can find love."

Other speakers amplified the event's theme of "Unity in Christ" from a range of perspectives:

■ Christian oneness centers on fulfilling Jesus' "radical mission," stressed William Shaw, president of the National Baptist Convention, USA, one of the four African-American conventions.

The heart of that quest is establishing justice and uprooting injustice, Shaw noted. "When God made mankind, He made us male and female—in His image. To do injustice to anybody is to do injustice to the reality of God, because we are in His image, and His image is not to be demeaned."

■ Unfortunately, the Baptist name is associated with exclusion, observed novelist John Grisham, a member of University Baptist Church in Charlottesville, Va. "The reason is because, for so long, so many Baptists have worked so hard to exclude so many," he said.

Grisham offered Baptists three suggestions for seeking unity: Restore their good name by respecting diversity, stay out of politics and "spend as much time out on the streets in ministry as in the church."

"Jesus preached more and taught more about helping the poor and the sick and the hungry than He did about heaven and hell. Shouldn't that tell us something?" he asked.

■ Baptists could express their unity by giving themselves—and their means—to rescue the poor, Tony Campolo said.

Jesus pronounced His priorities in Luke 4, beginning with preaching good news to the poor, noted Campolo, author and professor emeritus at Eastern University near Philadelphia. "Do you think Jesus meant what He said, or do you think He was kidding?" he asked.

After calling on both individuals and churches to pour themselves into ministering to the poor, he shouted, "Rise up, you suckers, and go out and do the work of Jesus!"

■ Ironically, the world—for the first time in history—began producing enough food to eliminate hunger altogether in the 1960s, Grassley said, noting one in seven people worldwide goes to bed hungry each night.

Grassley said increasing free trade will help alleviate hunger worldwide, but Christians in the U.S. should focus on practical ways of alleviating hunger themselves.

"If ever there was a time for unity," he emphasized, "now is the moment."

With additional reporting by Baptist Press

## Covenant organizers look for ways to continue overcoming barriers

By Greg Warner  
Associated Baptist Press

Atlanta (ABP)—"We don't want this to be a wasted moment," Jimmy Carter said, describing the excitement and concern he said he found among participants in the first-of-its-kind New Baptist Covenant, which wrapped up its three-day gathering in Atlanta Feb. 1.

Former President Carter, a Baptist layman and the catalyst for the New Baptist Covenant, said many of the estimated 15,000 participants stopped him in the hallways of the Georgia World Congress Center to urge organizers to capture and build on the positive spirit of the gathering—the first collaborative meeting of more than 30 Baptist denominations and groups in North America.

No plans have been laid yet for another convocation, organizers said, and there

is no need for a new interdenominational structure. But organizers committed to meet again in March to set a course for follow-up ministries.

"The diversity of this group represents both its potential and its problem," said William Shaw, one of the event organizers and president of the National Baptist Convention U.S.A.

"We're not on a picnic here. We're on a journey," said program co-chair Jimmy Allen. "And we're going to be working hard to overcome these cultural barriers."

Carter said participants had already demonstrated a consensus to work on environmental stewardship, civil rights, equality for men and women, and ministry to immigrants.

Even the Southern Baptist Convention, the largest denominational group not involved in the New Baptist Covenant,

might cooperate with the new coalition, he said, despite its initial opposition to the movement.

Carter noted he had developed a positive relationship with SBC President Frank Page, who initially criticized the endeavor. Carter also said he would provide Page with a full report on the convocation and its possible outcomes.

"The results of this meeting will determine how the Southern Baptist leaders respond to us," he predicted. "We will reach out" to them to participate in follow-up projects, he added.

Page, who did not attend the Atlanta meeting, said in a news release Jan. 24 that while he would pray for the event, he remained skeptical about some participants' motives.

Bill Underwood, president of Mercer University and event co-chair with Carter,

said the gathering will have a positive impact on the public witness of Baptists.

"People are seeing Baptists talking about working together and doing positive things together, rather than bickering," he said. "I think that is a very positive thing for Baptists."

Allen, the last moderate Baptist president of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1979, said the Covenant is "reflecting a movement of God that is bigger than any participating group."

Allen said the Covenant leaders are not interested in organization, structure or control. While follow-up plans will come, he said, the leaders are welcoming suggestions from participants and counting on grassroots involvement.

"We're not trying to find ways to say no," he added. "We're trying to find ways to say 'go.'"

# Birthplace of a president's faith

*200 years after his birth, Abraham Lincoln's spiritual pilgrimage still fascinates*

*Continued from page 1*

"In the end, his faith is his own," said Rietveld, an ordained Baptist minister. "It isn't something he has parroted from any particular church or movement."

Many historians agree that the Lincolns' anti-slavery sentiments were cemented, in part, because they regularly saw slaves driven past their Knob Creek farm.

"Bardstown was a major slave market," explained LaRue County Judge Executive Tommy Turner, co-chairman of the Kentucky Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission and one of 15 people in the nation appointed to the national committee. "The Lincolns lived along the Louisville and Nashville Turnpike," a major artery through the state, he said.

"Seeing people in chains, families that were driven down the road like cattle, and all the horrors associated with that ..." Talley said, "one would not be able to look at something like that and not be repulsed."

The early 19th century was a time of church disputes that foreshadowed the traumatic political and

military conflict yet to come. "South Fork (Baptist Church) was quite severely divided over the issue of slavery," Talley noted.

Lincoln scholar Louis Warren wrote that 15 members of South Fork left the church in 1805 over the issue to form the Little Mount congregation about three miles from Lincoln's boyhood home.

In that home was perhaps Lincoln's greatest spiritual influence, his mother. As president, Lincoln recalled his mother's love for the Bible and how she taught her children Bible verses. In later years, the president "said he could hear her voice in certain scriptures," Rietveld reported.

## The request of a grieving boy

In 1816 the Lincolns left Kentucky for Indiana. Two years later, Nancy died. A local man, perhaps a Baptist layman, "prayed over her grave," Rietveld wrote, but later 9-year-old Abraham penned a letter to the pastor of Little Mount Baptist, asking him to travel from Kentucky to perform a proper funeral service.

"For a 9-year-old boy to want the

preacher to come and preach his mother's funeral—at a time when a 75-mile trip was a big deal—shows he had a very high regard for who that preacher was and the things he would say," Turner said. The pastor honored the family's request.

Scholars speculate there were aspects of the Lincolns' strict Separatist teachings that perhaps chafed on Abraham as he reached adulthood. Perhaps his dismay was best illustrated when he decided not to join his father's church in Indiana even though he helped construct the building.

According to Frank Masters' book, "A History of Baptists in Kentucky," many Separatist churches embraced Calvinist teachings so rigidly they eventually rejected missionary endeavors. Some scholars believe Thomas Lincoln's Indiana congregation subscribed to such teachings.

## A changing view of God

By 1830, at the age of 22, Lincoln "seems to have held unorthodox religious views when he openly expressed skepticism toward the religion of his parents," Rietveld wrote. Among his ideas was that God was without wrath or anger; 34 years later, it was obvious that opinion had changed radically.

In Lincoln's second inaugural address "he deals with the issue of slavery but he deals with it in the context of God's judgment," Rietveld pointed out, noting that the speech contains three quotations from the Bible and 10 allusions to Scripture. Other speeches followed a similar pattern.

Rietveld's interest in Lincoln began about 50 years ago. In 2006 he devoted six months to organizing decades of research with a specific goal in mind: writing an overview of the spiritual journey of the president.

"I'd never seen anyone pull those things together in one article," he said. The view that Lincoln was not a believer because he never joined a church is a shallow one, Rietveld added. "I call it 'churchianity.' ... I see a difference in the Lincoln who didn't join a church and the Lincoln who has a growing relationship with God."

The opinion of William Herndon had a great influence on the topic of Lincoln and religion, Rietveld noted. Only a year after the president's assassination Josiah Holland, an editor and devout Christian, wrote a best-selling biography of Lin-

coln that characterized him as "a true-hearted Christian."

Rietveld said the description offended Herndon, one of Lincoln's former law partners in Springfield, Ill., who said the president "held many of the Christian ideas in abhorrence." Herndon's writings characterized Lincoln as "an infidel" and a man "living on the borderland between theism and atheism."

## A faith matured by loss

Rietveld said Herndon's words are "not a fair estimation at all" of Lincoln's spiritual views. "Herndon never knew, in a personal daily way, Lincoln's life in the White House years," Rietveld noted. "The Lincoln of the war years is a man whose faith deepened through crisis, repeatedly."

When the president and his wife, Mary, arrived in Washington, they already had lost a son, Eddie, to illness; in 1862, another son, Willie, died. Biographer Ida Tarbell wrote that after Willie died, Lincoln's "personal relation to God occupied his mind much."

His faith also matured through the fires of war and the issue of slavery. Although finding slavery morally repugnant, Lincoln attempted to compromise on the issue rather than risk secession by the Southern states. His attitude was transformed by war and a renewed conviction about the evil trade, Rietveld said.

