

February 12, 2008  
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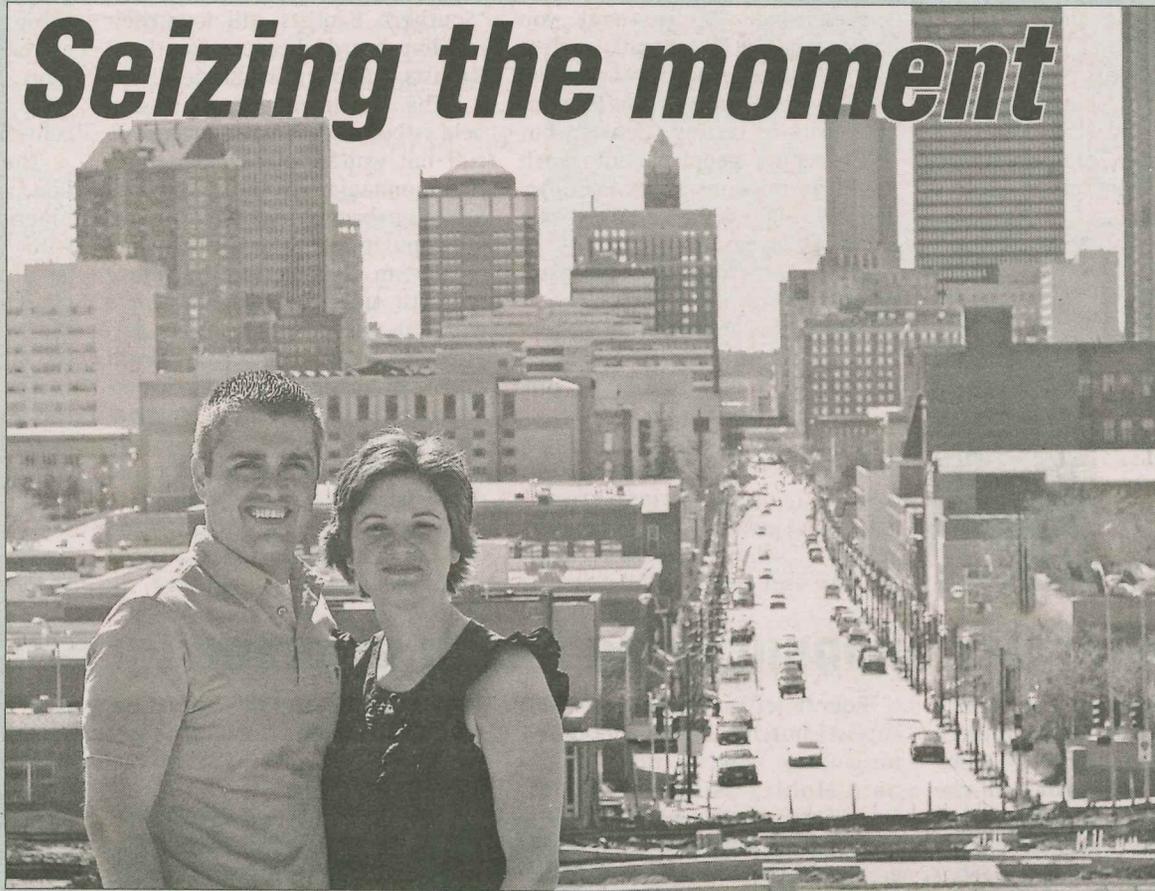
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## Seizing the moment



For nine years, Jon and Mindy Jamison have served the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board and the Baptist Convention of Iowa as a husband-wife missionary team in inner-city Des Moines, Iowa. (Photo by Norm Appleton)

### Missionary couple live in missions 'field of dreams' in Iowa

**By Mickey Noah**  
SBC North American Mission Board  
Des Moines, Iowa—"The Hawkeye State" conjures images of a Midwestern state of green cornfields, big-time pig and dairy farming, small towns and the setting for wonderful movies such as "The Music Man" and "Field of Dreams."

Iowa certainly is all those positive things and more, but Des Moines, the state capital and larg-

est city with 500,000 people, also is plagued with the same gangs, crime, violence, drugs and poverty of other American cities. Just ask Jon and Mindy Jamison.

For almost nine years, Jon and Mindy, have co-directed the Friendship Baptist Center in inner city Des Moines. They are missionaries with the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board. They also co-direct community ministries for the Baptist Conven-

tion of Iowa, providing assistance to local congregations.

The Jamisons are two of more than 5,000 missionaries in the United States, Canada and their territories supported by the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions, and are one of eight NAMB missionary couples highlighted as part of the annual Week of Prayer, March 2-9.

This year's theme is "Live with  
□ See *Seizing the moment ... Page 6*

## Students injured as tornado devastates Union Univ. campus

Jackson, Tenn.—More than 60 students at Union University were treated for injuries after a tornado swept through campus Feb. 5, damaging several buildings at the Tennessee Baptist college.

Union officials said at least 13 students were trapped in residence halls as more than 1,000 students sought shelter in bathrooms. Seventeen buildings were damaged, school officials noted, and 80 percent of campus dorms were either destroyed or heavily damaged.

Of the students who were treated for injuries, nine of them were kept at hospitals overnight. Although some injuries were serious, none appear to be life threatening, according to Union University President David Dockery.

"By God's providence, no lives were lost," he said, adding that as many as 3,300 students had been on campus earlier in the day.

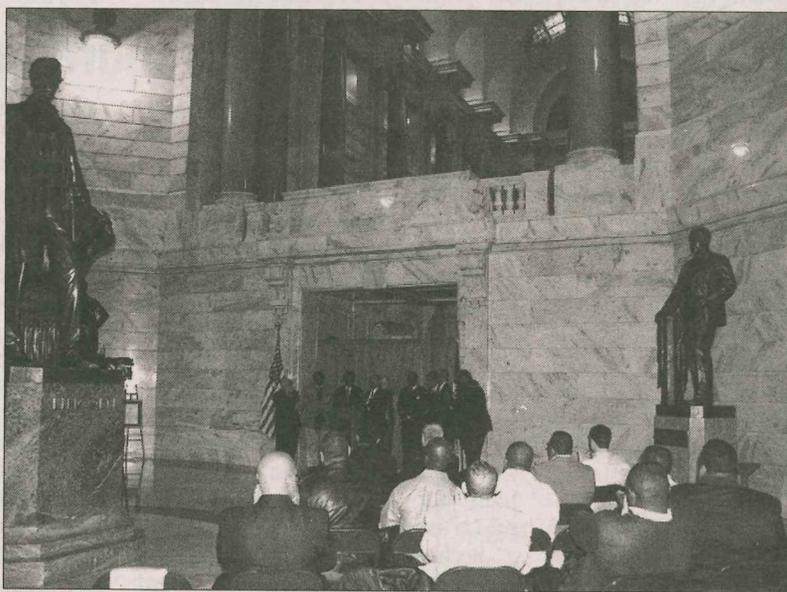
Dockery recalled a 2002 tornado that struck the campus, causing \$2.6 million in damage, and said this one was "15 times worse than that." The process of rebuild-

□ See *Tornado devastates ... Page 8*



**DESTRUCTION** A large number of Union University students have been displaced by the Feb. 5 tornado that did extensive damage across the campus. (BP photo by Jim Veneman)

## African-American pastors voice gambling opposition in Frankfort



**SHOW OF UNITY** African-American pastors from across Kentucky gathered at the Capitol Rotunda to voice their opposition to expanded gambling in the state. The group included pastors of Kentucky Baptist churches as well as those from other denominations. The gathering was hosted by the KBC's African-American Pastors' Fellowship. (Photo by Drew Nichter)

**By Drew Nichter**  
News Director

Frankfort—Just a few feet from the office of Gov. Steve Beshear, African-American pastors from across the state gathered in the Capitol Rotunda in Frankfort Feb. 6 to voice their opposition to the push for expanded gambling in Kentucky.

The gathering, organized by the Kentucky Baptist Convention's African-American Pastors' Fellowship, included dozens of Kentucky Baptist pastors and church members, as well as leaders from churches of other denominations.

Described as a news conference, the assembly at times resembled a church service as several pastors took the podium to passionately proclaim their opposition to the possibility of casino gambling in Kentucky.

Gov. Beshear made expanded gambling the central issue in his gubernatorial bid last year. Shortly after his election, a House of Representatives

task force was assembled to study expanded gambling on behalf of the Kentucky General Assembly.

Lawmakers have proposed a constitutional amendment which would allow casinos to operate in Kentucky. Gov. Beshear has said recently that his casino proposal could be filed by the end of February.

At its annual meeting in November, the KBC passed a resolution opposing expanded gambling and encouraged fellow Baptists to contact their legislators and ask them to vote against the amendment.

Willis Polk, president of the African-American Pastors' Fellowship and pastor of Imani Baptist Church in Lexington, described the gathering as a way "to encourage attendees to leave here and to continue the fight, making our representatives aware of our concerns."

Polk, who in the past has referred to gambling as "a back-door tax on  
□ See *African-American ... Page 3*

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, Feb. 13.

## Annie Armstrong gifts top goal for second straight year

By Carmon Keith  
SBC North American Mission Board

Talladega, Ala. (BP)—Southern Baptists' gifts to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions exceeded the national goal for the second consecutive year, with \$59.3 million received, the most ever in the history of the offering.

Geoff Hammond, president of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, shared the news with national and state Woman's Missionary Union leaders at their recent board meeting at Shocco

Springs Baptist Conference Center in Talladega, Ala.

Hammond noted that WMU is a valued partner in the work of reaching North America. "We cannot do our work without partners. We can't send missionaries without our partners," he said.

Presenting a large thank you board signed by NAMB staff, trustees and missionaries, Hammond said, "We have gratitude to God for your hard work in getting the word out and teaching people about North American missions. Once again, we had the highest Annie Armstrong Easter Offering in the history of the North American Mission Board. Praise the Lord."

In reaching the \$59.3 million record, Southern Baptists exceeded the offering's 2007 goal of \$57 million by \$2.3 million.

"We are so grateful to all those in our churches who support North American missionaries through prayer and giving," said Wanda Lee, WMU's national executive director. "We also greatly appreciate the

strong and thriving partnership we share with the leadership and field personnel of the North American Mission Board for the cause of missions."

Hammond noted that one of the things he has learned in his eight months as NAMB president is that "Southern Baptists still love their mission boards because Southern Baptists still love missionaries."

"The North American mission field is becoming increasingly difficult but wonderfully challenging," Hammond said. "God is bringing the nations to be our neighbors. Increasing population, ethnic diversity and secularism characterize the future of North America. Engaging people with the gospel is critical. As never before, we want to be your North American Mission Board. We are focusing on missionaries and missionary things. We want to help churches do the kinds of things they could not do without a mission board."

Showing a video highlighting the work of Brenda Crim, a collegiate evangelism missionary in

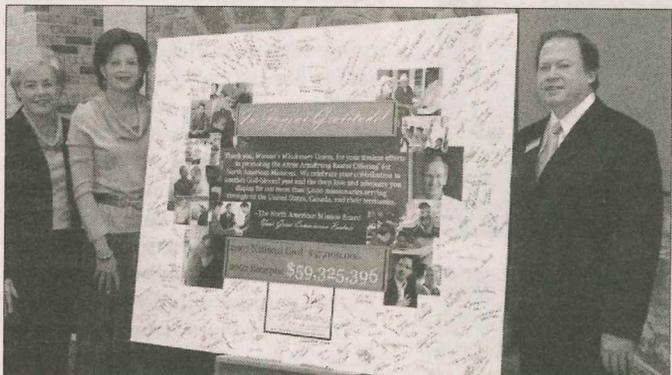
Anchorage, Alaska, Hammond said, "Our missionaries do what they do so that men, women, boys and girls can know Christ."

The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering accounts for 47 percent of NAMB's annual budget, with 37 percent provided by church gifts through the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program to jointly support more than 5,000 missionaries and their ministries with state Baptist convention partners.

The 2008 offering goal is \$61 million, and the theme for the North American Missions Emphasis is "Live with Urgency." The offering will be promoted in Southern Baptist churches in March, beginning with the Week of Prayer for North American Missions, March 2-9.

The national mission offering was established in 1895 by Woman's Missionary Union to support Southern Baptist missionaries in the United States. In 1934, the offering was named in honor of Annie Armstrong, WMU's founder and champion of missions.

**BIG THANKS** Wanda Lee (left), executive director of Woman's Missionary Union, and WMU President Kaye Miller accept a note of gratitude from North American Mission Board President Geoff Hammond on behalf of NAMB missionaries and staff. (BP photo)



## Ga. pastor Cox announced as fourth nominee for SBC presidency

Hartselle, Ala.—Frank Cox, pastor of North Metro First Baptist Church in Lawrenceville, Ga., will be nominated in June as president of the Southern Baptist Convention during the SBC's June 10-11 annual meeting in Indianapolis, according to a Feb. 7 announcement by Alabama evangelist Junior Hill.

Cox, a former president of the Georgia Baptist Convention, served as SBC first vice president in 1999-2000. He also served on the SBC Executive Committee for nine years and currently is a member of the SBC Funding Study Committee.