"Today if a politician were to change views that like, he'd be called wishy washy," Turner observed. "When you look at Lincoln, you have to look at his life as a whole. Religion and spirituality played a very strong part in his later life."

In his research, Rietveld found a dramatic statement by Phineas Gurley, pastor of New York Avenue Presbyterian Church in Washington, D.C., that seems to support this assertion. The Lincolns attended Gurley's church regularly during their Washington years.

The pastor maintained that after the Battle of Gettysburg, Lincoln said he intended to make "a public profession of his Christian faith." He died before he could make that profession but Rietveld said he has no doubt Lincoln was "a biblical Christian."

"I would have liked to see Lincoln make a more definitive statement about his faith," Talley remarked, "but maybe he made the most definitive statement he could simply by his actions."

Lincoln was in Kentucky less than a decade, but Talley said he believes the experiences of this "LaRue County boy," and the family in which he was raised, had a profound effect on the future president's life and faith. "By the time he left Kentucky, the foundation had been laid for what he was later in life."

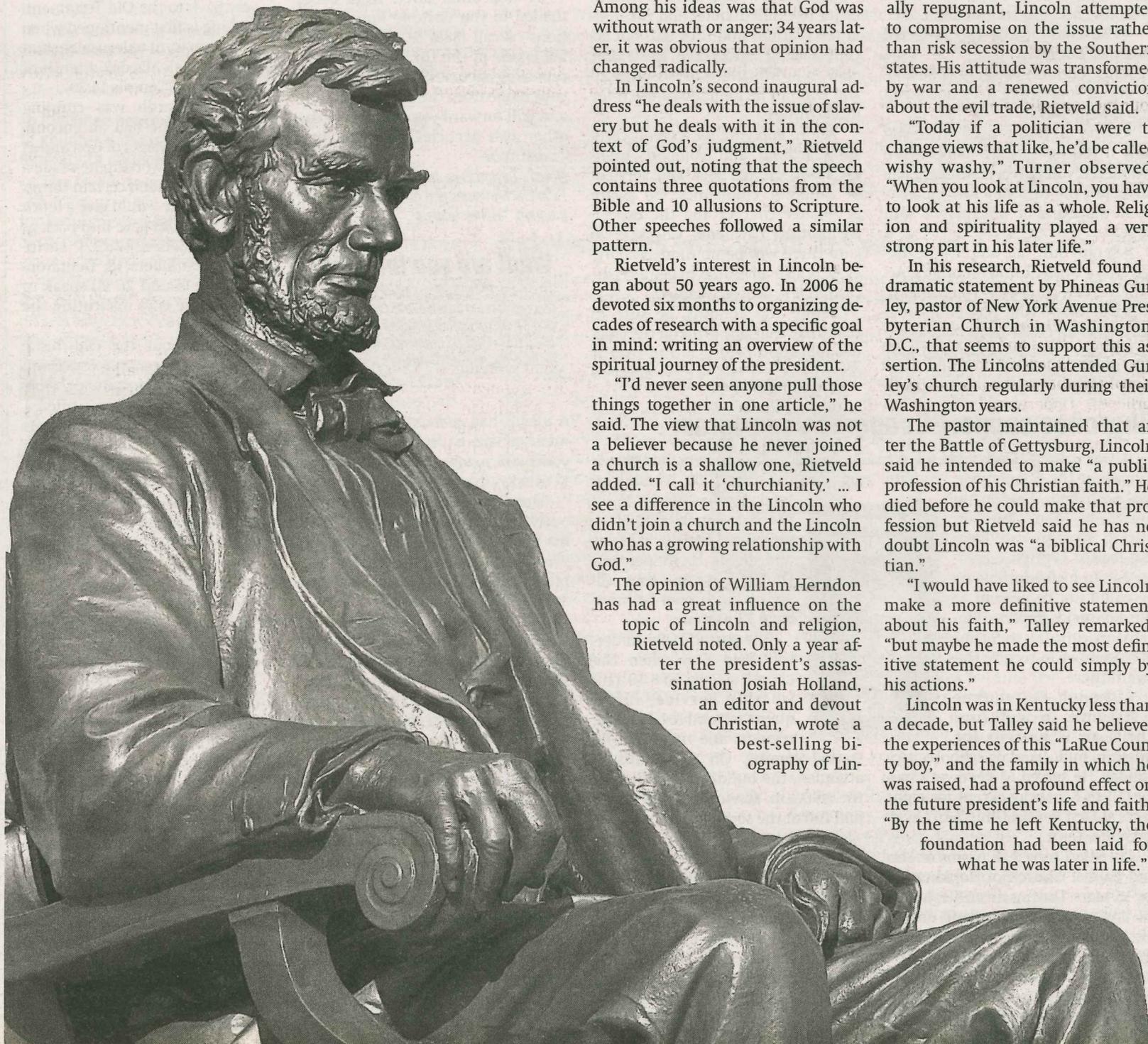
## Inaugural is just the beginning of bicentennial

During the next two years, an array of activities across the country will mark the 200th anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln. Kentucky is hosting the inaugural event, Feb. 12 at 10:30 a.m., at the Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site near Hodgenville. Invited guests include President Bush, U.S. Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne, Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear, author Doris Kearns Goodwin and actor Sam Waterston. The event is open to the public.

Prior to the inaugural is a gala Feb. 11 at the Kentucky Center for the Arts in Louisville. Among the presentations will be a performance by Waterston who has portrayed President Lincoln multiple times in his career.

On Feb. 9, at 7 p.m., First Baptist Church of Elizabethtown is hosting "Journey to Freedom: Performance of Negro Spirituals of the 19th Century" at Elizabethtown Christian Academy.

Special events extend beyond February across Kentucky. For a list of activities, visit [www.kylincoln.org](http://www.kylincoln.org) or call (502) 564-1792.



**LaRUE'S FAVORITE SON**  
The Centennial Statue of President Lincoln was placed in downtown Hodgenville in 1909. The president's son, Robert, attended the dedication ceremony. (Photo by Sandy Dorsett used with permission and with thanks to Lincoln Museum, Inc.)

## 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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## Should Christians use credit cards?

By Howard Dayton

Gainesville, Ga. (BP)—There is a legend—whether urban, suburban or rural—about credit cards. It's brief and goes like this: A person must have one.

The short-version response to the legend is this: Do not establish credit unless you have a specific purpose for it and you know how to use it wisely.

Lenders say that you should establish credit early, in case you need it. What they don't tell you is that the longer you can go without credit, the less you will depend on it later. The Bible tells us: "A sensible person sees danger and takes cover, but the inexperienced keep going and are punished" (Proverbs 22:3).

Is it wrong for Christians to use credit cards? No. Credit and credit cards do not cause financial problems. It is the misuse of credit and credit cards that create financial problems. Through discipline, any consumer can enjoy the convenience of credit cards without falling into the debt trap often associated with their use.

The following suggestions will help you control the use of credit cards:

- Ask your bank for an extra checkbook register to keep track of credit card purchases and payments—just as you would record checking account transactions.

- Use credit cards for budgeted purchases only.

- Just because you might be able to afford something does not mean you have to buy it.

- Carry a credit card with you only if you have a zero or near-zero balance. If you have a credit card balance, put the card in a safe inconspicuous place and do not carry it with you.

- Retain only one all-purpose, no-fee credit card. Cancel all others. Accept a credit limit that you can easily pay in full on your present income and reject all credit limit increases.

- If stores add a surcharge to your bill for paying with a credit card,

you can refuse to pay it. Most credit card companies do not allow vendors to add surcharges to credit card purchases.

Credit card interest represents a very large waste of money, so pay your bill off every month during the grace period so you don't pay interest charges. If your credit card company charges you a fee for not carrying a balance, cancel the card.

The first time that you have a credit card bill you cannot pay in full, charge no more and then pay the balance as soon as possible. Make the payments as early in the billing month as you can or else make two smaller payments a month if you can't pay early. Most banks calculate interest on the average daily balance, so the larger the payment and the sooner in the month you make it, the more it will apply to the principal.

To steer clear of financial problems, avoid the traps that cause those problems. If you can function without credit cards, it is to your advantage. If you really need a credit card, discipline your use and pay off the balance monthly.

If you must have a credit card, try using a debit card. A debit card works like a check and it debits your checking account the amount you charged. If you need a credit card in order to confirm hotel and car rental reservations and they will not accept a debit card, keep the credit card in a difficult-to-access place so you will not be tempted to use it for other things.

Before applying for a credit card, shop around and compare interest rates, annual fees and services of different companies. Be aware of finance charges and the expected monthly payments. Check to be sure there will be no hidden charges. It is also advisable to get a credit card that is widely accepted.

Before you commit, be sure to read all of that fine print on the credit application contract—and read it carefully. Creditors are required to

state the cost of borrowing in common language so that the customer can figure out exactly what the charges for borrowing will be.

The difficulty people encounter when they attempt to reestablish credit reinforces the importance of keeping your bills paid and up-to-date. Remember, it takes a long time to build up a good reputation but very little time to destroy it.

The fact is that credit cards do not ruin a person's financial reputation—the person ruins his or her own reputation through the misuse or abuse of credit cards. And that sort of abuse can damage more than your financial reputation.

God's Word offers us an important truth in Proverbs 22:1: "A good name is to be chosen over great wealth; favor is better than silver and gold."

Finally, if you are not interested in those unsolicited or pre-approved credit applications you receive in the mail, do not throw them in the trash. A thief may find them and take out an account in your name and begin charging. Destroy the applications, cut them up and dispose of the pieces in different waste receptacles. Or, mark through the application and mail it back to the sender in the postpaid envelope that came with the offer and note on the application that you want to be removed from their mailing list.

To stop other offers from being mailed to you write to Equifax Options or call (888) 5-OPT-OUT. Equifax is one of the three major credit reporting agencies. They will remove your name from the list they provide and will forward your request to the other two agencies, Experian and TransUnion.

Howard Dayton is co-founder of Crown Financial Ministries and host of Crown's radio program, "Money Matters"

## What are you thinking?

The Western Recorder considers letters on any subject for publication, provided they don't make a personal attack. Submit by mail, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253; or e-mail, wesrec@earthlink.net.

## Churches support Cooperative Program

It was a special privilege for me to present the Cooperative Program Distinguished Leadership Award to John Christian during worship at Trenton Baptist Church recently. Due to health problems he could not be present at the Kentucky Baptist Convention annual meeting in November to receive the award there.

Although he requires assistance in walking, Christian is present for worship and Sunday school every Sunday. He served 61 years as a pastor (all in Kentucky except for eight years at First Baptist Church of Goodlettsville, Tenn.).

Christian served as pastor of Second Baptist Church of Hopkinsville for 16 years. During this time, he led his congregation to become one of the strongest KBC churches in Cooperative Program support. After "retirement," he continued the tradition of strong CP support at Sinking Fork Baptist Church for 13 years.

Trenton Baptist Church, which

has about 230 members, has grown significantly since 2000. Worship attendance has grown by 62 percent, Sunday school attendance by 30 percent and giving by 61 percent. During the same time, CP giving has grown by more than 73 percent.

The pastor, Dean Anderson, said that when the church started an 8:30 a.m. worship service, infrequent attendees became regular and new people started coming. On the Sunday I attended, the building was filled at the 8:30 a.m. service and was about half full at the second service.

Ted Sharp, who is from a family of musicians, directed the music. He played the guitar to accompany new songs as well as traditional hymns. The choir and keyboard provided support and a young teen provided the special music.

The church has 65 enrolled in Woman's Missionary Union under director Georgie Smith and sponsors all missions organizations.

## PARTNERS IN THE MISSION



Bill Mackey

## CHURCH

## Giving your best to God is an integral aspect of worship

By Doug Strader

Worship has many different aspects such as adoration, confession, praise, and giving just to name a few. At different times in our life all the aspects of worship are more meaningful to us than at other times.

But giving may be the one aspect of worship that receives less attention in most of our churches. We do not neglect to take our tithes and offerings; rather we fail to highlight the importance of giving to God as much as we could.

When we give of our material possessions to God in our worship services, it should be one of the most meaningful aspects of our worship. We should be offering to God our best. The way we give and the attitude with which we give play very important roles in our worship.

Giving to God goes all the way back to the Old Testament. Tithing is first mentioned when Abraham went to Jerusalem and he gave Melchizedek a tenth of everything (Genesis 14:20).

When Jacob was running from Esau, he had an encounter with the Angel of God and as a part of his worship he made a vow to God that if certain things happened he would give a tenth of all the Lord gave him back as a tithe (Genesis 28:22). Leviticus 27, Numbers 18, Deuteronomy 12, 14 and 26 all speak of the Mosaic laws instituting the tithe.

Throughout the Old Testament the writers reminded the people of God that the tithe belonged to God. It constituted a tenth of their crops, vineyards and herds. In order to give an offering, one must give beyond the tithe.

In the New Testament, tithing is not taught as much as it is in the Old Testament, but Jesus commended the Jewish practice of tithing in Matthew 23:23. The Apostle Paul wrote many times about giving and supporting the work of the church with their material resources.

Today the work of the Lord through the church is still supported by the faithful tithes and offerings of His people. Each time we give our offering to God we are giving Him the best—the first fruits—of all that He has given us. What a joy and blessing that we can share in the work of our Lord each time we come to worship Him, by giving our tithes and offerings as a part of our worship.

Doug Strader, retired director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's stewardship department, is pastor of Farmdale Baptist Church in Louisville



## Marriage requires deeper level of communication & revelation

**Q: After four years of marriage, I don't feel I know my spouse any better than when we were dating. I am not sure what the problem is or what to do about it. Is this normal? I do know I am tired of the way things are.**

Spouses, partners and adult children will talk about the "hidden parts of marriage." Sometimes these hidden parts are e-mails, text messages or chat rooms and sometimes they are expectations or feelings. Routine communication centered on facts and data is too often the only form of communication sustained.

### MARRIAGE

A deeper level of communication that will reveal more of the self is sadly not maintained or developed. Hidden parts of marriage can lead to betrayal of trust, dissolution of the marriage, isolation, emptiness and lack of intimacy.

The Johari Window is a tool that could be helpful in addressing this. There are four windows that could be interpreted for the marriage relationship.

One window represents what is known to one's self but is unknown to the spouse. Another window represents what is known to the spouse but is unknown to self. There is a window that can represent what is known to both the self and spouse. Finally, there is a window representing what is unknown or hidden from both spouse and self.

An exercise of discovery would be for each of you to create a four-pane window and fill in each pane with what you believe is hidden and what is known. Share with each other and talk about these window panes in your relationship.

Scripture is revealed truth about who God is and who God is not. Part of our spiritual work is self-revelation. We are asked to reveal ourselves to God in prayer.

Marriage is a special relationship created by God also intended for self-revelation. These relationships need to be safe and loving places to reveal who we are. Christ's love revealed in Scripture is about intimacy. This is the work God has for us to do on earth in our relationships.—*Valerie Vincent*

**Q: I've been hearing about the concept of "The Show" in children's ministry. What impact does it have on ministry to children?**

The trend toward the increasing use of lengthy, staged live-actor or video performances in ministry to children has led some observers to refer to such an approach as "The Show." A recent article in Group's Children's Ministry magazine evaluated its effectiveness.

Studies have shown that relationships are a key to learning. "The Show" short-circuits relationships, relying instead on teaching that depends on hearing and seeing—methods that typically result in only about 20 percent retention.

### PARENTING

Along the same lines, some experts worry about the passive nature of "The Show." Without question, today's children demand the use of media and visually-oriented teaching techniques. However, children's minister Larry Challenger said Generation Media prefers interactive learning to passive learning. They want high tech, but they also want high touch. Visual presentations, no matter how well done, cannot consistently provide the same impact and influence as a teacher with whom the child can talk and have a personal relationship.

Finally, concern exists that "The Show" gives children the wrong idea about the nature of church. They end up thinking that they come to church to be entertained. Participation takes a back seat to observation, and children grow up thinking of church as a place to receive instead of give and serve.

Challenger concluded, "We shouldn't hesitate to use drama or video elements, but we need to be aware that too much passive learning changes the gospel message."—*David Garrard*

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## Is Baptist unity really such a bad thing?

The much-hyped New Baptist Covenant gathering in Atlanta has come and gone. What is the result of thousands of Anglo, African-American, Asian-American and Hispanic Baptists coming together for three days of worship, challenge and fellowship? That depends on who you ask.

A headline in Associated Baptist Press, an independent Baptist news service with moderate Baptist ties, emphasized that "Baptist unity takes center stage" at the event. By contrast, a headline in Baptist Press, the official news service of the Southern Baptist Convention, claimed that Covenant speakers "go negative" on a variety of topics. A third perspective, published by Religion News Service, a secular news service that majors on coverage of religion, declared, "Baptists test limits of big-tent diversity."

So there you have it: three professional news services, three different slants on coverage of the New Baptist Covenant.

The same is true for most participants, observers and critics. Their view of the historic three-day Baptist gathering is based to a large extent on their view of the event before it ever convened.

For me, I wrote a year ago when the convocation was announced that it sounded like "a good basic concept and content, but the packaging isn't quite right." That assessment was due to the fact that the proposed program announced by former Presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton appeared rather one-sided with high-profile Democratic keynote speakers including Carter, Clinton and former Vice President Al Gore. While later efforts were made to reach out to well-known Baptist Republican leaders, the biggest Republican name on the program ended up being Sen. Chuck Grassley of Iowa—not quite a balance to two former Democratic presidents and a former VP.

Additionally, Southern Baptist Convention leaders—who previously had led the SBC to pull out of the Baptist World Alliance and its related North American Baptist Fellowship—were not initially offered a

seat at the table in helping plan the New Baptist Covenant. While Carter eventually did seek to reach out to SBC President Frank Page, it proved to be too little too late to smooth ruffled Southern Baptist feathers.

### STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Tennis Henderson

Despite those concerns, Carter said he has developed "a wonderful relationship" with the current SBC president and that he will be "reaching out personally to Frank Page ... after this assembly to give him a report."

"As we assess the kind of projects that we will undertake, it would be my hope and prayer that we could cooperate with the Southern Baptist Convention," Carter added. "We would like very much for them to join in with us" in future initiatives.

For his part, Page said Carter "expressed his deep desire that this meeting be non-political and Christ-honoring."

"I always affirm bodies of believers who gather for that reason," he added. And although he said he remains skeptical about some participants' motives, Page emphasized, "My promise of prayer support continues to be that this meeting will exalt the name of Christ, will point human beings toward the need for a personal relationship with Christ who alone can bring salvation."

In the big picture, Covenant organizers said their goals include pursuing Baptist harmony across racial, theological and geographic lines. The initial Covenant proposal adopted in 2006 challenged Baptists to work together "to promote peace with justice, to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, shelter the homeless, care for the sick and marginalized, welcome the strangers among us, and promote religious liberty and respect for religious diversity."

While neither supporters nor critics would agree with every opinion voiced by every speaker, the bottom line is that seeking unity among diverse Baptist groups is a good and honorable pursuit. Despite our differences on many issues, the words of Psalm 133:1 remain true, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity!"

## Relationships with youth are vital

Relationships—that seems to be the theme of this time of year. Be it information on True Love Waits events, how to do or find entertainment for a Valentine banquet in the church, or pre-planning for the prom that is coming up. (What do high school juniors need with a Hummer limo anyway?)

There just seems to be that recurring theme that revolves around relationships. But that is OK, because it is relationship that just may be the most important element in youth ministry.

It used to be that if you were doing good youth ministry, you had one adult for every five or six students. Now, according to Chap Clark in his book "Hurt," "Instead of having one adult for every five children, we need five adults for every one child that knows their name, prays for them and practices their faith" in front of them.

"Aside from their parents" who should already be doing this, "there should be five non-parental adults in their lives. Coaches, teachers and a boss" will fill one or two of these roles, but that still leaves three or four others that we as adults in church can fill.

For my wife and I, it was either dumb luck or divine intervention. We challenged some adults at Edge-

wood Baptist Church in Hopkinsville to do this for our children. Our rationale was this, "Your children have the benefits of both a youth minister and parents." For us, I filled both the role of a dad and youth minister and Gina was mom and a youth chaperone and our kids did not have the built-in luxury of both.

I will attempt to not mention names here but several people in Hopkinsville filled this need in their lives. We haven't lived there for almost three years and yet when we go back, our children find you. Maybe not every time but they find you on a regular basis because you have made an impact on their lives.

I do that myself. It has been almost 30 years since I left the youth ministry at Little Flock Baptist Church in northern Bullitt County. But I will occasionally see former youth workers and I will remember the impact they had on my life.

It is said that students today "pick the adults they want to interact with, and if it is not you, then you sound to them like Charlie Brown's teacher." So which students do you know who have "picked you" to interact with? Those students are your assignment from God. We need to be better stewards of building those relationships.

### YOUTH MINISTRY CORNER



Joe Ball

There may be times when we need to broker those relationships. There are adults in your church who know cars inside and out and teenagers in your church who are car crazy or teens in your church who love to play ball, garden, dance, play music, shop, act or take pictures. There are adults who have the same interests and some skills in those areas.

We need to start pairing them up, let them share life skills, biblical truths and life with each other. These relationships will last well beyond the students' six or seven years in the youth program and when our students return from college, they will look those adults up.

Those relationships can help with the transition students have to make out of the youth ministry into "big church." While the youth minister is still hanging out with the youth, or moved on to another church, these adults are still there, speaking into their lives. Those are the types of relationships we need to develop.

Don't get me wrong, programs like True Love Waits and Valentine programs are important. They help our students set biblical standards for moral purity. But they work best alongside healthy relationships with adults in our congregations—adults who love them, know their names, pray for them regularly and model before them what living this Christian life looks like.

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

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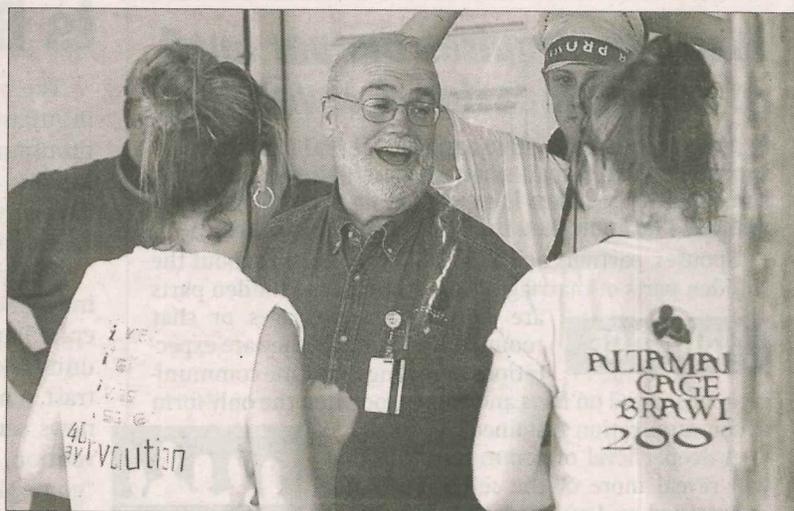
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I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. — Philippians 4:13



**WORLD CHANGER** Based in Bartlett, Tenn., Jon Hodge, national mobilization missionary for the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, manages NAMB's World Changers summer projects in middle Tennessee, Mississippi, Arkansas, southern Illinois and Alaska. (NAMB photo by William Starling)

## Hodge leads World Changers projects in five U.S. states

Continued from page 1

Changes activities in a given city. They, in turn, work for World Changers' experienced project coordinators, construction and ministry coordinators.

"The college students must be strong people to serve on these teams," Hodge noted. "We need leaders who'll take a group and lead it. ... Mainly, we need kids who are willing to go, serve and work hard because it's long hours. You may go from 5 o'clock one morning to 1 o'clock the next morning. You have to be flexible, have a great personality and be willing to do whatever the Lord wants you to do that week."

Regardless of the project venue, Hodge said the first questions the World Changers always get from local residents are "Why are you here?" or "Why are you doing this?"

"And we're able to share with them that we're doing this because we love Jesus, and Jesus called us to go, serve and help people," Hodge declared.

He recalled the story of a man in Gulfport, Miss., who was a victim of Hurricane Katrina. About 350 World Changers were on the scene in the city to help local residents rebuild.

The man, in his 50s, was suspicious of anyone claiming to want to help him for free. He had already run off others from another denomination who had volunteered to re-roof his wind-damaged home.

"Then he met 12 teenagers and adults who had come from different Baptist churches in different places to help hurricane victims," Hodge recalled. "He said he could see in them a love that he had never seen before. He said he had to have what this group had. He accepted Christ because of the witness of the World Changers."

Prior to his appointment as a NAMB national missionary, Hodge worked as a coach, truck driver and a Krispy Kreme Doughnut route salesman. Before his call to full-time missions work, he also served as a youth and recreation minister for 11 years in Tennessee and Illinois churches.

"My call to missions came after I took a youth group to a World Changers project in Alabama," Hodge noted. "The more I became involved on the leadership side of World Changers as a project coordi-

nator and speaker, the stronger the call I felt to be involved in missions.

"I had taken the group to Alabama to rehab the homes of several low-income homeowners. I thought I was going to change their world by repairing their homes and sharing the love of Christ with them. But not only were their lives changed, my life was changed," he added.

"There are times when it's tough during the summer—long hours and a lot of different things going on, and a lot of fires to put out. But it's all worth it when you see these high school and college students, and hear the stories of how their lives were impacted and changed."

Because Hodge now has been working with World Changers for nine years, he said he has seen high school and college students grow up, finish their educations, marry and have their own children.

"I've seen many college students come in, thinking they're going to be something else in life, but God gets a hold of them that summer and they realize they want to be in the ministry or go into missions," Hodge noted. "It's exciting at the end of the summer when we compile everything and see 1,000 or more students who say 'I want missions to be part of my life.'"

Hodge also thanked "those people who give Annie Armstrong Easter Offerings sacrificially."

"Because of them, I don't have to come back from the field worried about whether I have food on the table back at home or whether my family is being taken care of," he acknowledged.

"Southern Baptists need to be involved in World Changers because it's an opportunity for us to be out there and to touch people's lives. I've seen this program open up doors that through other avenues, we couldn't open up."

### Kentucky projects

World Changers has coordinated four projects in Kentucky this summer: Owensboro, June 7-14; Pikeville, June 14-21; Madisonville, June 21-28; and Henderson July 5-12. The Pikeville project is for senior high school participants only. The other projects are open to all students. For more information, visit [www.worldchangers.net](http://www.worldchangers.net).