Cox is the fourth SBC presidential nominee to be announced, joining Albert Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville; Wiley Drake, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church in Buena Park, Calif., who was SBC first vice president in 2006-2007; and Bill Wagner, a former Southern Baptist missionary and seminary professor and current president of Olivet University International in San Francisco who served as SBC first vice president in 2003-2004.

Robert Jeffress, pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas, announced in January that he would nominate Mohler as SBC president. Drake's nomination was announced last August by Robert Bosworth, a member of Drake's congregation. Wagner announced his candidacy in September.

Hill—who also nominated Paige Patterson, president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, for his second term as SBC president in 1999—described Cox as "a man's man, a pastor's pastor, a Southern Baptist's Southern Baptist and a man after God's own heart."

Cox "is winsome, gentle and approachable," Hill added. "He believes that the gospel is for all people in all the world all the time."

North Metro First Baptist "models missions, evangelism and faithful stewardship as well as any church I know," Hill continued. Cox "has a rapport with younger pastors and will help get them involved in the

great work of our denomination. As our convention president, he will speak with a clear voice to call our nation back to God."



Frank Cox

Cox has served as pastor of North Metro First Baptist for nearly 28 years. Under his leadership, the church has grown from 700 members to more than 4,600, with more than 3,600 individuals added to the church fellowship as baptized believers.

According to the Southern Baptists' 2006 Annual Church Profile, North Metro First reported 110 baptisms and \$393,839 (13.4 percent) of undesignated receipts through the Cooperative Program from total undesignated receipts of nearly \$3 million. Since 2002, the church has placed in the top 100 of all SBC churches in total dollars contributed through the Cooperative Program, ranking 44th out of more than 44,000 congregations in 2006.

Cox also has served as a member of the SBC's Ad Hoc Cooperative

Program Committee which formed in 2003 and issued its final report in 2006 with recommendations on how to revitalize the convention's primary giving channel.

In 1995, Cox led his congregation to relocate from its original location in Duluth, Ga., to Lawrenceville 10 miles southeast. The move subsequently led to a name change from Pleasant Hill Baptist Church to North Metro First Baptist Church, as there was an existing congregation in Lawrenceville known as Pleasant Hill Baptist.

A native of Tallahassee, Fla., Cox is a graduate of Mercer University in Atlanta, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Luther Rice Seminary in Lithonia, Ga.

Cox's wife, Mary, serves as the Georgia Baptist Convention's ministers' wives ministry coordinator. The couple have two sons and a daughter. His first wife, Debbie, died of a brain tumor in July 1986. Cox's first book, "Trusting God's Heart," is an account of her illness and death.

Based on reporting by Baptist Press and News Director Drew Nichter

### BAPTIST DIGEST

**Huckabee, Warren to speak at preaching conference.** Republican presidential candidate Mike Huckabee and best-selling author Rick Warren, both ordained Southern Baptist pastors, will speak about how to use the pulpit to address political, social and cultural issues at the 19th annual National Conference on Preaching April 7-9 in Washington, D.C. Other speakers include Barry Black, chaplain of the U.S. Senate; Charles Colson, founder of Prison Fellowship; and Robert Smith, professor of preaching at Beeson Divinity School.

**Mark Kelly joins Baptist Press staff.** Mark Kelly, with more than 20 years in Baptist journalism, joined the staff of Baptist Press Feb. 1 as assistant editor. Kelly, 52, previously worked at the Southern Baptist International Mission Board as news editor and, initially, as a staff writer from 1994-2004. He also served as managing editor of the Arkansas Baptist News and editor of the campus newspaper at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. He also has worked for Purpose Driven Ministries; Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, Calif.; Union University in Jackson, Tenn.; and the Chicago Metro Baptist Association.

## IMB leaders emphasize need for more missionaries

Gainesville, Fla. (BP)—Southern Baptist International Mission Board trustees appointed 36 missionaries during their Jan. 28-30 meeting in Gainesville, Fla.

But Gordon Fort, IMB vice president for overseas operations, asked why there are not enough missionaries to reach a lost world.

If just 10 million of Southern Baptists' 16-plus million members banded together to send 1 percent of their number into missions, Fort said, "we would have 100,000 missionaries."

"We can't be sitting in a spiritual rocking chair," he declared. "We have to do something that can ensure these people groups have a witness."

There are 600 remaining unengaged, unreached people groups—each with populations of more

than 100,000—that have no access to the gospel, Fort noted. To engage those people groups, which represent about 1 billion people around the world, personnel need to be placed among them to implement aggressive church-planting strategies, he said.

To place more missionaries on the field, Southern Baptists need to give even more than they have given in the past to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions, IMB treasurer and vice president for finance David Steverson told trustees.

Because of the declining value of the dollar around the world, board officials have projected that Southern Baptists needed to give \$165 million—meeting the goal for the 2007 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering—just to sustain budgeted ministries

supported by 2006's record \$150 million offering.

A final report on the 2007 Lottie Moon offering total will be released after the May 31 closing date for offering receipts.

In his report to trustees, IMB President Jerry Rankin said that despite ongoing political sensitivities and restrictions on overt evangelism in parts of the world, doors are opening to the gospel.

He joined Vietnamese Baptists in Ho Chi Minh City in early January to celebrate Grace Baptist Church's official recognition by the Vietnamese government.

There are strong foundations of indigenous leadership and stable churches training believers and engaging students and unreached population segments in Southeast Asia, Rankin told trustees.

## For Harris, gospel message trumps winning Grammys

By Garrett Wishall  
Kentucky Baptist Convention

Louisville—Despite his five Grammy awards, 11 Dove awards and 19 radio chart-topping hits, gospel singer Larnelle Harris said his career accolades pale in comparison to the responsibility of sharing the gospel.



Larnelle Harris

Harris, a Kentucky Baptist who was inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame last year, will lead worship for the Kentucky Baptist Convention Evangelism Conference Feb. 25-26 at Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown.

"I don't know what else I would be doing if I weren't singing about Jesus Christ and the truths of the gospel, and then giving people an opportunity to respond," Harris noted.

"I try to make certain that everything I do and sing comes from a scriptural point of view," he added. "When you sing or speak the truth of Scripture, it does something to the heart. I believe that everyone should be given the opportunity to respond to the gospel and so I sing about it. I don't try to cloak what I am singing about."

Local church involvement is also high on Harris's list of priorities. A member of Maple Grove Baptist Church in Louisville for more than 30 years, Harris has served as a deacon for the past two decades and views his role as a God-ordained appointing.

Harris said he has revolted against the "performer mentality" of viewing on-stage performance and the rest of life as two separate categories. Instead, he explained that believers are Christ's representatives in every arena of life. "You have to do evangelism everywhere," he said.

Hanging on the wall alongside his Grammy and Dove awards hangs a photograph taken in Malawi. It includes Harris; Larry Jones, founder and president of the Christian organization Feed The Children; and several African tribesmen.

Harris said the photo was snapped while he and Jones were in the country selecting a strategic location for the digging of a well to better meet the needs of local residents.

"It is a principle of scripture to be God's hands and feet," he noted. "I want to be the guy that has the towel wrapped around his waist, washing the feet of those who are dirty. My act of washing those feet and loving people is my witness that I have been changed by God's love, and that God's love is open and waiting for them."

## African-American pastors rally in Frankfort

Continued from page 1

the poor," reiterated that point calling casino gambling "a very distracting activity" that would have the most destructive impact on "the ones who can least afford to participate."

He also acknowledged slot machines as the greatest concern in bringing casinos to the state. "We wanted to make people keenly aware of how slot machines are designed to not make you rich," Polk said.

Edgar Wallace, pastor of Second Christian Church of Midway, offered further evidence of the destructive nature of slot machines. He noted that the machines currently drive the casino industry, adding that "70 to 80 percent of casino revenues are derived from slot machines." That is compared to only 20 percent as recently as 20 years ago, he explained.

"Gamblers get addicted to machines about three times faster than they do table games or horse racing," Wallace pointed out.

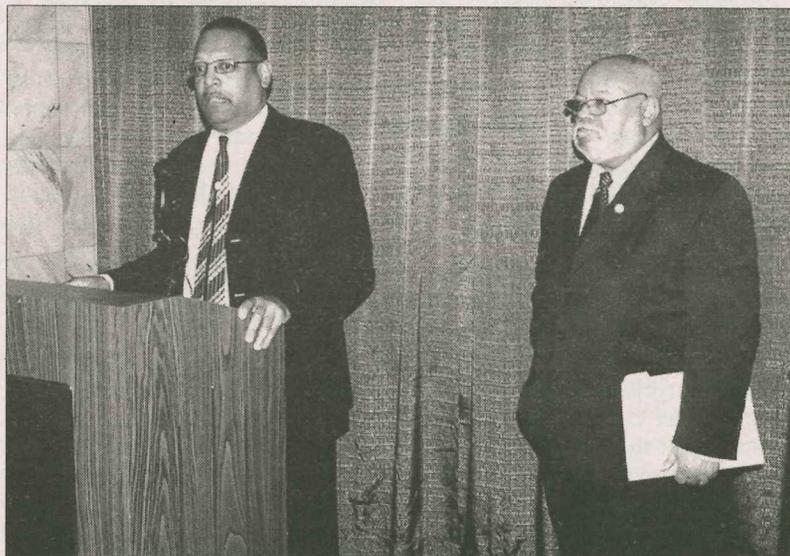
Citing research done by MIT professor Natasha Dow Schull, Wallace said that "slot machines are engineered to get people to play longer, faster and more intensively ... and encourage gamblers to play to extinction."

"Today's machines are a far cry from the old one-armed bandits," he added. "These machines are engineered to cultivate more gambling addicts."

Addressing the argument of gambling proponents that the amendment would bring \$500 million to the state, Wallace called that position a "myth." He cited research that shows Kentuckians would have to lose \$1.4 billion in order to achieve that figure.

"We cannot fund government by making losers of our citizens," he declared. "Government should prosper when its people prosper. Sending more and more money out of our state to casino owners will only engage Kentucky in a race to the bottom."

KBC Executive Director Bill Mackey estimated that 2 percent of the



**VOICING CONCERNS** Willis Polk (left), president of KBC's African-American Pastors' Fellowship and pastor of Imani Baptist Church in Lexington, speaks at a news conference Feb. 6 in the Capitol Rotunda. Edgar Wallace (right), pastor of Second Christian Church of Midway, waits to address the crowd. (KBC photo by Robert Reeves)

state population will become "pathological gamblers" if expanded gambling is permitted in the state. From that number, more than "1 million people will be impacted by this addiction," he added.

Responding to gambling proponents who have acknowledged the "marginal costs" that casinos will have on the state, Kevin Smith, pastor of Watson Memorial Baptist Church in Louisville, cited Christ's love for the marginalized as the reason for his opposition.

"As a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, I can't count one family or individual as marginal or dismissible," he declared. "We want to affirm the value of each family and individual who is a citizen of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. No one is dismissible."

Polk said that to date, pastors and churches within the African-American Pastors' Fellowship have written nearly 3,000 letters to legislators opposing expanded gambling. He added, however, that only three state representatives have responded to the Fellowship's concerns.

Many proponents of the bill continue to insist that they intend to let the people decide whether to bring

casinos to the state. Citing section 256 of the state constitution, Wallace noted that it is up to lawmakers to decide if they are for the amendment or against it, not the voters.

"If the legislature simply votes to put the matter on the ballot, they have abdicated their responsibility as members of the Kentucky General Assembly," Wallace said. "They are here to represent our interests, not their own."

"When they come here to represent their own interests, then we need to ... send them home."

### Proposal status

Gambling opponents received a boost Feb. 5 with the election of Republican Brandon Smith to the state Senate, filling the seat vacated by Lt. Gov. Dan Mongiardo. Smith has said that he is opposed to casino gambling in Kentucky.

In addition, the Louisville Courier-Journal has reported that Smith's win could signal trouble for the proposed gambling amendment. Rep. Joni Jenkins (D-Shively), who serves on the expanded gambling task force, told the newspaper that the proposal "might be on life support at this time."

## Upcoming conferences designed to help church groups get creative

Louisville—Churches looking to begin or improve creative arts and youth missions ministries will benefit from an assortment of practical training sessions at two upcoming Creative Ministries Festivals.

Creative Ministries Festival 2008 will be held Feb. 29-March 1 at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, and again March 7-8 at First Baptist Church of Bowling Green.

Designed for teens and adults of all skill levels, both events feature a wide variety of training sessions. Participants can customize their event experience by selecting from several creative arts workshops, including drama, interpretive movement, mime, puppetry and clowning.

A variety of youth missions workshops will also be offered to help train teens and leaders interested in planning mission trips, vacation Bible schools, games and crafts.

Special guest artists featured at this year's events include:

- Chagy the Clown.
- Jeff Smith, director of Salt & Light Ministries in Richmond, Va.
- Comedienne Kim Coleman.
- Comedian Dr. Tom.

Auditions for the Kentucky Baptist All-State Youth Choir and Youth Orchestra will again take place in conjunction with the Creative Ministries Festivals. High school youth who are active members of a KBC church may audition at either location. For more information and to register for an audition, visit [www.kybaptist.org/asyc](http://www.kybaptist.org/asyc) (to register for the choir) or [www.kybaptist.org/asyo](http://www.kybaptist.org/asyo) (to register for the orchestra).

Space is limited and registration is required. To register online, visit [www.kybaptist.org/cmfc](http://www.kybaptist.org/cmfc) or contact the KBC creative ministries department at (502) 489-3574 or toll-free in Kentucky at (866) 489-3574.

## KBC disaster relief responds to Kentucky storms

Greenville—The Kentucky Baptist Convention has mobilized disaster relief volunteers in response to the severe tornado outbreak that caused widespread damage throughout Kentucky Feb. 5.

According to Coy Webb, KBC's disaster relief associate, two teams of volunteers—including workers from Trigg and Christian counties—are working in Muhlenberg County to assess the damage and assist with cleanup.

In addition to those teams, the KBC has sent disaster relief volunteers to Cecilia, Brandenburg and Monroe County.

Webb said a chainsaw team of 17 volunteers is currently working in Cecilia to clear debris and assist with cleanup. Additional teams have been dispatched for chainsaw work in Brandenburg as well as areas in Monroe County.

Webb added that the duration of the relief effort has not yet been determined.

## Former Kentucky pastor recognized for his outstanding military service

Scott Air Force Base, Ill.—Air Force chaplain, Captain Scott Savell, a former Kentucky Baptist pastor, was recently recognized as the 375th Airlift Wing Director of Staff Company Grade Officer of the Year at Illinois' Scott Air Force Base where he is currently stationed.



Scott Savell

Savell's ministry and contribution to the Wing mission was rated No. 1 out of 14 Company Grade Officers on the Wing Commander's personal support staff.

The honor recognizes Savell's outstanding ministry to Airmen and families, and specifically the Singles' Ministry Program he directs in the Airmen Dorms.

Some of Savell's achievements as chaplain include the spiritual care he delivers to the Air Mobility Command's "Showcase Chapel," launching the Single Airmen Ministry, delivering inspiring expository sermons with life-changing impact, and developing a blog to connect with a new generation of Airmen.

Although serving on full-time active duty, Savell and his wife, Susanne, are still members of Lakewood Baptist Church in Louisville. He also served as pastor of Little Mount Baptist Church in Taylorsville from 1996 to 2001.

## 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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## Worshipping with helmets

By Beth Newman

Richmond Va. (ABP)—Recent reports about the age of messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention have alerted some to the “graying” of the convention. Specifically, the percentage of messengers aged 18-39 dropped from a high of 35.9 percent in 1985 to a low of 16.1 percent in 2005.

Strictly speaking, this is not news, and it is certainly not unique to the SBC. Across the Protestant world this age range has been shrinking. A little more surprising is that Illinois' Willow Creek Community Church, once thought to be the hope of the church's future, is now experiencing its own malaise.

There are, I'm sure, an almost limitless supply of sociological, cultural and economic explanations of why this is happening. I want to suggest at least one theological one: We have a serious misunderstanding of the purpose and nature of worship. And this impoverished understanding has serious implications for the formation necessary for long-term obedience and discipleship.

This misunderstanding is reflected in the language we use. A small example is the replacement of the term “sanctuary” with “worship center.” As with other aspects of contemporary reflection on the church, there is a supposed method to this madness—the archaic “church” language puts off potential seekers. The difficulty, however, is that “sanctuary” has a long biblical history, a meaning that is completely absent from a worship center.

An even more egregious instance of this reduced and confusing language is the replacement of worship with “worship experience.” The former focuses on God, the latter on us.

Annie Dillard is surely right to remind us of the kind of expectation we ought to bring to worship: “Does anyone have the foggiest idea what sort of power we so blithely invoke? Or, as I suspect, does no one believe a word of it? The churches are children playing on the floor with their chemistry sets, mixing up a batch of TNT to kill a Sunday morning. It is madness to wear ladies' straw hats

and velvet hats to church; we should all be wearing crash helmets. Ushers should issue life preservers and signal flares. They should lash us to our pews.”

But where does this leave us? Should we place helmets at the doors of the church with a sign, “Danger: Beware?” It would surely be foolish to appear so uninviting. And yet even Moses, despite his terror and dread, was drawn to the holy presence in the burning bush. To acknowledge that worship is risky, even dangerous, is also to say it is not simply about us. It's about a God we cannot domesticate, a God who surprises and even shocks us out of our easy complacency.

We are easily tempted to believe that the survival of the church depends upon us. If this were true, we would have to figure out ways to make the gospel more palatable on the world's terms. Yet “God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.” As foolish as it seems, worshipping with “holy helmets” prepares us to be astonished by a holy God.

*Beth Newman is professor of theology and ethics at Baptist Theological Seminary at*

## COMMENTARY

## Three goals for making life better

By Anthony Jordan

Oklahoma City (BP)—Because I am a preacher, I tend to think in threes. Normal people have circular thoughts or thoughts that come in ones or twos. But any self-respecting Baptist preacher will always think in three points. It just isn't comfortable to think outside the box.

I want to challenge myself and you to consider three areas that cry out to us from the inner core of our lives. In our loud, busy, hectic, hard-charging world, consider these three areas: silence, aloneness and laughter.

I would propose that in today's world a moment of silence is deafening. It is hard to imagine a minute without the TV, iPod, radio, telephone or some other device filling the air with noise. Yet, I suggest that

the only way we are going to find ground center in our lives is to stop the world, get off and sit in silence.

Silence has a way of re-centering our lives. It is certainly one of the only ways one is able to hear the voice of the God. He doesn't yell, but speaks in a still small voice. The Psalmist had it right when he quoted the Lord, “Be still and know that I am God.”

I am a totally radical “people person.” I love people. I want to spend time with people. But I have noticed that when I have no alone time, my life loses balance and rarely finds center. Really, silence and aloneness are kissing cousins. While long periods of aloneness can be damaging, I doubt many of us in this world will ever find ourselves in that danger.

Aloneness gives us time to think.

## FIRST PERSON

## Kentucky Baptists can overcome barriers

“Overcoming Barriers” is the theme for the upcoming Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference Feb. 25-26 at Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown. This seems to be an especially pertinent topic given a recent LifeWay Research study that indicates the greatest barrier to Christ can be the church itself.

According to LifeWay's study of “unchurched Americans” which polled 1,400 adults who had not attended a religious service in the previous six months, many Christians are seen by the unchurched as hypocrites rather than people who are living out their love for God by loving others.

Another barrier for unchurched Americans is their misunderstanding about who God is. While 72 percent said they believe in a supreme being, only 48 percent agreed there is one God as described in the Bible. Sixty-one percent believe the God of the Bible is no different from the

gods of other religions. Also, 86 percent believe they can have a relationship with God without being involved in church.

The good news is that 66 percent of 18-29-year-olds agreed that Jesus died and came back to life, compared to 54 percent of adults 30 and older.

Also, 78 percent said they would be willing to listen to someone talk about their Christian beliefs. Only 28 percent of adults 30 and older said they think Christians they know talk to them too much about their beliefs. More than 75 percent of adults 30 and older said they would enjoy an honest conversation with a friend about religious beliefs, even if they disagree with that friend.

Although this research indicated there are great challenges for Christians, there are also wonderful opportunities for each church to connect with its community through servant evangelism and to reverse

And time to think gives us opportunity for new thoughts, visions and dreams. Aloneness provides time to contemplate our own life, its direction or misdirection, and to process our relationship with the One to Whom we must give account. I am committed to finding little slices of time to sit alone with my thoughts and my God.

My third and final thought has to do with laughter. I deal with too much serious stuff. Serious stuff impairs your funny bone. I love to laugh.

Laughter comes best out of life experiences. People-watching gives me some of my greatest and most harmless laughs. Solomon was right. Laughter is like good medicine. Most of us need to plan regularly to indulge in a heaping dose of laughter. Life will be better.

*Anthony Jordan is executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma.*

the perception that the church is not living out its love for God by loving others. This is the time to trust God to enable us to overcome all barriers—within and without—and to enter the white harvest fields compelled by His love for all people.

Plan to attend the Evangelism Conference and bring church members with you so they can be encouraged and challenged to share their faith. Session speakers and leaders of breakout luncheons will provide significant approaches in overcoming barriers to evangelism. Grammy winner Larnelle Harris will provide inspirational music.

I know personally and have heard most of the speakers. They are godly men who have spent years in ministry finding ways to overcome the barriers that arise with each generation.

Women also will enjoy an outstanding session designed just for them Feb. 26. The session features Phyllis Foy of the North American Mission Board and singer Alicia Williamson Garcia.

*Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention*

## FAMILY

## Tips to financially survive your next family vacation

By Jeremy White

Your family vacation—where to spend it and how to pay for it—are important decisions.



The answers to those questions can bring great enjoyment and togetherness—or frustration and stress.

Some families feel guilty during their vacation because of overspending. Some families do not even pay off last year's vacation before the next one rolls around. These five recommendations regarding the family vacation can help relieve these symptoms of “vacationitis”:

**Understand your real objectives.** A vacation should first of all, provide a break in the routine for each member of the family and be long enough to allow you to wind down from daily activities. Second, our family strives to build memories during vacation time. A third objective is to build relationships.

**Make children a part of the process.** Plan vacations in advance with your family by discussing objectives, budget and priorities. This helps avoid conflict, as well as teaches decision making and goal setting. Encourage your children to save money during the year for the vacation. This teaches them delayed gratification and gives them a sense of excitement about the vacation. But remember to give the freedom to spend on vacation as they wish. This will avoid conflict and builds a trust relationship between parents and children.

**Never borrow to fund a vacation.** Prepare a specific vacation budget as part of your annual spending plan. This way, when vacation time arrives, there is no guilt related to spending the money. No money does not necessarily mean no vacation. No money simply means that a creative alternative to a vacation is required.

**Be creative in saving money.** Can the objectives of the vacation be accomplished in some way other than a cruise or a trip to Europe? For example, can you camp out instead of staying in a hotel? Can you stay with friends? Can you go in the off season? What activities can you enjoy on vacation that do not require spending money?

**Trust God to provide resources.** Whenever you borrow to fund a vacation, you are in effect saying that God cannot provide for your vacation except through a lender. God may provide a vacation as well as a business or mission trip.

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

## Valentine's Day offers couples opportunity to assess marriage

### Q: Should Christian couples observe Valentines Day?

Valentine's Day, despite its commercial and syrupy underpinnings, represents a great opportunity for an annual marriage checkup. While recognizing the ebb and flow of romantic feelings, partners should carefully assess the heart and vital signs of their marriage by asking these questions inspired by 1 Corinthians 13:4-7:

- Am I more patient with my spouse than I was last year?
- Am I kinder and more apt to go out of my way to say nice things and do thoughtful deeds?
- Am I putting envy aside and celebrating my partner's successes and gifts?
- Am I more humble and less boastful than a year ago?
- Do I make less cutting or improper remarks when I don't get my way? Am I less prone to become silent and withdrawn?
- Do I put my spouse first more often than a year ago, being more willing to serve?
- Am I less likely to let little things bother me and more willing to be forgiving?
- When I need to confront my spouse, do I do so lovingly and with compassion?
- Do I dwell on the best in my spouse, rather than focusing on his or her shortcomings?
- Am I more committed to accepting and enduring the inevitable difficult seasons of marriage, knowing that God can use even these?

Valentine's Day is a fine time to remember that the true hallmark of love is not a sentimental card from Cupid, but a sacrificial commitment from Christ. If we are following, He beckons and empowers us daily to be a little more like Him.—Scott Wigginton

### Q: How can parents be sure their children know they are loved?

As Valentine's Day approaches, love becomes a special topic of thought and deed as folks look for ways to show love to the special people in their lives. The season can remind parents of the importance of making sure they consistently demonstrate love for their children to their children.

Without question, most parents love their children. However, as Ross Campbell, author of "The Five Love Languages of Children," points out, kids can sometimes be loved but not feel loved. Saying "I love you" does not count as much with children who operate on a feeling level that runs deeper than words. Campbell suggests four behaviors that parents can put into practice immediately that will ensure that their children feel loved.

**Eye contact.** Looking directly into the eyes of your child when you talk to them will help you connect at the deepest levels and will help your child know you care about them in a special way.

**Physical contact.** Appropriate kinds of touches (hugs, playful pokes, pats on the back, holding hands, tousling hair) communicate love in a powerful way.

**Focused attention.** Giving focused attention requires shutting out all distractions and letting your child know that at this particular moment in time, they have your undivided attention and are the most important person in your life.

**Discipline.** Discipline and love go hand in hand. Showing love through discipline means saying, "I care enough about you that I am not going to let you do certain things or act in certain ways." When we fail to set limits for our children, we are not just being permissive and indulgent; we are in fact saying very loudly, "I don't care."—David Garrard

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## 'Putting your money where your mouth is'

As I move into my final few weeks as editor of the Western Recorder, it is becoming clear there will be several editorial ideas that never make it into the pages of the Recorder. As I have done occasionally over the past several years, I wanted to take time this week to mention several issues rather than focus on only one editorial topic.

**Convention priorities.** As 2008 rapidly moves along, the Kentucky Baptist Convention Mission Board staff continues to juggle a variety of major ministry emphases, including such priorities as efforts to encourage increased baptisms, discipleship and church planting.

Reflecting the old saw, "Put your money where your mouth is," three other key priorities are obvious in light of recent Mission Board staff additions. Those vital ministries—which have long been pivotal parts of the KBC's overall ministry strategy—are Cooperative Program promotion, partnership missions and disaster relief.