## Louisville church, East. Ky. ministry damaged by storms

Louisville—A Kentucky Baptist Convention church and an Eastern Kentucky ministry center suffered major damage during a line of storms that passed through the state Jan. 29.

Hill Street Missionary Baptist Church in Louisville and Hazel Green Ministries in Wolfe County were hit hard by the unusual outbreak of winter storms. The National Weather Service confirmed that as many as three tornadoes touched down in the Louisville area.

Although unconfirmed if a tornado was the cause, Hill Street Baptist sustained "massive damage" throughout the entire building during the storm, according to Pastor Gregory Smith.

High winds peeled off areas of the church's roof, including a large section above the main entryway and library. In addition, many of the church's windows were shattered, trees around the building

uprooted, and interior doors damaged.

The pastor estimated that repairs to the church will cost more than \$1 million and not be completed for at least six months. Smith noted that a nearby Seventh-Day Adventist Church has offered its sanctuary for Hill Street's Sunday morning services.

Meanwhile, the same line of storms that tore through Louisville did major damage to Hazel Green Ministries in Wolfe County, destroying a campus dormitory used to house short-term mission teams.

Ministry director Lewis Faulkenberry, said that 70 mile-per-hour winds caused the roof of the building—which was built in 1901—to collapse.

Hazel Green Ministries, which has been an outreach of Red River Baptist Association since 2003, hosts the majority of its visitors in the summer, Faulkenberry noted, and that no one was in the building during the storm.

He also explained that because of the extent of the damage, he has not been able to get an estimate on repairs.

Faulkenberry noted that he and others are expected to decide this week whether the beds in the dorm can be moved to another location to house the groups who are scheduled to come in this summer. If not, he said he may have to turn the teams away.

"It's going to have a pretty devastating effect on our ministry," Faulkenberry added.

**AFTERMATH** An interior view of the main entryway of Hill Street Missionary Baptist Church in Louisville shows the destruction caused by the Jan. 29 storms that ripped across Kentucky. (Photo by Drew Nichter)



## What do young people really need?

**Care, concern, discipline, forgiveness & love are hallmarks of care at Oneida**

By Michael Spencer, assistant to the president

America has more "helping" institutions for young people than any other civilization in the history of the world. An amazing amount of money, education, political focus and opportunities are given toward turning out "good" young people.

There is much cultural confusion and frustration associated with the fact that millions of America's children and teenagers experience serious problems. Teen pregnancy, educational dysfunction, violence, pornography, substance abuse and various psychiatric problems are just some of the struggles our young people face. Politicians and community leaders ask for more resources to spend on the overall quality of life of America's youth. But what do young people need to be "happy" and "healthy" in the best sense?

These serious problems do not just happen to young people in disadvantaged communities, but in every community from small towns to the most exclusive suburbs. They happen where money is spent, experts are available, opportunities abound, and families go the extra mile for their kids.

Often OBI is a last resort for parents who have tried everything. We see parents who care about their children weeping from broken hearts, asking us to help their child whose path has become a mystery. If we did not believe we could help such families, we would not be here, and we would not ask for your support.

We cannot help every child, but we can help

many. We do not have psychiatrists, therapies or expensive facilities, and we never will. Our "program" is about being the people of God, loving one another, paying attention to what it means to be made in God's image and applying grace.

We believe we can help many teenagers because we offer them the most important things in the life of a young person: a relationship with God; the opportunity to grow into an adult; an environment of basics and boundaries; and finally, grace, forgiveness and mercy. When a student joins our community, we are confident he or she will find friendship and mentoring. We cannot force them to change but we can pray, preach, teach and live the gospel. We provide an environment with stability, boundaries and consequences. We show mercy and grace, and also provide discipline.

Every member of the OBI family plays a part in helping change lives. Kentucky Baptist churches are part of the lifeline of prayer and resources that have helped thousands of students create a future for themselves that does not reflect the mistakes and disadvantages they have brought to us. In asking for your support, we ask you to extend the influence of Christ into those places where there is despair. We ask for your partnership in being the presence of Christ for people who believe there is no hope. We need your prayers, volunteer efforts and financial support.

Oneida may be far from the world's "main streets," but our mission puts us directly in the path of hopelessness, serving others in Jesus' name and pointing to Him in all we do.

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

## Serving with passion

**First-year student excited about God's call on his life**

The one word that appropriately describes first-year student Ed Goodman is passionate. You can sense the excitement as you talk to him about the Lord's call on his life.

"I was saved when I was 13," Ed noted. "My grandfather is a Clear Creek alumnus and I used to go and listen to him preach a lot when I was younger. I was saved during a revival he preached in Lexington. I ran from the Lord, though, for many years, and finally rededicated my life to the Lord when I was 23."

From that point on, he said, "The Lord really spoke to me in a strong way, really got a hold on me, not only to preach, but He gave me a passion for the Word of God. Ever since then, I cannot read the Bible enough; I cannot proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ enough. I really love the Lord and want everyone to know about His saving grace.

"After the Lord called me to preach, I was a youth minister for a year and a half," Ed continued, "but I knew there was something more that the Lord wanted me to do. As a youth minister, I would talk to the young people about moving forward with their call because

everyone has a call; I knew mine was to preach.

"My grandparents kept telling me about Clear Creek because it was a really great experience in their lives," he said. "They knew I was dealing with a call but I didn't know how to further my education or where the Lord was leading me.

"I went to the Clear Creek Web site and I remember just sitting in front of the computer screen and praying to the Lord to speak to my heart and show me if Clear Creek is where I need to be. As I continued to pray over a period of time and research information about the college, I felt the Lord's direction to Clear Creek. I know this is where I am supposed to be," Ed recalled, "I am right in the center of God's will.

"Clear Creek is one of the greatest places I have been in my life. You can just feel the Lord's presence so strongly here. The people are great. I wouldn't want to be anywhere else in the world right now than Clear Creek Baptist Bible College."

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.cbcc.edu](http://www.cbcc.edu); e-mail: [dfox@cbcc.edu](mailto:dfox@cbcc.edu)

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## Fla. church spurns efforts to bring gambling to community

Lloyd, Fla. (BP)—A Southern Baptist pastor and Sunday School teacher are credited with launching a grassroots effort to turn back plans for a horse racing track that ultimately would have brought the gambling industry to their rural Florida community.

Pastor George Smith from First Baptist Church of Lloyd, Fla., and David Hall, a member of the church, fought against what Smith called "some great odds" and powerful pro-gambling lawyers.

Following a public hearing last month, commissioners in Florida's Jefferson County voted 4-1 to deny a permit for the development of a

quarter horse racetrack on a plot of land along Interstate 10. The \$16.5 million project would have included the track and a 25,000-square-foot building for a card room, lounge, restaurant and bowling alley.

Hall said he felt like the racetrack "was a done deal," while Smith noted the outcome was "way beyond what we even dreamed of." They credited the community's voice and "a lot of prayer" for the victory.

In opposition to the proposed project, Hall had presented a slide show to fellow church members less than two weeks before the county commissioners' meeting, alerting them to the environmental con-

cerns and infrastructure problems associated with the proposed plan.

Hall also spoke at the local Baptist associational meeting to educate pastors about the proposal and galvanize support for seeing the permit denied.

His efforts prompted as many as 300 residents to attend the public hearing. Nearly 50 people were afforded time to speak out both for and against the proposed facility.

Proponents of the track, including gaming law attorney David Romanik, told the commission that they wanted to build the quarter horse complex simply to get back "to the roots of racing."

He also noted that the proposal would create about 60 new jobs for the community, increase business near the track and add to local entertainment options.

John Wesley, pastor of a local church, told the committee he was not against horses but was also not in favor of building "another saloon, card room or watering hole in our community."

Speaking about the new jobs promised for the kids of the community, Wesley declared, "I guess we need the school board to put into our curriculum bartending and card dealing so our kids will have a future in our county."

Florida Baptist Convention's legislative consultant, Bill Bunkley, said he believes the story of Jefferson County is a good example of what happens when citizens become informed and engage in the governmental process to maintain community standards.

"These outside gambling interests totally underestimated Pastor Smith and Layman Hall and because of their leadership and doing the right thing, the commission in this community made a courageous and right decision," Bunkley added.

He explained that a community has a right to set its own standards and even though the county already has a dog track, the population at large may feel one pari-mutuel facility is enough.

"I wish other communities would be able to readily see, as this community has, the disadvantages and untrue assertions that are made time and again by pro-gambling advocates," Bunkley noted.