Dedicated leaders in each of those areas began their new roles with the state convention in January. Billy Compton, former pastor of Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown and a former KBC president, began Jan. 1 as the KBC's executive associate for Cooperative Program and resources. In that role, he is responsible for encouraging Kentucky Baptists to express a renewed commitment to CP support and biblical stewardship. That is particularly significant since Kentucky Baptist churches' undesignated contributions through CP have declined from more than 10 percent a decade ago to just over 7 percent today.

Partnership missions has been a popular ministry focus for the past several years. Effective Jan. 16, Scott Pittman became director of the KBC's partnership missions department. He succeeds Ross Bauscher, who was named the leader of the KBC evangelism growth team just over a year ago. As a longtime missionary to Brazil and former Kentucky Baptist pastor, Pittman brings a wealth of practical experience to the partnership missions position.

As KBC Executive Director Bill Mackey noted in a recent interview, "It is crucial to continue involving church leaders and members in partnership missions. Personal involvement helps advance the cause of mis-

sions and develops a greater passion for support of missions."

In the area of disaster relief, Coy Webb, former pastor of First Baptist Church of Monticello, was named Baptist Men's associate effective Jan. 1. He succeeds Larry Koch, who retired Jan. 31. In addition to his responsibilities in coordinating the KBC's disaster relief efforts, Webb will provide leadership in such areas as Baptist Builders, Campers on Mission and Habitat for Humanity.

One needs to look no further than the deadly storms that hit Kentucky and several other states last week to be reminded of the urgency of disaster relief's hands-on ministry philosophy of providing disaster victims "a cup of water in Jesus' name."

These three areas—Cooperative Program support to help fund ministries at home and around the world, partnership mission projects and disaster relief efforts—are timely examples of how Kentucky Baptists are seeking to impact today's culture with the gospel of Christ.

**Gambling battle.** Kentucky Baptist leaders and other concerned citizens continue to seek to halt expanded gambling in Kentucky. During a Capitol rally last week organized by the Kentucky Baptist African-American Pastors' Fellowship, Lincoln Bingham, pastor of St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church in Louisville, reminded participants, "We're here today to state affirmatively, strongly, emphatically, with clarity our opposition to expanded gambling." A similar rally led by WAGE (Women Against Gambling Expansion) was held this week.

Don't take for granted that pro-casino forces can be halted without your help. You can leave a message for your state legislators by calling the toll-free legislative message line at (800) 372-7181.

**Valentine's Day.** Oops, I'm almost out of space this week too. Suffice it to say that Valentine's Day is an excellent occasion to enthusiastically proclaim your love for your spouse, family members and others who are dear to you. As Scott Wigginton emphasizes in this week's Family Forum column, "Valentine's Day, despite its commercial and syrupy underpinnings, represents a great opportunity for an annual marriage checkup." Don't miss that opportunity.

### STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

## E-mail and evangelism

By Chuck Lawless

Louisville (BP)—It's official. I no longer like e-mail.

That wasn't always the case. I still remember discovering e-mail for the first time. My computer modem was as large as a vintage radio and as loud as a jet engine, but it allowed me to contact friends at a moment's notice, at any time of the day or night.

Today, e-mail provides a means to express much more than we would say personally. We give too little thought to our words when communication is between computer screens rather than two people looking each other in the eye.

My biggest concern about e-mail, though, is that this medium makes it possible to send messages without ever talking to each other. I fear that face-to-face conversations have sometimes been unintentionally sacrificed on the altar of e-mail convenience.

Of course, my distaste for e-mail is really only partial. I am excited when I hear from long-lost friends who found me via web pages and e-mail. I can now communicate with missionaries around the world. And, e-mail has provided unprecedented opportunities for doing evangelism—especially for those believers

who might be less inclined to speak face-to-face about Jesus.

### FIRST PERSON

On the other hand, my concern that e-mail promotes faceless communication is dwarfed by a similar concern about current trends in evangelism. Think about it:

- Evangelism in too many churches is about believers responding to a guest who first visited the church rather than their proactively sharing Christ. If the non-believer makes the first move, we are then ready to respond with the gospel.

- Evangelism is sometimes reduced to "invite others to church, where someone else will tell them about Jesus"—and even then more corporately than individually. In that case, nobody does personal evangelism.

- In some congregations, evangelizing takes place more on the international mission field than in a church member's neighborhood. The same believer who travels overseas to speak of Christ through a translator often leapfrogs his own unbelieving neighbors who speak the same language.

- Despite the New Testament emphasis on laity, too many churches still relegate evangelism to hired clergy. Personal involvement in

evangelism is often equated with putting a check in the offering plate on Sunday.

I need to be clear here. I fully support using any God-honoring means to spread the gospel. Ignoring current technological advances means missing great opportunities now available. I want church members to appreciate so much God's work through their church that they willingly invite their friends to attend. My heart beats with global missions, and I have seen church members more committed to local evangelism after returning from the mission field. I also believe that clergy must set the example in doing evangelism. Hence, I am not discounting the methods and strategies listed above. I simply am saying that they are not enough if evangelism is not also personal.

Yes, write evangelistic e-mails, invite your neighbors and friends to church, follow up with guests, take mission trips and expect your pastor to be a model. Prayerfully support all that your church does to reach its community.

Don't forget, though, to tell others about Jesus—and do it face-to-face.

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

# Seizing the moment

*Center provides opportunity to build trust, share gospel with at-risk children, families*

*Continued from page 1*

Urgency: Seize Your Divine Moment." The 2008 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering's goal is \$61 million, 100 percent is used to help missionaries such as the Jamisons.

The Friendship Baptist Center, a non-descript building, sits on the corner of Meek Avenue and Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway in Des Moines.

"The neighborhood surrounding the Friendship Baptist Center is a poverty-impacted community," Jon said. "Upwards of 30-35 percent of the households are in poverty. Many of the people are victims of crime. There's a lot of violence, gang activity and drugs in the communities surrounding the center. So we have a challenge just outside our doors.

"Many people struggle with having something to eat, having clothes to wear, shelter, heat in the winter. For kids in the area, there's no one at home to take care of them," he continued.

"Kids must find a way to wake themselves up in the morning," Jon explained. "If there's food in the house, they have to make their own breakfast. They have to find a way to school, if they go. Many kids are sort of their own parents. That may sound like fun, but it also brings some struggles."

Mindy Jamison echoes her husband.

"The kids get up and don't take a bath because there's no water," she said. "They don't have a toothbrush or shampoo. They probably forget to take their books to school. They walk to school in the cold, and it gets very cold in Des Moines," she added. "They go hungry and without basic needs, much less encouragement and nourishment."

The problem belongs to local Christians as much as the children who come to the center, Mindy concluded.

"I think if that doesn't break our heart, if that doesn't concern us,

then our heart isn't lined up with the heart of Christ," she said. "He was so concerned for 'the least of these.'"

Mindy began urban missions in her native Fort Myers, Fla. She said the neighborhood around the Des Moines center is "great" and "horrible" at the same time.

The Friendship Baptist Center primarily serves African-Americans and Hispanics, the Jamisons said, but the community also is home to refugees from Zaire, Sudan and Bosnia.

The ministry helps the community in many ways. "Kids Club" is an after-school program that provides students help with homework and a safe place to play board games or sports. They also learn life skills, nutrition and even how to cook. And, of course, the Jamisons teach boys and girls about the Bible.

"Once we get to know the kids better, we offer a Bible study and teach them what God says about their lives and how God wants to be a part of their lives," Jon said.

"Many times, we tell them Bible stories, and it's the first time they've ever heard Bible stories," he continued. "It's great to see the lights come on when they realize that God loves them and can provide for them."

Teaching unchurched boys and girls is very different from telling Bible stories to children who have grown up in an evangelical church, the Jamisons said.

"Many of the neighborhood kids here are waiting on the edge of their seats to find out how the Bible story ends because they haven't heard it before," Mindy said.

Fifteen Kids Club volunteers "pour their lives into these kids every day," Mindy said. In all, 250 volunteers help the Jamisons annually.

"The kids get to meet volunteers from all over who may be Iowa State students, people from local churches, and others," Jon said. "The kids get to rub shoulders with them and be mentored by them. 'It's so important ... to get them here, off the streets and into a positive place,'" he said.

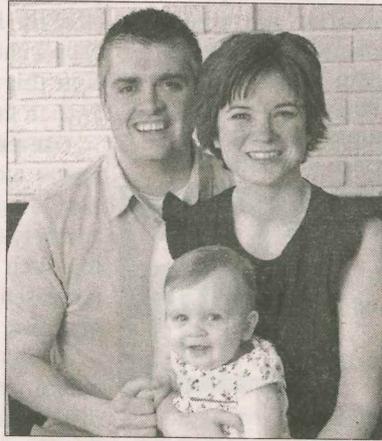
## Language lessons

Another huge project for the center is its English as a Second Language classes.

"It's a great way for us to connect to the community," Jon said. "Immigrants and refugees come to Des Moines and need to provide for their families. They need a job. And often they can find better jobs if they speak English."

The center also provides a food and clothing ministry, adult Bible studies, GED tutoring and summer camps.

"The Clothes Closet is an important ministry because it's free, and because it's meeting such a basic need," Mindy said. "A lot of our ladies come to the Clothes Closet. They call it 'The Mall.'" In addition to clothing for adults and children, the Clothes Closet supplies residents



**FAMILY ON MISSION** Jon and Mindy Jamison with their two-year-old daughter, Maggie. (Photos by Norm Appleton)

with free household items.

The Clothes Closet helps the Jamisons build personal relationships with customers, and it provides open doors to sharing the gospel.

"When they come in for clothes, we ask them about other needs in their lives," Mindy said. "We ask them if we can pray for them. We ask them if they know about Christ."

Through the day-to-day interaction with residents the Jamisons discover ways to share the gospel.

"We have found that forming relationships is the way we're going to introduce Christ in Des Moines," Jon said, "not only to the children but to the adults. If we can connect with them on a level that is non-threatening—a level that says 'I'm fun and I want to have fun with you'—then we can relax. Once we get to know them, the spiritual conversations can take place. We can talk to them about the things that bother and worry them, and share the love of Christ with them."

The couple said one of the most challenging problems they face is trying to prevent local kids from joining the gangs that roam the streets of inner city Des Moines.

"Many of the kids join a gang because either they want power or protection," Jon explained. "Some people will join a gang because they know they can wield power. They can be a powerful person in the neighborhood. Or they fear that without the gang, they will be picked on. They feel like a gang gives them a ready-made group of people who are willing to stand up with them."

"A lot of times the gang becomes their family," Jon continued. "The gang provides immediate support, immediate family and immediate love."

Gangs create a strong temptation for children and youth who want to do what's right, who want to follow Christ, Jon said.

"The kids still have to face the pressures of violence in the streets. They have to decide, 'Am I willing to stand alone and be a Christian and follow Christ and do what that means, or do I want to surround myself with gang members and let them become my family?'"

Through the Friendship Baptist Center, boys and girls are taught that God loves them and that He has a plan for them, beyond violence

and destruction.

"Some people have not heard the name of Jesus," Mindy said. "We share the gospel, and often it's the first time someone's ever heard of Jesus."

Gang- and domestic violence plagues the community around the center, Jon said. "We have many people from the community who are in prison right now because of violence," Jon said. "Our goal is that, as these people come to know Christ, the crimes will stop and the reliance on drugs will stop."

The stakes are high in inner city Des Moines, the Jamisons said.

"While we know we're attempting to reach this community for Christ, there are gang leaders who are attempting to reach the community, too," Jon said. "There are people of other faiths who are trying to reach this community," he added, noting that Muslims, Buddhists and Mormons are aggressively spreading their religions locally.

## Family first

Despite the many obstacles, the Jamisons say they are blessed as husband and wife to serve together and to bring their nearly two-year-old daughter, Maggie, to work with them every day.

"We can come to work together every day and can both be used of God," Mindy said.

Jon, a native of Elizabethton, Tenn., and Mindy both accepted Christ as children, graduated from Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tenn., and from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. They said they fell in love with missions because of the many mission trips in which they participated as youth.

"The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering is such a blessing to us," Mindy said. "Because of financial cooperation among Southern Baptists, we can focus on the ministry without worrying about where funds will come from or where our next paycheck will come from, or how to find money to feed hungry people."

"Through the Annie Armstrong offering, we are able to offer the love of Christ ... without closing the doors every couple of months to seek additional funding," she continued.

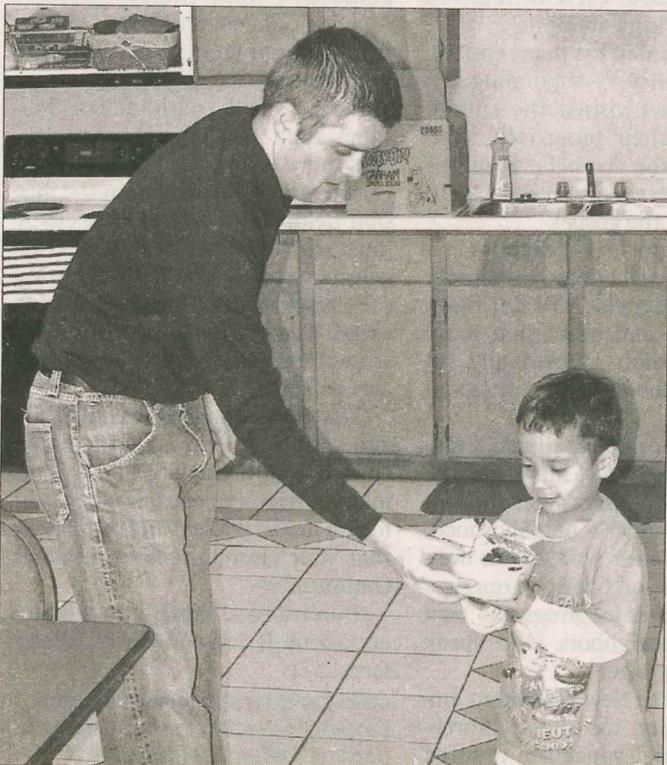
"Annie Armstrong provides consistent, reliable ministry for those in need all year-round," Mindy concluded. "We also know Baptists are praying for us as they give. It enables us to be here and for the ministries to continue. It's our lifeline here in Iowa."

The Southern Baptist North American Mission Board provides many resources to assist churches as they promote the week of prayer and offering, including the annual missions study, written for all ages.

Video presentations, children's resources, posters, offering envelopes, bulletin inserts, sermon outlines, skits and other materials can be reviewed online at [www.anniearmstrong.com](http://www.anniearmstrong.com). Materials also are available in Spanish, French and Korean.

To request materials by phone, call (800) 634-2462.

**EASTER TREAT NAMB** missionary Jon Jamison gives an Easter basket of candy to 5-year-old Emilio Garcia, a frequent visitor at The Friendship Center in Des Moines, Iowa. Each year, Jamison, with help from local Southern Baptists, sponsor an Easter party for kids at the center, during which the gospel message is shared.



## Questions arise over jump in 'born-again' support of Dems

By Adelle Banks  
Religion News Service

Washington (RNS)—A new poll that shows Sen. Hillary Clinton drawing a large percentage of "born-again" voters is giving her campaign something to trumpet, but is also prompting questions: Did the pollster define born-again too broadly? And if so, are the results meaningful?

California-based researcher George Barna found that Clinton, a New York Democrat, leads among born-again voters at 20 percent, followed by Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., (18 percent) and former Republican Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee (12 percent). No other candidate received double-digit support, and 30 percent of poll respondents were undecided.

The poll also found that 40 percent of born-again voters likely to vote would choose the Democratic candidate in November, compared to 29 percent who favor a Republican nominee and 28 percent who are undecided.

The numbers would represent a seismic shift in presidential politics, signaling that Democrats are making serious inroads in their attempt to woo religious-minded voters away from the GOP.

It also would add a new dynamic to an ongoing tussle between Democrats and exit pollsters who ask Republican primary voters about their religious leanings, but do not ask the same questions of Democratic voters.

But some observers say Barna's definition of a born-again Christian—someone who has made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ and, based on a confession of sins, believes heaven awaits after death—may be too broad.

"That's a really broad measure," noted John Green, a senior fellow at the Washington-based Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life. "If you think about it, all kinds of Christians might be able to agree with that."

At its broadest measure, the "born-again" category could include white Protestants (often reliable Republicans), Catholics (a frequent swing vote) or black Protestants (reliable Democrats).

Barna, who did not return calls for comment, said in a statement that Republicans will have a tough time reaching born-again voters.

"Given the large percentage of undecided voters, it is possible that the Republican candidate might eventually win a majority of the born-again vote," he wrote. "However, it will not be easy to win them over."

The Barna Group uses a narrower definition of "evangelical" in polling. Respondents—who are not asked to describe themselves as either "born-again" or "evangelical"—must meet Barna's born-again criteria as well as seven other categories to be counted as evangelicals.

Barna's figures have received attention. Beliefnet.com's "God-o-Meter" called the findings "eye-popping," and David Brody, a widely-read correspondent for Pat Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network, said the research confirms his detection of "a gradual shift of born-again Christians who have become more sympathetic to the Democratic Party."

Mark Silk, a contributor to the "Spiritual Politics" blog on religion and the current election campaign, offered a more qualified analysis of the numbers.

"First, the born-again are not separated by race or ethnicity and so include a lot of traditional Democratic voters, African-Americans especially," Silk wrote.

He added that a more accurate measure might be the missing religious questions in exit polls among primary voters.

"The bottom line: This is suggestive," Silk noted, "but it would be really helpful if today's Democratic exit polls include the standard evangelical question."

### NATIONAL NOTES

**Senator moves to allow churches to show Super Bowl.** Pennsylvania Sen. Arlen Specter, the ranking Republican on the Senate Judiciary Committee, plans to introduce legislation to allow churches to show the Super Bowl on widescreen televisions, just as bars do now. "There's absolutely no reason why you ought to be able to have a big screen in a bar but not in a church, where a church is having a social event," Specter said in an interview Feb. 3. NFL spokesman Brian McCarthy has said NFL rules protect the network that paid to broadcast the game because large gatherings—in churches or theaters—could erode ratings and affect advertising revenues.

**Judge lowers judgment against Kan. church.** A federal judge in Baltimore Feb. 4 reduced the \$10.9 million judgment against a Kansas church and three of its members who protested out-

side a fallen Marine's funeral. U.S. District Judge Richard Bennett awarded \$5 million to Albert Snyder, "for acts of intentional infliction of mental and emotional distress (and) invasion of privacy" by protesting members of Westboro Baptist Church in Topeka, Kan. outside his son's 2006 funeral.

**Gambling addictions common on campuses.** An NCAA survey in 2003 found that 63 percent of Division I male student-athletes admitted to gambling, and more than 17 percent admitted violating NCAA regulations by betting on collegiate sports, according to a report published last month in the Columbus (Ohio) Dispatch. "Gambling is the second-fastest-growing addiction on college campuses, behind alcohol," said Frank Turner, a sports management professor at Ohio State University. "Athletes are competitive individuals, and that competitiveness can lead to gambling."

# Overcoming Barriers



## 2008 Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference

Monday & Tuesday, February 25-26

Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown, Kentucky

### Conference Highlights:

- Music by Larnelle Harris and Terry & Barbi Franklin
- Special Women's Sessions and Luncheon
- Youth Ministers' Dinner with Gerald Sharon
- Focused Breakout Sessions

*If you've ever tried to share your faith, you've probably encountered different kinds of barriers. Join us as we seek to break down barriers and connect all people to Jesus Christ.*

### Guest Speakers:



**John Avant,**  
Pastor of FBC,  
West Monroe, LA



**Kevin Smith,**  
Pastor, Watson  
Memorial Baptist  
Church, Louisville, KY



**Roy Fish,**  
Distinguished Prof. of  
Evangelism, SW Baptist  
Theological Seminary,  
Fort Worth, TX



**Gerald Sharon,**  
Executive Pastor of  
Ministries,  
Saddleback Church,  
Lake Forest, CA



**Richard Harris,**  
Sr. Strategist  
for Missions  
Advancement, for  
NAMB, Atlanta, GA



**John Sullivan,**  
Executive Director-  
Treasurer, Florida  
Baptist Convention



**Frank Page,**  
President, SBC,  
and Pastor, FBC of  
Taylors, SC



**Hershael York,**  
Pastor, Buck Run  
Baptist Church,  
Frankfort, KY



**Chuck Lawless,**  
Dean, Billy Graham  
School of Missions,  
Evangelism & Church  
Growth, The Southern  
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**Bobby Welch,**  
SBC Strategist for  
Global Evangelical  
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*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. — Philippians 4:13*

## Tornado devastates Union University campus

Continued from page 1  
ing will be "lengthy and extensive," he noted.

Tennessee Baptist Convention President Tom McCoy called on Southern Baptists in that state and across the nation to consider how they can help the Union University community tackle the challenge of rebuilding.

"We know the storms destroyed much of the personal possessions of many, and I encourage all our Baptist brothers and sisters across our state and nation to support those who have experienced loss," McCoy urged. "I also ask you to pray to see if the Lord would lay it on your heart to help Union financially in its rebuilding effort."

Local churches, as well as several of Union's peer institutions, have already offered their resources to the stricken campus. Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., has set up a fund to assist with relief and rebuilding efforts, and officials at Rhodes College, a Presbyterian school in Memphis, Tenn., have also offered their assistance.

After taking a day to evaluate the damage inflicted on the campus, the school launched a major clean-up effort on Feb. 7. U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff and Tennessee Gov. Phil Bredesen also toured the tornado-ravaged campus.

University officials also are drafting an "intermediate strategy" to help get classes underway again on Feb. 18, Dockery said, despite the fact that almost every building on campus sustained significant damage during the storm.

The day after the storm, faculty and staff met students at a shopping center across from campus to verify that everyone was safe and accounted for, according to Union professor Michael Chute. Local churches mobilized buses to transport students to host homes.

Students living in the McAfee campus housing complex—the one



**ASSESSING THE DAMAGE** Rescue workers begin the long process of cleanup and repair at Union University in Jackson, Tenn. after a Feb. 5 tornado left dormitories and other facilities in shambles. (BP photo by Jim Veneman)

least damaged in the storm—were allowed back into their rooms to retrieve their belongings.

Also, service was restored to the university's main Web site less than 18 hours after the tornado took it offline. A new site, uuemergency.com, has been established to communicate with members of the university community.

Dockery expressed gratitude to those who have offered support and prayers to the school in the wake of the storm's devastation.

"I want to offer highest commendations for our students and the Student Life Team, who have handled this challenge in amazing ways," he said in a letter. "We want to thank everyone who has given help, provided service and offered ongoing prayer on behalf of Union University."

"We thank God for His providential care," Dockery added. "With the help of God, we will move forward together."

Compiled from reporting by Baptist Press, Associated Baptist Press and Religion News Service



**COSTLY STORMS** Union University President David Dockery surveys damage to the Jackson, Tenn., campus after a Feb. 5 tornado. He estimated that the cost of the damage will be 15 times that of the \$2.6 million destruction caused by a 2002 tornado. (BP photo by Morris Abernathy)

## Tornadoes destroy Tenn. church, kill dozens in south

Savannah, Tenn. (BP)—More than 60 rare winter tornadoes touched down in parts of Tennessee, Arkansas, Kentucky, Alabama and Mississippi Feb. 5, killing at least 57 people and leaving residents to cope with damaged homes, downed power lines and fallen trees.

Sharon Baptist Church in Savannah, Tenn. along the Tennessee River in the southwest part of the state, was destroyed. The church, which also houses Savannah Christian Academy, is led by Jerry Spencer, a former Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee member and former itinerant evangelist. The school had been a ministry of the church since 1997.

"I'd say it's totally destroyed," a dispatcher at the Hardin County sheriff's office said. "The main part of the building, I saw videos of it. It's kind of standing, but it probably won't be stable, and the metal buildings were completely destroyed. I would just about say they'll have to tear it down and start over."

The deaths included 32 people in Tennessee, 13 in Arkansas, seven in Kentucky and five in Alabama, according to the Associated Press.

President Bush said Feb. 6 that his thoughts were with the tornado victims.

"Our administration is reaching out to state officials," he said. "I just called the governors of the affected states. I wanted them to know that this government will help them; but more importantly, I wanted them to be able to tell the people in their states that the American people hold those who suffer up in prayer."

## Florida marriage amendment certified for November ballot

Tallahassee, Fla. (BP)—A constitutional amendment to protect traditional marriage in Florida will appear on the November ballot after supporters gathered 92,000 extra petitions in about two weeks after learning a computer glitch had dropped the previous tally below the 611,000 required signatures.

John Stemberger, chairman of the Florida Coalition to Protect Marriage, was notified earlier this month by the director of the state Division of Elections that the Florida Marriage Protection Amendment was officially certified for the Nov. 4 general election ballot.

"We are grateful to God first and to our supporters second for this amazing victory," Stemberger said. "What our people did was simply remarkable."

In January, supporters of the amendment were informed that they had fallen nearly 22,000 signatures shy of the required number after an audit found that 27,000 petitions from Miami-Dade and other counties were double-counted.

The text of the proposed amendment says, "Inasmuch as marriage is the legal union of only one man and one woman as husband and wife, no other legal union that is treated as marriage or the substantial equivalent thereof shall be valid or recognized."

"The battle has only just engaged and I ask all Florida Baptists to place the Florida Marriage Protection Amendment on their prayer lists until the Nov. 4 election," said Bill Bunkley, legislative consultant for the Florida Baptist Convention.