### FEATURED SPEAKERS

#### T. W. Hunt

Teacher; Writer;  
Seminar Leader



#### Frank Page

Pastor;  
Southern Baptist  
Convention  
President



#### Don Whitney

Author; Former  
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- 2 March 13 — Flemingsburg Baptist Church, Flemingsburg
- 3 April 1 — Walnut Memorial Baptist Church, Owensboro
- 4 April 10 — Immanuel Baptist Church, Pikeville
- 5 April 17 — Central Baptist Church, Corbin
- 6 April 22 — Mount Washington Baptist Church, Mt. Washington
- 7 May 1 — Crossroads Church, Russellville
- 8 May 13 — Danville First Baptist Church, Danville

All events are 6:30 pm — 9:00 pm



FREE BOOK  
for each church  
represented:  
*Beyond the First Visit*  
by Gary L McIntosh

## NATIONAL NOTES

**Miami voters approve slot machines.** Voters in Miami-Dade County approved the installation of Las Vegas-style slot machines Jan. 29. Under the measure, three facilities—Flagler Dog Track, Calder Race Course and Miami Jai-Alai—each can install up to 2,000 slot machines. With the Seminole Tribe also offering gambling in the region, the Miami Herald described the vote as "perhaps pushing South Florida closer to a future as a gambling destination." According to the leader of an opposing group, foes of slot machines were "outnumbered 10 to one" from a financial standpoint.

**ABC draws FCC indecency fine.** The Federal Communications Commission leveled a \$1.43 million indecency fine against 52 ABC affiliates Jan. 25 for airing nudity during an episode of "NYPD Blue" in 2003. It marked the second-largest indecency fine ever imposed for a television broadcaster. Though ABC has said it will appeal the ruling, The Wall Street Journal noted that the fine is "notable for its size and because it could signal the beginning of a new round of indecency fines that may soon emanate from the agency." "Our action ... should serve as a reminder to all broadcasters that Congress and American families continue to be concerned about protecting children from harmful material and that the FCC will enforce the laws of the land vigilantly," FCC commissioner Deborah Taylor Tate said.

**Romney disputes comment about beliefs.** Mitt Romney's presidential campaign is disputing a statement by Focus on the Family's political arm that Romney said his Mormon beliefs are not Christian. Tom Minnery, senior vice president of Focus on the Family Action, stated Jan. 19 that "Mitt Romney has acknowledged that Mormonism is not a Christian faith and I appreciate his acknowledging that." The Romney campaign has denied that the candidate made such a statement about the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. "The governor has not made that acknowledgment," said Alex Burgos, a Romney spokesman. "He has said that his belief is not the same as others. But there is no doubt that Jesus is at the center of the LDS church's worship."

## HOW TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

By Scott Pittman

This story is true; only the names have been changed:

Sandra was curious about the group going up the other side of the street carrying Bibles and other literature. Most likely they would be coming by her house soon and part of her really wanted to hear what they had to say. Life had become unbearable since Eddie's drinking had escalated. She heard voices coming toward her house and her heart quickened.

The group was representing the Baptist church and they were in the area to "share God's love." Though not fully understanding what that meant, she invited them in, sensing she needed to find out. Thirty-five minutes later tears of joy streamed down her face as she asked Jesus to come into her heart. Eddie would be home that evening. Could they, perhaps, come back and talk to him?

Eddie politely listened to the same witness that evening. He wasn't ready, but said he would host a Bible study in their home. Every week Eddie listened. He understood the message and understood what he needed to do. Yet, he said, he was waiting.

Finally, after 55 weeks Eddie stopped waiting, and asked Jesus to come into his heart.

Some are ready while others are waiting. Both need the love of God.

**Man's sin.** All of us have sin in our lives (Romans 5:12).

**God's love.** Despite our sin, God's love provided a way to be forgiven through Christ's death (Romans 5:8).

**Eternal hope.** When you accept God's provision in faith, you are blameless in God's eyes resulting in eternal peace with God (Romans 5:1).

*Scott Pittman is director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's partnership missions department*

## MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **BARDSTOWN**—Mill Creek Church ordained **Gary Chesser** to the gospel ministry Jan. 27.

■ **FRANKFORT**—The Point Community Church recently called **Shane McGrath** as associate pastor. He previously was associate director of Cedar more Camp and Conference Center. **Rick Long** is lead pastor.

■ **FRANKLIN**—First Church recently called **Jerry Gifford** as pastor.

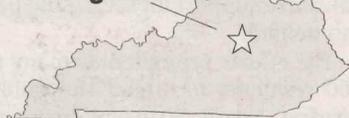
■ **RAVENNA**—Faith Church recently called **Chris Winkler** as pastor.

Williams Memorial Church recently called **Paul Hubbs** as pastor.

■ **SALYERSVILLE**—Licking River Church recently called **Dustin Simms** as pastor.

## Spotlight on ...

### Lexington



The University of Kentucky Baptist Campus Ministry will host its second annual Mystery Dinner Theatre Feb. 15-16, 6:30 p.m., and a dessert show Feb. 17, 2:30 p.m., with proceeds helping fund summer missions. For ticket information, call (859) 257-3989.

## Former KBC president releases book

**Louisville**—Former Kentucky Baptist Convention President Jim McKinley has released a new book in an effort to inform others how to interact with Muslims.

"Living with Muslims: An American Family of Seven—34 Years with Muslims in Their Land" contains McKinley's personal reflections and experiences from his days in Bangladesh, where he served as a missionary for 34 years, alongside his wife and five children, through the Southern Baptist International Mis-

sion Board.

McKinley served as KBC president in 2000-2001.

Proceeds from book sales will benefit The Jim McKinley Foundation, which will designate a portion of the funds to the Betty McKinley Scholarship Fund for children of international missionaries seeking to attend Campbellsville University, McKinley's alma mater.

The book is available for purchase for \$25 from McKinley by calling (502) 423-9116.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### February

- 16 Special-Needs Meeting, Baptist Building, Louisville.
- 18 Regional Church Financial Benefits Conference, First Baptist Church, Calvert City.
- 19 Regional Church Financial Benefits Conference, Warren Association Office, Bowling Green.
- 20 Regional Church Financial Benefits Conference, Anchor Baptist Church, Lexington.
- 21 Regional Church Financial Benefits Conference, Erlanger Baptist Church.
- 23 Hispanic Evangelism Conference and Hispanic Baptist Women's Event, Elizabethtown.
- 23 Love 101 Conference, Living Hope Baptist Church, Bowling Green.
- 25-26 Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference, Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.
- 28-March 1 Handbell Festival, Paroquet Springs Conference Center, Shepherdsville.
- 29-March 1 Creative Ministries Festival, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.
- 29-March 1 Mission Service Corps Basic Training, Baptist Building, Louisville.

### March

- 1 All-State Youth Choir/Orchestra Auditions, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.
- 1 RA Congress Region 5, Mays Lick Baptist Church.
- 1 State Vacation Bible School Clinic—East, Porter Memorial Baptist Church, Lexington
- 4 Assimilation Tour, Rosebower Baptist Church, Paducah.
- 5-19 College Blitz, Laurel Lake Baptist Camp, Corbin.
- 7-8 Creative Ministries Festival, First Baptist Church, Bowling Green.
- 7 Mission Service Corps Basic Training, Baptist Building, Louisville.
- 8 All-State Youth Choir/Orchestra Auditions, First Baptist Church, Bowling Green.
- 8 RA Congress Region 1, Bellview Baptist Church, Paducah.
- 8 RA Congress Region 3, First Baptist Church, Mount Washington.
- 8 Regional Keyboard Festival, Beacon Hill Baptist Church, Somerset; First Baptist Church, Murray; First Baptist Church, Shelbyville.
- 8 State Vacation Bible School Clinic—West, Second Baptist Church, Madisonville.

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

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**FOR SALE:** 60x30 office desk and chair. \$50. Call (502) 253-9817.

**NEEDED:** Volunteers: Glorieta Conference Center. March-November in the mountains (7,500 feet) 18 miles east of Santa Fe, N.M. Serve in maintenance, conference support, grounds and food service. Long-term commitments preferred with a minimum commitment of one month. Each volunteer works at least 30 hours a week for which Glorieta will provide: a full-hook-up RV site, an apartment or hotel room, and meals (when available). For information/application: contact the coordinator of volunteers at (505) 757-4298; mail request to PO Box 8, Glorieta, NM 87535; or download information/application from our website: [www.glorieta.com](http://www.glorieta.com).

**SEEKING:** Interim worship leader. College choral training desired with experience. Please contact Burlington Baptist Church, 3031 Washington St., PO Box 48, Burlington, KY 41005. (859) 586-6529.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor, Frenchburg Southern Baptist Church, Frenchburg, Ky. Please send resumé with a DVD, CD or tape of recent sermons to: Pastor Search Committee, Frenchburg Baptist Church, 298 Hwy. 36, Frenchburg, KY 40322-8118.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of music. Primary duties include leading choir and congregational singing, coordinating music program and preparing seasonal cantatas. We desire someone with a true passion to lead worship. Please send resumé, references and DVD (if available) to: Music Committee, Springfield Baptist Church, PO Box 286, Springfield, KY 40069; or e-mail to [springfieldbc@bellsouth.net](mailto:springfieldbc@bellsouth.net) with "Minister of Music" as subject.

**SEEKING:** Full-time worship pastor gifted in leading contemporary praise/worship style services in seeker-sensitive environment. Significant experience/education expected. Send resumé to Bellevue Baptist Church, 519 W Byers Ave., Owensboro, KY 42303; fax: (270) 685-5134; e-mail to [gfaulls@bellnet.org](mailto:gfaulls@bellnet.org).

**SEEKING:** Minister of worship, Green Castle Baptist Church, 4970 Murphy Lane, Louisville, KY 40241. Seeking candidates with mature personal relationship with God, and the ability to conceive, design, prepare, direct and lead high-impact, integrated worship services based on selected themes, drawing from a broad range of worship styles and arts, assisting the pastor in planning worship services—responsible for selection and presentation of music, and the supervision of the music department and worship service staff. This position reports to the pastor. For job description and instruction, contact Angela Overton at (502)243-4040 or [gcbc@iglou.com](mailto:gcbc@iglou.com).

**SEEKING:** Full-time youth minister. Seeking an enthusiastic individual with a heart for youth ministry to: Lead meaningful Bible study; teach relevant topics during youth meetings; plan and supervise age-appropriate activities and events; promote growth of our youth ministry within our church and community; assist in pastoral duties in absence of pastor (i.e., vacations, conferences, etc.). Requirements: college degree and/or previous experience in youth ministry preferred. Compensation: negotiable. First Baptist Church, 116 Eastview Drive, Central City, KY 42330. (270) 754-2420. Contact person: Dr. James (Jimmy) Brewer, [brewerdm@bellsouth.net](mailto:brewerdm@bellsouth.net).

**SEEKING:** Part-time youth minister for Panther Creek Baptist Church in Owensboro, Ky. Please e-mail resumé to [pcbc@bellsouth.net](mailto:pcbc@bellsouth.net) by March 1, 2008.

**SEEKING:** Senior pastor for First Baptist Church, Morganfield, Ky., seeking community-minded individual for a church that has an existing community outreach presence. Morganfield First Baptist Church is located in a small, western Kentucky town and has an average attendance of 200-250. We have two Sunday morning services—one contemporary and one blended. This is an awesome church that has a strong potential for growth. Send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 200 North Morgan St., Morganfield, KY 42437.

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister of education for First Baptist Church, Blytheville, Ark. Responsibilities include education, evangelism and administration. Previous experience required; seminary degree preferred but not required. We are a traditional Southern Baptist church located just north of Memphis, Tenn. Please send resumé to Pastor Greg Bowers, First Baptist Church, 715 West Walnut St., Blytheville, AR 72315. Additional information can be found at [www.fcblytheville.com](http://www.fcblytheville.com).

**SEEKING:** Pastor for Tunnel Hill Baptist Church. We are a traditional congregation, standing on the Word of God. Candidate should be a conservative leader with strong, scripturally-based preaching and teaching. Visitation and outreach also are important parts of the ministry of our church. Please send resumé to Pastor Search Committee, 734 Tunnel Hill Baptist Church, Elizabethtown, KY 42701.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for Grapevine Southern Missionary Baptist Church, Madisonville, Ky. Average Sunday morning attendance: 350. 10-15 years experience. Send resumé to GBC Pastor Search Committee, 85 Sandcut Road, Madisonville, KY 42431.

**SEEKING:** Passionate, visionary children's and worship leader to guide comprehensive programs in established, mission-minded church. Requires energetic and creative individual who seeks endless possibilities and a complete surrendering to the Holy Spirit. E-mail resumé to [office@pgbcchurch.com](mailto:office@pgbcchurch.com) or [opsnurse@yahoo.com](mailto:opsnurse@yahoo.com).

**SEEKING:** Pastor for Burlington Baptist Church, located near Cincinnati in Boone County, one of Kentucky's fastest growing areas. Contemporary and traditional worship services. Preferred is at least 5 years senior-pastor experience and a seminary degree. Send resumé to Pastor Search Committee, Burlington Baptist Church, PO Box 48, Burlington, KY 41005; or [lkmc9@insightbb.com](mailto:lkmc9@insightbb.com) by Jan. 31, 2008.

**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 essential 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.

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

# Caring for the elderly

*Seminary professor encourages churches to meet needs of aging church members*

By Norm Miller  
Texas Baptist Crossroads

Fort Worth, Texas (BP)—Seminary professor Terri Stovall wants churches to “understand the current trends of the aging population that will balloon over the next 50 years, to examine what Scripture says to seniors, families and the church, and to offer practical ways to meet the needs associated with the elderly.”

Stovall, who serves as dean of women’s programs and associate professor of women’s ministries at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, asked, “How does our theology and ecclesiology come together to truly care for the aged and care for those who are the caregivers?”

Stovall, who addressed the topic during a family conference at the seminary last fall, is concerned that many churches could be “blindsided by the intense needs and issues” of an aging population.

Such issues include helping church members care for aging parents; ministering to the increasing number of homebound members; and providing ministry opportunities for seniors.

“There are times when the church must ... care for the aging,” noted Stovall, citing the Bible’s instruction to believers to care for widows (1 Timothy 5:3-16) and help the hungry, the thirsty, the naked and visit the sick and imprisoned (Matthew 25:31-46). Many seniors and their caregivers may fall into these categories, needing ministry by the church to meet their spiritual, physical and emotional needs, she added.

“Regardless of a person’s age,” Stovall said, “the church must provide opportunities for seniors to stay involved. Being a part of the body of Christ gives one a sense of connectedness and roots, as persons desire to belong to and be a part of something larger than self.”

According to the professor, most aging adults gain wisdom and should have opportunities to declare God’s works to the coming generations (Psalm 71:17-18; Joel 1:2-3) and pass life skills on to younger adults and teenagers (Titus 2). Therefore churches can “help senior adults not

retire from something, but to something,” she noted.

She also shared a variety of ways churches can help senior citizens remain involved in ministry. They include:

- Holding a “Senior Adult Sunday” featuring elderly church members in leading roles.

- Showing seniors’ video-taped testimonies during worship services.

- Helping elderly members mentor the younger generation.

- Getting senior citizens involved in doing missions.

- Involving seniors in prayer, which is a vital ministry that many older individuals can undertake with minimal physical effort, Stovall noted.

- Inviting retirees to serve and minister as assistants in church offices.

Stovall added that churches must not overlook caregivers, but minister to them as well by:

- Helping them learn new communication skills, especially those who care for aging adults who may suffer from dementia. Caregivers also may need counseling to deal with the twofold grief of those with the condition who are approaching their death.

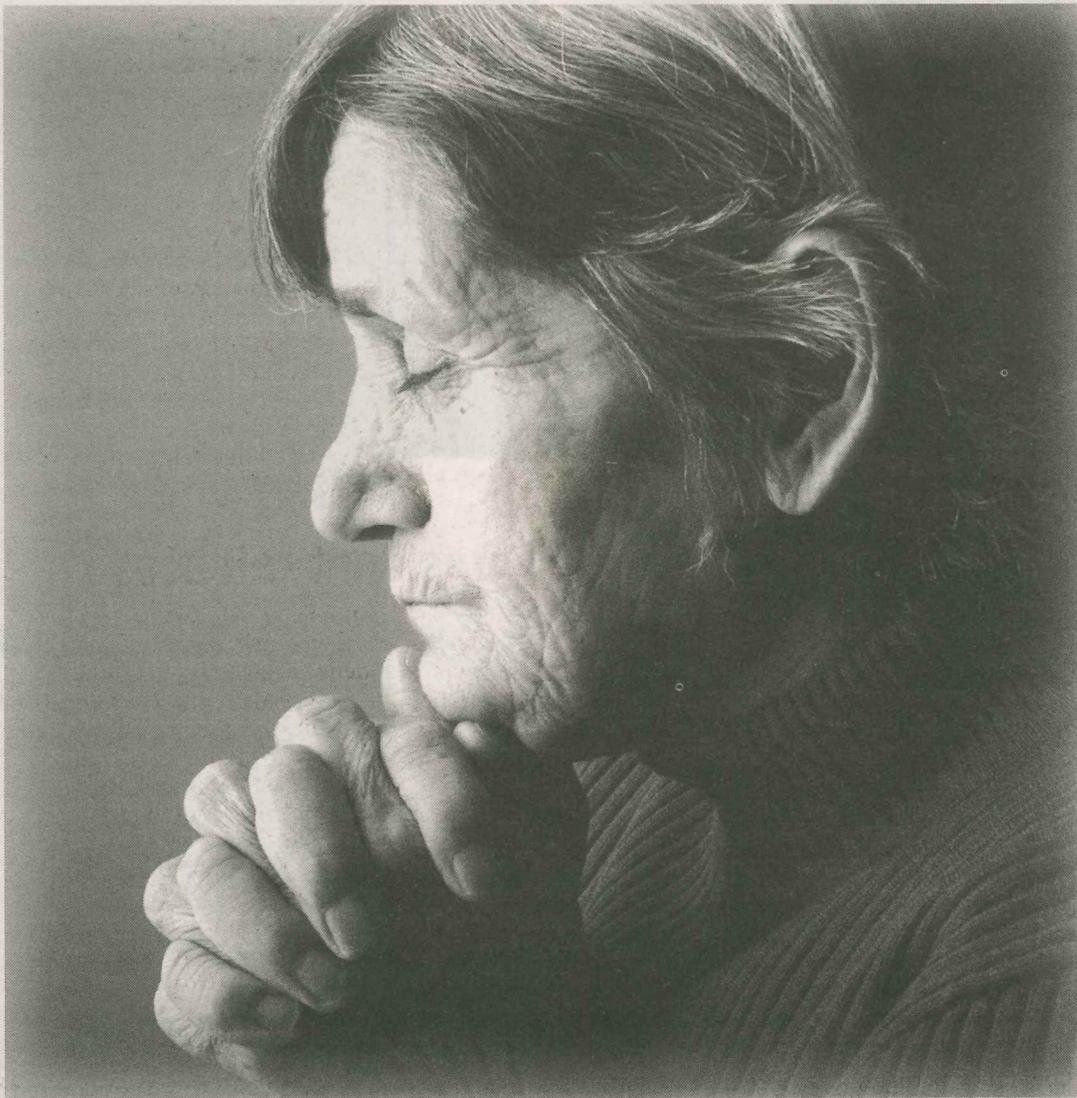
- Making sure that caregivers do not skimp on their own spiritual nourishment.