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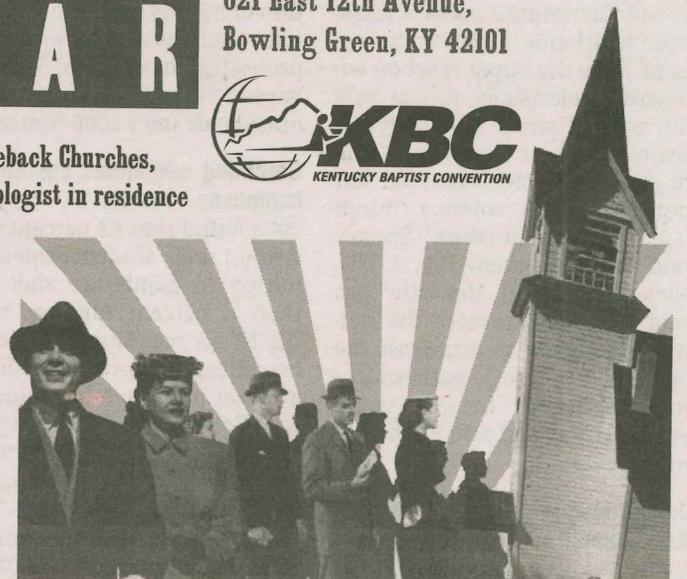
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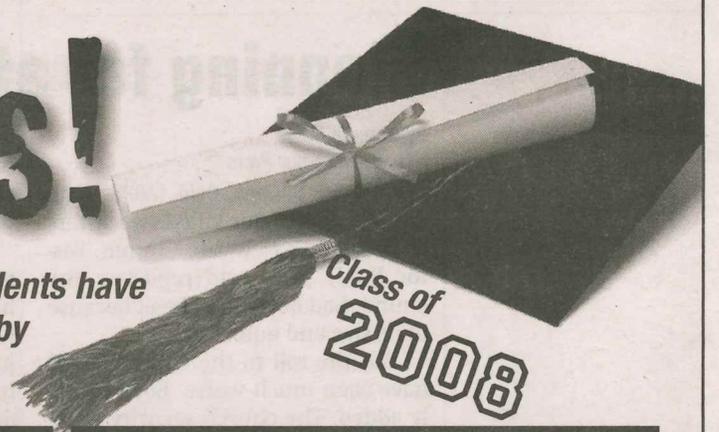
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**Holly Roach**  
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**Adam Craig**  
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**Timothy Gerst**  
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**Christa Spencer**  
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**Amanda Todd**  
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**Sarah Lake**  
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**Justin Woods**  
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## Planning for attack is concern for churches of all sizes

By Hannah Elliott  
Associated Baptist Press

**Colorado Springs, Colo.** (ABP)—One day after a shooter killed two sisters at Colorado's New Life Church, Pastor Brady Boyd told reporters the church had become a target because of its size and notoriety.

But the toll to the church could have been much worse, Boyd quickly added. The church security team quickly and effectively subdued the attacker, a 24-year-old man who ultimately was shot and died.

"Because we took extra precautions, we saved a lot of lives yesterday," Boyd said at the time. "We have had a plan in place here for many years, before I ever came as senior pastor, for situations like this."

But what should an average church do to prepare for a violent crisis? What's more, how should staff members prepare a congregation for the unthinkable without terrifying it in the process?

It is helpful to recognize that simply articulating security plans does not mean a church is dangerous any more than pointing out emergency exits on an airplane means it will crash. It just means precautions have been taken.

Experts say the first step to ensuring safety is deciding what kind of image a particular church wants to present and then acting on it. Richard Schaber, risk-control manager for Church Mutual Insurance Com-

pany, explained that there are two basic ways to address security in a church—similar to that of a shopping mall or an airport.

Each method has its own irregularities, he noted. Shopping malls have a great deal of open space, allow for fluid motion of crowds, and have several points of entry and exits. For better or for worse, airports do not.

"Unfortunately when we mostly look at (a church) like a shopping mall, it's very difficult to secure. You've got people coming and going," Schaber noted. But using metal detectors at a single entrance "certainly has an impact on those attending. When you treat it like an airport and you're wandering people (with a metal-detecting 'wand'), that doesn't always go over very well."

### Creating a response plan

Schaber explained that the essential issue is to create response plans tailored to a specific church. That begins with forming a security team to identify potential threats. The team should include staff members, volunteers and church members with skills in the medical, military or law-enforcement fields. They should then brainstorm threatening scenarios.

According to experts, it is important to remember that each church will have specific needs. Generic policies may not fit what a particular

congregation is able or willing to implement, and misguided or unheeded policies can increase liability, said Phill Martin, deputy chief executive officer of the Texas-based National Association of Church Business Administration.

"Be careful what policies you put into place," Martin warned, noting the "boilerplate" language of generic policies may not fit what a particular congregation is able or willing to implement.

According to Martin, three of the basic threats to churches are the presence of a weapon, the use of a weapon, and a hostage situation or barricaded gunman. After determining the vulnerability to and potential impact of a worst-case scenario, members should assign responsibilities that will minimize damage to people and property. Duties could include locking the building, checking classrooms, calling authorities, conducting head counts, administering first-aid and counseling victims.

A simple step toward mitigating the consequences of any security threat is to improve general building security, according to a newsletter from Wisconsin-based Church Mutual. Keeping doors and windows locked, installing video cameras and adequate lighting, trimming bushes and changing locks annually can prevent a crisis before it starts.

Small churches that cannot af-

ford to hire professional security should reach an understanding with local police about what to do in a crisis.

Once a team is formed and a safety plan established, church staff should inform the congregation so that panic does not overwhelm them if a gunman enters the building. A crime-prevention checklist distributed by Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company suggested using announcements during services to outline evacuation plans, show emergency exits and explain how children will be protected in the nursery. It also advised posting emergency policies on walls, printing them in church bulletins and posting them on websites.

Unfortunately, as worshipers at New Life Church discovered, the impact of a crisis does not stop after danger is eliminated. A key responsibility of any safety team is to designate a spokesperson for media inquiries—and depending on the nature of the crisis, that could be a huge task.

According to experts, church employees and members should direct all media questions to a designated person and that a communication plan should be included in the overall security plan. Pastors should neither seek nor hide from media coverage, and they should be ready to respond to media questions with more than a "no comment."

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Reflections on trip to Zambia

Partnership opens doors to share gospel with orphans

By Reagan Carfield  
assistant program director

During the first week of January, I had the opportunity to travel to Kitwe, Zambia. While we were there, we had the opportunity to work with 55 students at a school with which Crossings partners.

The moment that my heart attached itself to Zambia was on the first day of our visit. The team was passing out peanut butter and jelly on hamburger buns. I handed one to a little boy named Shadrick. He looked up at me, thanked me and then placed half of his sandwich in his pocket. For this precious child, that was the only food he would have for the day, so he wanted to save a little for later.

Watching the team hand out bread to children who are hungry was a true testimony of the gospel. Jesus said in the book of John, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst." I will always carry in my mind the image of Shadrick with his pockets full of bread.

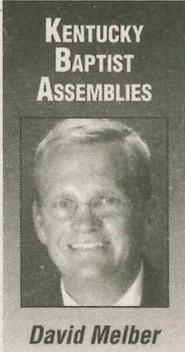
In the mornings, we facilitated a modified vacation Bible school

and in the afternoons we worked with the older boys and a carpenter to build tables and benches for the school. When we asked the boys what their favorite part of the week was, we anticipated hearing about the games or the songs. Instead, their favorite part was learning how to use tools because that gave them hope of getting a job doing carpentry in the future. These boys were only 11 years old.

It is hard to imagine a place where almost every child you meet has been orphaned because of AIDS. It is hard to imagine a place where you can become sick simply from drinking water. And it is hard to imagine a place where children who have lost one or both parents to disease and who have no material possessions can smile like they do.

Our goal for this partnership with Zambia is to remind these children that the Lord knows them by name. He knows their needs before they ask. Through Crossing's investment in Zambia, we have the opportunity to show them that they are not alone and to share the living gospel of Jesus Christ with them.

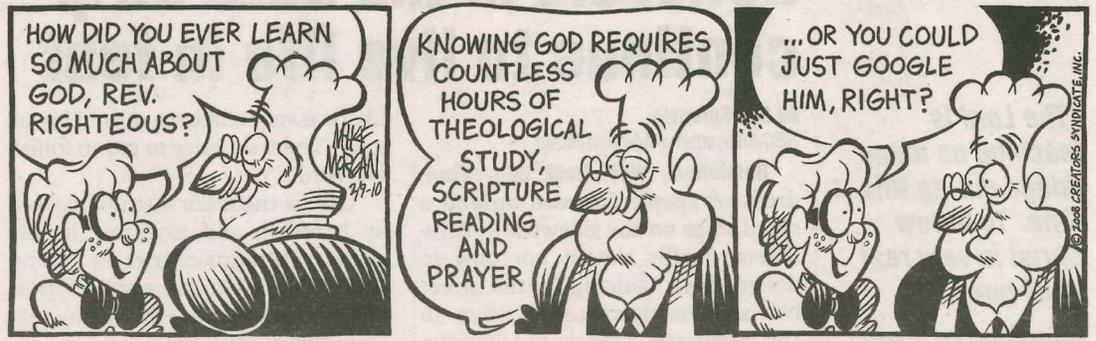
David Melber is president of Kentucky Baptist Assemblies. Contact him at Box 99918, Louisville, KY 42069-0918; phone (502) 491-7000.



David Melber

For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



Church of the Covered Dish

Thom Tapp



Bible Crosswords

By Teri Grottke

Across

- 1 Son of Benjamin (Genesis 46:21)
- 4 Ruth's sister-in-law
- 9 Pronoun
- 11 Son of Zephaniah (Zechariah 6:14)
- 12 Wake
- 13 \_\_\_ what?
- 14 Son of Aram (Genesis 10:23)
- 15 Where the shewbread was
- 16 Skin
- 17 "\_\_\_ thy cause with thy neighbor himself" (Proverbs 25:9)
- 19 Made useless
- 21 Family of exiles (Ezra 2:44)
- 22 The Great \_\_\_
- 23 More astute
- 24 Assistant to Ezra (Nehemiah 8:7)
- 27 Consume
- 28 Certain muscles, according to your personal trainer
- 30 Conjunction
- 31 Parched
- 34 City in Asher (1 Chronicles 6:75)
- 37 Grain mentioned in Isaiah 28:25
- 38 Exhaust
- 39 Are
- 40 "Come before his presence with \_\_\_" (Psalm 100:2)
- 43 Give heed to
- 47 Esau's father-in-law (Genesis 26:34)
- 48 Miner's trove
- 49 Father of Jeroboam (1 Kings 11:26)

1	2	3		4	5	6	7	8		9	10
11				12						13	
14			15						16		
17		18					19	20			
	21						22				
23							24			25	26
27					28	29					30
31			32	33				34	35	36	
		37					38				
			39			40				41	42
43	44	45			46				47		
48				49				50		51	
52				53						54	

- 51 Solomon's great-grandson (1 Kings 15)
- 52 U.S. founder of Girl Scouts
- 53 Grate the teeth
- 54 Carve

Down

- 1 Second judge of Israel
- 2 He was given fifteen more years to live
- 3 Preposition
- 4 Daniel Webster, for one
- 5 What kings and sleepyheads wear
- 6 King of Assyria (1 Chronicles 5:26)
- 7 "Of the tribe of \_\_\_ were sealed twelve thousand" (Revelation 7:6)
- 8 Pronoun
- 9 Created
- 10 Regarded
- 13 Commandment mountain
- 15 Bible weed
- 16 \_\_\_ the Bethelite (1 Kings 16:34)
- 18 Exert or busy
- 20 Employ
- 23 Blanket or suit
- 24 Where Auntie Em lived (abbr.)
- 25 Also
- 26 Eight adults lived aboard this
- 28 Preposition
- 29 Near
- 32 Eve was made from one of Adam's
- 33 To Thomas, this was believing
- 34 Ancient Hebrew liquid measure
- 35 "The Pharisees began to \_\_\_ him vehemently" (Luke 11:53)
- 36 "Will the men of \_\_\_ deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul?" (1 Samuel 23:12)
- 38 One of the sons of Japheth (1 Chronicles 1:5)
- 40 One of the sons of Cush (1 Chronicles 1:9)
- 41 Probiscus
- 42 Chew
- 43 N.T. book (abbr.)
- 44 Mountain (comb. form)
- 45 "Behold, I make all things \_\_\_" (Revelation 21:5)
- 46 Lair
- 50 Chemical symbol (abbr.)

Last week's solution

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
W	O	R	L	D	S						S	G		
A	R	I	A			A	B	I		I	L	K	S	
S	A	T	I	A	T	E	D			M	A	S	T	
		E	S	T				H	O	S				
M	A	S	H			I	N	C	E	N	S	E	D	
I	F					S	T	E	A	L		G	O	
C	O					R	A	B	B	I		B	Y	
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W	E	N				A	L	P	H	A		E	E	

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Where tradition meets technology

## Believers in the Gaza Strip continue to live life in fear

By Sue Sprengle  
SBC International Mission Board

**Bethlehem, West Bank (BP)**—Hundreds of people crowded around a small stage on the sidewalk in Bethlehem. Traffic slowed not only to dodge those dancing in the street but so passengers could listen to the musicians publicly proclaiming God's love for the nations.

A visiting Gaza woman nervously looked around, checking the crowd for troublemakers at the outdoor praise and worship concert by Bethlehem Bible College students.

"We couldn't do something like this in Gaza. People are always watching," she whispered. "Ever since our dear brother was killed for his faith, Gaza Christians live in fear."

In October, Rami Ayyad, a prominent Baptist, was kidnapped and found dead less than a mile from a Christian bookstore he managed for the Palestinian Bible Society. Officials said there has been no progress in the investigation.

Life has been increasingly difficult for Christians in Gaza since Hamas seized control of the coastal strip last June. Attacks against Christians have been rare; however, the Baptist community has been a target for extremists.