- Enlisting church members to assist caregivers with routine chores and errands, as well as providing an “adult-sitting” ministry to allow them to have some personal time.

- Helping caregivers understand end-of-life issues.

- Informing caregivers of other options of caring for their loved ones, including respite care, home care or retirement facilities.

“What is the best thing that a church can do to benefit both the aged and the family caring for them?” Stovall asked. “In short, strengthen the families. We can talk about ways to care for the aged and giving rest to the caregivers, but it truly comes down to strengthening families and giving them the foundation that will carry them through the difficult times.”



## Energized by creativity: Ideas for senior ministry

Grapevine, Texas (BP)—Need some fresh ideas for effective nursing home and homebound ministry? Consider these:

**Manicure team.** They show up at the nursing home each Tuesday at 10 a.m. with their plastic totes full of polish and nail files. Every week a row of women in wheelchairs and walkers waits behind each nail table. No, they are not professional nail technicians. They are just a team of women from a local church, ready to minister with a listening ear, a gentle touch, nail polish and a prayer.

**Monthly birthday parties.** Make nursing home residents feel special by planning a party each month for those residents celebrating birthdays. Stock a portable party box with balloons, streamers and birthday plates and napkins. Take a cake along, and offer a prayer and Scripture for the birthday honorees.

**Adopt a grandparent.** Teens, children or adults in your church can make a yearlong commitment to make weekly visits to their adopted “grandparent.” A nursing home director or minister can provide names of residents or homebound members who need visitors.

**Banana bingo.** For years, members from our church played bingo each week at a nursing home with bananas as the prize. Residents never seemed to grow tired of it.

**The Lord’s Supper.** Deacons from your church can administer the Lord’s Supper to members in nursing homes or confined to their homes each quarter. Members of adult and youth choirs could divide into trios and quartets and accompany the deacons for the ordinance once a year.

**Bible study.** With the nursing home director’s permission, schedule a weekly Bible study for residents. Churches could use a rotating list of teachers or the same teacher each week; or plan a topical Bible study series, teaching biblical answers to relevant questions such as, “How

can I get into heaven?” or “How do we lean on God?”

**Story time.** Announce a live story time at the nursing home. Read selected Bible stories or a weekly devotional book. Choose a novel with a Christian theme and read a chapter each week along with a chapter from God’s Word.

**Read through the Bible.** If you are committed to a weekly visit at the nursing home or a homebound member’s residence, consider reading through the Bible with them. If you read a half hour each week, you could complete the New Testament, Psalms and Proverbs in less than a year. Use a chart to mark off chapters to follow the progress. Read with enthusiasm the story that has truly changed the world.

**Hymn sing-along.** This is always a big hit. It can be as simple as one pianist leading the group, or you can bring an entire ensemble or choir with a lot of instruments.

**Worship.** Sundays without corporate worship can be heartbreaking. Plan a weekly service for the nursing home, complete with sermon, music and an evangelistic invitation. A retired pastor would be effective in this setting.

**Centerpieces.** A group of talented women from your church could create Christmas centerpieces for dining tables at the nursing home. If they are industrious, they could make centerpieces for several holidays.

**Develop relationships.** By visiting the same hallway or individual each week, you will begin to learn names and needs. Always ask the residents if they would like for you to pray with them before you leave.

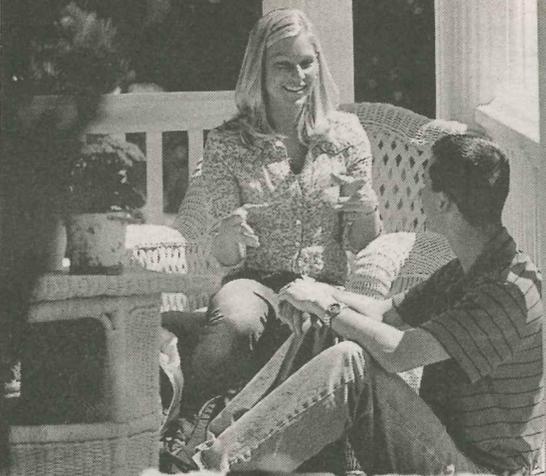
**With a hug, share Jesus.** Never forget that many nursing home residents are not Christians. They need more than good deeds and smiles. They desperately need to know Jesus personally. Make a point to know the spiritual condition of each person you visit. Then share God’s plan of salvation.

Compiled by Diana Davis, from her book “Fresh Ideas: 1,000 Ways to Grow a Thriving and Energetic Church”

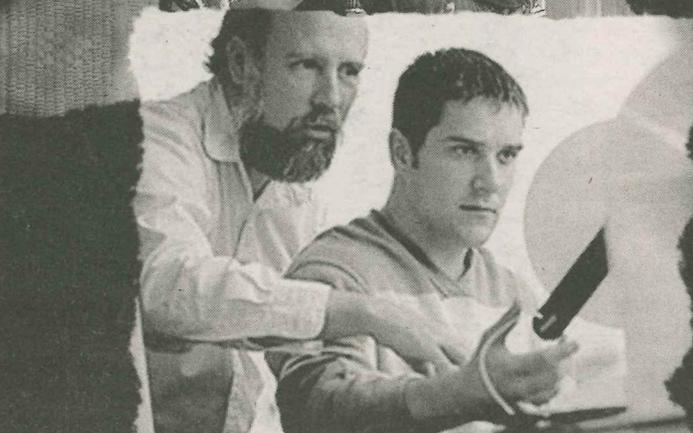


# Campus Discovery Day

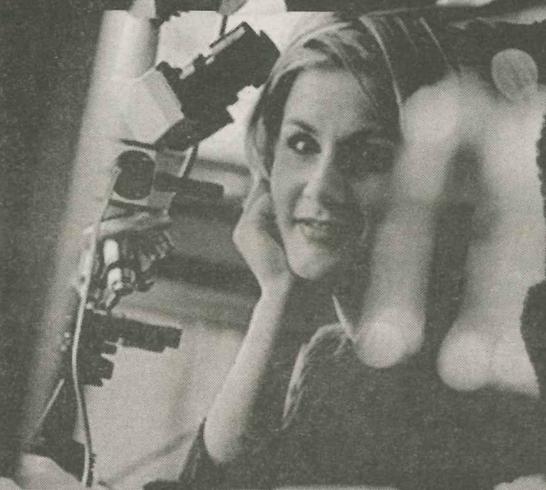
Saturday, March 1



The faculty, staff and students at University of the Cumberland invite prospective students to experience some of the excitement of being a college student by taking part in Discovery Day.



This is an excellent opportunity to discover first hand what college life is like. A schedule highlighting our academic departments, campus activities, student services and housing will reveal what University of the Cumberland can offer you.



All activities are free of charge.

**Reserve your spot today!**

Register online at [www.ucumberlands.edu](http://www.ucumberlands.edu) or call us at 1-800-343-1609.

- Schedule*
- 8:15 Breakfast
  - 8:30 Registration
  - 9:00 Welcome
  - 9:10 Academic Program, Admissions, & Financial Aid
  - 10:00 "Why I Chose UC" student panel
  - 11:00 Parent Information Session & Mock classes for students
  - 11:40 Departmental Browsing
  - 12:10 Campus Tours
  - Lunch—Our treat!

## Christian Leadership and Community Service Scholarships

University of the Cumberland offers scholarships up to \$1,000 for students who have provided leadership in their church or other religious organizations.

UC also offers thirty \$1,000 Community Service Scholarships to students who have shown outstanding service in their community.

The deadline to apply is March 15.

For more information, call Admissions at (800) 343-1609 or log onto our web site at <http://www.ucumberlands.edu/admissions/financialaid/scholarships.html>

**UNIVERSITY OF THE CUMBERLANDS**  
Lead. Serve. Grow.