Many Baptist leaders have fled the Gaza Strip, taking refuge in the West Bank. Pastor Hanna Massad and his family are among eight families who relocated because they felt it was too dangerous to remain in their homeland.

"The Lord is teaching us many things during this time. To follow

Christ is very real to us now," Massad said. "There's a price to pay to follow our Lord."

Life in the Gaza Strip is marked by hardship and isolation, as the average Palestinian tries to survive from one day to the next. There is often no electricity. This means very little water since water pumps are electric. Store shelves are depleted. Food prices have escalated dramatically, making even basic necessities too expensive for many.

Violence or the threat of violence is just a part of everyday life, as seen recently with rocket launchings by the Palestinians and reciprocal shootings by the Israeli army just days after President George W. Bush visited the region.

Also taking an emotional toll is the security fence circling the Gaza Strip, separating them from the outside world. Many say this is their own "little prison."

Most Baptists live in one section of town, in further isolation. The Baptist church that had more than 100 members six months ago has only 10 attend Sunday services now.

In December, some Gaza Christians had a small reprieve from the stresses of living in the Gaza Strip. Israel granted temporary permission to hundreds to travel to the West Bank for the holidays. Many chose not to return.

The Gaza woman listening to the concert in Bethlehem said she planned to return home.

"Yes, life is hard there and we live in fear. But I will go back," she said. "It is my home."

**"The Lord is teaching us many things during this time. To follow Christ is very real to us now."**

Hanna Massad, Baptist pastor living in the West Bank

## Organization suspends mission trips to Kenya in wake of recent violence

**Dallas (ABP)**—All Buckner International mission trips to Kenya will be cancelled through May, agency President Ken Hall announced. The decision comes amid violent unrest prompted by tainted presidential elections there Dec. 27.

The announcement follows a previous decision by Buckner, a Baptist child and family services agency based in Texas, to suspend mission trips until March.

Hall and Vice President of Global Initiatives Randy Daniels recently announced the decision after witnessing dangerous conditions first hand in Nairobi and Kitale, Kenya.

According to recent reports from the Red Cross, more than

860 people have been killed and more than 200,000 displaced in the turmoil.

"This trip to Africa is reminding me that there is a very real presence of evil in our world," Hall said. "Please pray for the people of Kenya and for this nation."

Despite the violence, Hall said the children Buckner cares for at the Baptist Children's Center in Nairobi and Seed of Hope Children's Home in Kitale remain safe.

Daniels, who oversees Buckner International ministries in Kenya, said the agency will continue to provide services to Kenya but will "rearrange the mission trips because we cannot guarantee safety at this time."

## Seeking Executive Editor

for the **Western Recorder**, Kentucky Baptist weekly newspaper in Louisville, Ky. Christian journalist with minimum of five years experience in print media; degree in journalism, communications or related field; seminary training preferred. Management and supervisory skills required. Submit resume, cover letter and a writing sample by March 10 to:

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Campbellsville Baptist Church  
420 N. Central Avenue, Campbellsville, KY 42718

## 'I could have told you'

### Students realize Oneida's advantages outweigh its perceived disadvantages

This may be a bit of a stretch, but sometimes I want to go to a student and tell him or her, "I told you." "Janice" (not her real name) came to Oneida five years ago when she was in the sixth grade. She was one of four siblings who enrolled at OBI for various reasons from a single-parent home. Their mother had a very modest income from working evenings. Just as the children arrived home from school, mom went to work to provide for the family.

Janice did not have any major issues when she enrolled, but her grades were not the best and everyone agreed that she needed more structure. She was also beginning to develop a bit of an attitude. Janice has never been totally excited about being at Oneida and I have never understood that. I knew she was doing much better here and I believed OBI was a much better environment for her. But if students do not work with us we cannot make them do anything.

So for quite some time Janice would tell us she was going back home or that she would not be back in the fall. In spite of this, she did not quit and always returned—until August of last year.

When Janice went home after school let out last May, she did not return. Anyone here could have told you that was a very bad decision. We do not know if her mother was agreeable or if she simply felt she could not stop it. Either way, no one here thought Janice would do well returning to her former school.

Just before Christmas we received word that Janice wanted to return to Oneida. Since she had not caused us any trouble and had not been ex-

pelled, letting her return was not a problem. As usual, we asked for her transcript. When we saw her grades, we knew why she wanted to return. She had six Fs and one D. Over the years, when students have been at OBI for a period of time and then decide to try it again at their former school, things often do not go very well.

One may ask why that would happen, especially if we had given the student a solid educational foundation. Shouldn't she be able to do just as well anywhere? Not so.

When you consider the smaller classes we provide (normally 8-11 students per class), the individual attention a student receives from our faculty and all the distractions a student faces in some home environments, it does not take long to put two and two together. I do not claim to know all the reasons Janice failed, but I am sure all of those reasons contributed to her failing grades.

Being so far out in the country has some real disadvantages, especially when it comes to shopping and being able to have access to everyday supplies we need as a school. But God could not have planted our school in a better location. If you have been to our campus, you know there are no distractions here. There are no malls; students cannot have cars; there is no time to run around with their peers; bed check is at 10:00 p.m. You get the idea.

The important thing right now is that Janice is back. And I do not believe it will take long for us to see her grades improve to where they were before she went back to her former school.

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

## Practicing what he preaches

### Miller resigns as pastor to focus on outdoor ministry

As a pastor for 18 years in the same church, alumnus Gary Miller was used to preaching to his congregation about the importance of "walking by faith" when it comes to following God's call. Now he is experiencing the opportunity to practice what he has preached.

Miller resigned as pastor of Pump Springs Baptist Church in Harrogate, Tenn., last year to concentrate full time on the ministry he felt called to start known as Outdoor Truths Ministry. He said he knew it was time for him to answer the Lord's call to minister to outdoorsmen through weekly newspaper articles, speaking engagements and developing discipleship materials geared toward outdoorsmen.

"I was so busy that I couldn't do both," Miller recalled. "I knew the Lord was eventually moving me and it got to where I knew it was time."

Outdoor Truths Ministry began more than four years ago when two newspaper men passed in the church's hallway picking up ads that the church was going to run in its newspaper.

"I always had a desire to write these articles for hunters and fisherman with a light religious message

to them," Miller noted. "Those two guys passed in the hall and each one took an article and said they'd run it every now and then."

That meeting in the hallway has grown—weekly papers across the region now pick up the articles. Miller also began to establish relationships with some outdoor companies and to receive opportunities to speak at churches, wild game events and fishing tournaments.

He added that people who would not normally come to church would come to those events where he could reach them with the word of God. "One reason why is that I've never met an atheist hunter or fisherman. Anybody who's outside long enough is very sure that there is a God," Miller noted.

"Seventy-four million hunting or fishing licenses are sold in America each year. That's a big group of people and I was doing something to reach that market," he said. "After a couple of years, God began to put a different burden within me."

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

## Lucado, LifeWay offer John 3:16 experience to the world

**New York**—Walking the streets of New York City is like taking a tour around the world. Every nation, every language group, every ethnic and religious background is represented. Noise is ever present. Even in the throng of people hustling back and forth, it is still easy to feel very much alone—to feel like just a plain, ordinary “whoever.” There are so many people, but so much loneliness.

That is the reason Max Lucado said he traveled to New York to film the video for his new LifeWay-produced resource, “3:16: The Church Experience.”

The resource accompanies his book, “3:16: The Numbers of Hope,” released Sept. 11 of last year. The title stands in contrast to its release date.

“While 9/11 represents the numbers of despair, 3:16 are the numbers of hope,” Lucado explained.

The 3:16 resources refer, of course, to John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

The book had a first-run printing of one million copies, almost unheard of for a Christian nonfiction

title and it is currently licensed for publication in 14 languages.

Lucado, who is pastor of Oak Hills Church, a nondenominational congregation in San Antonio, said that John 3:16 has always struck him as the most inclusive verse in the Bible.

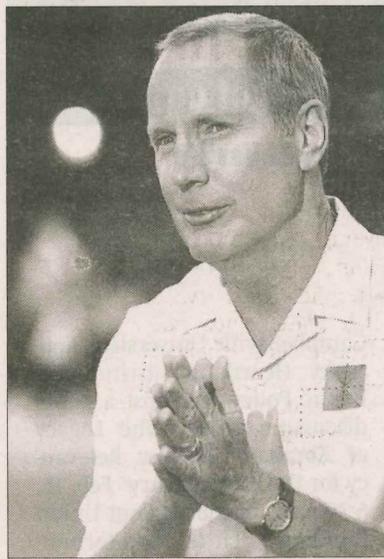
### All-inclusive verse

“It’s easy to understand,” he noted. “There’s no context or history needed. It’s simple and clear. You really can’t get more inclusive than ‘the world’ and ‘whoever.’”

“The word ‘whoever’ rolls out the welcome mat into the entrance of God’s heart. ‘Whoever’ throws open God’s front door. Everyone is a ‘whoever.’”

Lucado spoke to a cross-section of New Yorkers during the taping of 3:16 at Crossroads Tabernacle in the Bronx. Members of the church pointed out that they maintain an evangelistic outreach to everyone who comes near.

“Some people have tried to make salvation restrictive, but Jesus contradicted that when He said ‘whoever,’” Lucado said. “‘Whoever’ can come however they are. It’s good to be ‘whoever.’”



**RESOURCE OF HOPE** Author Max Lucado films a segment in New York’s Central Park for the video to accompany “3:16—The Church Experience.” (Photo by Kent Harville)

The taping of the 3:16 resource was the first time Lucado has worked in front of a live audience for one of his studies.

“I’m used to working in front of my congregation, but never for this kind of taping,” he acknowledged.

“Up to now, it’s mostly been pretty solitary, but John 3:16 is not a verse to do alone. I love working with this great crew of Christian men. I have worked with a lot of crews before who weren’t Christian, and that’s good too because they get to hear the message of Christ, but it has been good to work in this spiritual atmosphere of prayer.”

### On location

LifeWay’s film crew, headed by director Rick Simms, filmed the opening and closing segments of the study all around New York. Locations included the Brooklyn Bridge, Central Park, Flushing Meadows and a rooftop in Queens.

“We’ve put together ‘3:16: The Church Experience’ kit to provide church leaders with a rich cafeteria-style opportunity to choose from all the 3:16 resources available to tailor a study to fit their own churches and communities,” noted Sam House, LifeWay’s editor of leadership adult publishing. “Like Max said, John 3:16 is a verse for everybody. It’s a personal verse. We want every church to make it personal for their people and the people they will reach with the message.”

**“Some people have tried to make salvation restrictive, but Jesus contradicted that when He said ‘whoever’ (in John 3:16). ‘Whoever’ can come however they are. It’s good to be ‘whoever.’”**

Author Max Lucado

## Experienced ministers collaborate on updated resource for pastors

By Tammi Reed Ledbetter  
Texas Baptist Crossroads

**Nashville** (BP)—How do you counsel an abusive husband? Why should you re-evaluate a ministry every 18 months? How do you find and attract good staff members? What is the most important responsibility of a pastor?

Two veteran ministers answer these and a host of other questions in a new book aimed at helping pastors at any stage of ministry, no matter the size of the church.

Mac Brunson, pastor of First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Fla., and James Bryant, professor of pastoral theology at Criswell College in Dallas, are co-authors of “The New Guidebook for Pastors.”

The authors revisited the original “Guidebook for Pastors” written more than 25 years ago by W.A. Criswell, the long-time pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas.

“The New Guidebook for Pastors” frequently refers to the life messages, examples and writings of the two world-famous pastors of First Baptist, Dallas, Criswell and George Truett, who “still encourage pastors today,” the authors acknowledged.

Brunson and Bryant also tapped 21 notable Southern Baptist pastors, seminary faculty and other contemporary leaders who offer pertinent testimonies and insight based on years of experience in ministry.

The call to preach, the authors note, is a call to prepare, which is

the focus of the first two chapters of the updated book.

Bryant and Brunson also warn, “If you are in the ministry and do not have a clear, unquestionable sense of God’s call, even though you may not be able to explain it, then you should leave the ministry immediately. The harm you can do to people, a congregation, your family, yourself, and the kingdom is beyond description.”

For pastors confident in their call, however, the authors concede, “There will be many times when the only thing that holds your hand to the plow is your call.”

Contrary to what many pastors and church members believe, the authors note that a pastor’s “first

and most important responsibility is to preach the Word of God” and not to cast a vision, attend the latest convention, be at every class social or make hospital visits.

Other chapters and sections of the book address such topics as:

- Proper, biblical administration of baptism and Lord’s Supper, including theological and historical background for the ordinances.
- Weddings and funerals as significant avenues for ministry.
- Protocol of hospital visitation.
- Grief counseling.
- The minister’s family, prayer life, finances, ethics, politics, moral issues, denominational relationships, retirement, reward, schedule and ministry burnout.

## New Threads study explores hidden truths of feasts observed by Jesus

**Nashville**—Many Christians know Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur only as preprinted words on a store-bought calendar. However, these feasts and others hold hidden truths for those in search of details about Jesus Christ, His life on earth and prophecies He came to fulfill.

Threads, the young adult ministry community of LifeWay Christian Resources, will release a new study next month called “Feast: Finding Your Place at the Table of Tradition” which details six feasts practiced by Jesus corresponding to His Jewish tradition.

Author Derek Leman is a rabbi of the Tikvat David (Hope of David) Messianic Synagogue in Atlanta. He grew up an atheist and found Christ while attending college. After attending a Baptist church, Leman recalled that he quickly became intrigued with the Old Testament. He said he now has a passion for Jewish tradition and believes that “Christianity without its Hebrew founda-

tion is a tree without roots.”

“I believe that part of the Bible—our traditions—has been neglected,” Leman said. “People have false notions about the Old Testament. Understanding the feasts might help people understand the Old Testament, Jesus and Judaism better.”

The Feast study explores the origin and ancient versus modern practice of five feasts from Leviticus 23—Passover, Feast of Weeks, Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah), The Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), Feast of Tabernacles—as well as Hanukkah.

According to Threads Editor-in-Chief Valerie Hancock, the study is the result of feedback from young adults desiring to explore the historical context of Scripture and Bible stories they read as children.

“This study is about feasts, but it is also about Jesus, too. Many people may not get that,” Hancock noted. “Every ritual in the Old Testament has application in the New Testament.”

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## PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following requests associated with the Kentucky Baptist Convention's partnership missions efforts:

■ Pray for the Woman's Missionary Union volunteer team as they travel to Brazil to prayerwalk Feb. 18-28. Pray that God will guide them to be in the right places at the right time.

■ Pray for Scott Pittman, director of the partnership missions department, as he sets goals and objectives for the department. Pray also for wisdom and discernment as he seeks Kentucky Baptists' next international partnership.

■ Pray for Jorio Ferreira and Davi Rodrigues, who are serving as on-site coordinators for the KBC's mission partnership with Brazilian Baptists.

■ Pray for volunteers to fill the partnership mission project requests for 2008.

For more information about partnership missions opportunities, contact the KBC partnership missions department at (502) 489-3529 or toll-free in Kentucky at (866) 489-3529.

## MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **BOAZ**—Wice Church recently called **Roy Parks Jr.** as pastor.

■ **CENTRAL CITY**—Cherry Hill Church ordained **James Gossett, David Peay** and **Howard Spurlock** as deacons Feb. 3. **Gene Garner** is pastor.

■ **CLINTON**—First Church ordained **Laine Bizzle, Roy Dillard** and **Terry Mullins** as deacons Jan. 27.

■ **GEORGETOWN**—Georgetown College will host Pulitzer Prize-winning author **Garry Wills** as part of the school's Joseph-Beth Speakers Series Feb. 21, 11 a.m., in the John L. Hill Chapel. Wills will discuss his latest book, "What the Gospels Meant." For more information, call **Jo Anna Fryman** at (502) 863-8146.

■ **LaCENTER**—**Troy Deweese** recently resigned as pastor of New Hope Church.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Cloverleaf Church will host **Sons of Liberty** in concert Feb. 16, 7 p.m. **Geoffrey Lacefield** is pastor.

Ninth & O Church will host a 13-week Financial Peace University class each Wednesday beginning Feb. 20, 6:30 p.m. For more information, call **Ray Heck** at (502) 386-7815.

■ **OWENSBORO**—**David Stovall** recently resigned as minister of education and discipleship at First Church. **Paul Strahan** is pastor.

■ **PADUCAH**—Reidland Church recently ordained **Christopher Hines**

## Spotlight on ...

### Campbellsville



Campbellsville University's Kentucky Heartland Institute on Public Policy will host a panel discussion titled "The Legacy of Abraham Lincoln: Relevancy for the 21st Century" Feb. 18, 6:30 p.m., in the Student Union Building's Little Auditorium. The event is part of the Lincoln Bicentennial Celebration.

to the gospel ministry. **Larry Lewis** is pastor.

■ **PHILPOT**—Bethabara Church will honor **Herschel Morgan**, who has served 20 years as pastor, with a reception at the church Feb. 17, 2 to 4 p.m.

■ **WHEELWRIGHT**—**Roger Trusty** recently resigned as pastor of Jack's Creek Church.

■ **WICKLIFFE**—Faith Church recently called **Billy Prince** as pastor.

■ **WINCHESTER**—Central Church ordained **Matt Gurney** and **Matt Page** to the gospel ministry Jan. 27.



## 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, Sevens 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 Yourh 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:** Oak church pews with green padding. Twenty pews 10 feet long, three pews 7 feet long. \$200 each. Call (270) 849-6144 or (270) 465-1980.

**FOR SALE:** 100% solid oak pews—twenty 10 feet long; light oak finish; hymnal, cup, card and pencil holders; endcaps have cross. \$4,000 (negotiable). Call (859) 749-6305; for pictures, e-mail [jimla@psci.net](mailto:jimla@psci.net).

**FOR SALE:** Beautiful Christian, patriotic neckties: retail value: \$15, cost: \$7. Striped neckties: special price \$4.50. Military neckties: \$7. Humor book (1,000 sold): "Laughter Doeth Good Like a Medicine," \$7. Dake compact Bibles: \$28. Call (606) 285-3051.

**SEEKING:** Full-time director of youth ministries for Gardenside Baptist Church. For information, see [www.gardensidebaptist.com](http://www.gardensidebaptist.com).

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister of music/worship for Cynthiana Baptist Church. With an average worship attendance of 400, CBC is in the process of relocating to a 45-acre campus. Cynthiana Baptist seeks applicants who are called to the service of ministry as it relates to serving the needs of church members. This minister is responsible for the overall ministry of music and worship in the church. Applicant must be an experienced musician capable of leading a "contemporary" worship service with a 10-member praise band, as well as a "classic" service with choir, organ and piano. Send resumé, references, and any additional materials to: Personnel Committee, Cynthiana Baptist Church, 212 East Pleasant St., Cynthiana, KY 41031; or e-mail to [WayneSpivey@bellsouth.net](mailto:WayneSpivey@bellsouth.net).

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for Mount Tabor Baptist, an SBC church in Paint Lick, Ky. (near Richmond). Salary plus benefits. Send resumé to L. Metcalf, 213 LeBeau Drive, Nicholasville, KY 40356; or e-mail [l\\_metcalf@alltel.net](mailto:l_metcalf@alltel.net).

**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:** 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. Send resumé to Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, 5664 Hwy. 56, Owensboro, KY 42301; or e-mail resumé to [office@pgbcchurch.com](mailto:office@pgbcchurch.com) or [opsnurse@yahoo.com](mailto:opsnurse@yahoo.com).

**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:** Bivocational pastor for small, rural church in Sanders, Ky. Resumés by 2-20-2008 to [sbc0907@hotmail.com](mailto:sbc0907@hotmail.com). Profile listed on KBC site; or call (502) 484-2508.

**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:** Organist for First Baptist Church, Paris, Tenn. Resumés now being accepted. The music and worship ministry of FBC is blended/eclectic, ranging from Handel to Franny Crosby to Stuart Townsend/Keith Getty. The organ is a two-manual, 28-rank Schantz. Please contact Scott Shepherd, minister of music and worship, for job description or more information: [sshepherd@fbcparis.org](mailto:sshepherd@fbcparis.org); (731) 642-5074. Deadline: March 2.

**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, [brewerdmd@bellsouth.net](mailto:brewerdmd@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 Mar. 1, 2008.

**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:** 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:** 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.

# They are precious in His sight

*LifeWay develops resources for special needs community to serve and be served*

By Brooklyn Noel  
LifeWay Christian Resources

Nashville (BP)—Walt Micksch has cerebral palsy.

He also has a wife, two daughters, a business degree and years of experience in the field of operations management and logistics.

"From the time I could hear words, I was told, 'God has a plan for your life and there is a reason you are here,'" said Micksch, who credits his parents and his childhood physical therapist, Dorothy Spark, with pushing him to "be involved in the world" regardless of his cerebral palsy.

It was Spark, a member of the church Micksch attended as a child, who introduced him to special needs ministry by encouraging him to volunteer with a special needs community group when he was a teenager.

"She used that to show how I had no room to complain and that God could really use these people," Micksch recalled.

That early understanding led Micksch to a lifetime of service both in and outside of church, though not necessarily to the special needs community. Micksch said recent contact with several families with children who have cerebral palsy has reawakened his desire to serve in special needs ministry.

The timing was perfect for Carlton McDaniel, special needs specialist for LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, to approach Micksch about helping start a leadership team of people who have special needs. According to McDaniel, the team is the next step toward more fully integrating the special needs community into the larger church community.

"Anywhere that we go typically in our community, whether it be at the gas station, we see people with special needs," McDaniel pointed out. "But when we go into our churches, why don't we see people with special needs?"

Finding ways not only to minister to, but also to minister through

members of the special needs community is the mission of LifeWay's special needs ministry team.

"It's not just about ministering to them, we're helping them to see that they are called by God to be leaders as well," said Ellen Beene, editor of LifeWay's Special Education Today magazine and the special needs edition of LifeWay's Vacation Bible School curriculum.

## An evolving ministry

LifeWay has a heritage of providing resources for special needs ministry dating back to 1979, McDaniel noted. The ministry has developed considerably during the last 28 years and, in particular, during the past couple of years.

"Society as a whole is more accepting and aware of special needs and more churches are recognizing the need to create ministries to reach the special needs families in their community," McDaniel said. "This generation of parents is more likely to expect the church to provide a place for their child with special needs."

In 2007, LifeWay launched LifeWay.com/specialneeds, an on-line resource of articles, downloadable items, event information and other materials intended to meet the growing demand for special needs ministries.

LifeWay also has introduced a new five-year study plan called Access, a resource for adults and older youth with special needs that uses a storytelling approach to communicate biblical truths.

The Access curriculum has been available since 2000, but the fall 2007 edition was the first one designed specifically for learners with special needs to follow a five-year plan.

In addition to the change in the Access program, LifeWay's church resources area introduced a new line of curriculum for children in grades one through six called Special Buddies.

Beene explained that the education strategies of Special Buddies grew out of what LifeWay learned from years of working with local special needs programs.

"Special Buddies is a new resource, but not a new thought," McDaniel noted, adding that the curriculum is intentionally designed for compatibility with the mainstream Bible Teaching for Kids curriculum. This compatibility means that Special Buddies can be used as a resource for adapting lessons for learners who may need additional help or for the teacher who may be teaching a self-contained class, he said.

Having access to a specially tailored curriculum is important, but McDaniel noted that training is where church leaders, parents and volunteers garner encouragement and skills for building a successful special needs ministry.

In the past, special needs training opportunities and curricula focused on older youth and adults. LifeWay has since expanded its special needs



**MEETING THEIR NEEDS** Special needs children and their families often are seen in the community; LifeWay Christian Resources is working to help churches provide them with more opportunities for fellowship and worship as well as to help congregations more fully integrate them into church life. LifeWay began developing resources for special needs ministries back in 1979, but according to special needs specialist Carlton McDaniel, the need for the resources has accelerated in the past couple of years. (BP photos)

ministry to include tools for effectively teaching all ages of learners with special needs.

McDaniel said LifeWay also provides hands-on training during its annual Sunday School events at Ridgecrest and Glorieta conference centers.

During those sessions, a LifeWay staff member coordinates a lab where conference attendees volunteer to serve as teachers to children and adults with special needs in addition to attending seminars focused on special needs ministry. The students in the lab often are adults attending the conference with a church group. Sometimes the students are the children of parents attending the Sunday School events.

While teachers in the lab gain valuable experience in special needs ministry, McDaniel said the students in the class gain exposure to biblical truths through vacation Bible school.

## "We start ministries"

McDaniel also conducts training seminars with local churches, associations and other groups upon request. In these settings, he said he strives to keep the ministry individualized and personal.

"We don't start classes—we start ministries," he pointed out. "We want to teach Jesus in understandable ways, but we have to get families in the door to start that ministry."

Beene noted that special needs ministry impacts nearly every aspect of church life, including the church building itself.

"You have to consider how they get to the choir loft or the pulpit. How do we adapt the playground?" she asked, pointing out that Life-

Way's church architecture department can help with the renovation of existing churches as well as designing original structures that anticipate the need for accessibility.

As churches develop special needs ministries and involve members of that community, McDaniel said church leaders should think in terms of individuals and consider each person's strengths.

"Most of the time we begin a special needs ministry thinking of the impact it will have on the members," McDaniel explained. "It doesn't take long to realize that our members with special needs are actually ministering to us."

Micksch said he has spent nearly 30 years serving the church in some capacity, so he knows the breadth of service that individuals with special needs can perform. He offered the following tips for involving individuals with special needs in church service:

- Ask them whether God has already laid a service or function on their heart.

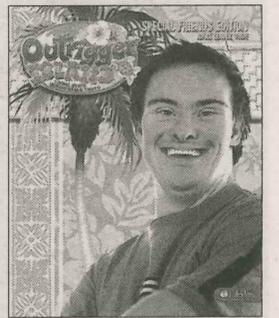
- Offer to pray with them as they seek God's direction for service.

- Create a list tailored to what you know to be each individual's strengths. Ask them to pray through those options. Often this generates additional ideas not on the original list.

- Involve loved ones in the process.

"The goal of every Christian is to serve God," Micksch noted. "People usually ask, 'How can we serve this segment of God's people better?' But I think the question is 'How can they serve us?'"

"Their special need is to serve God, just like everyone's special need is to serve God."



## VBS curriculum expands to include special needs

Nashville (BP)—Beginning this year, LifeWay's vacation Bible school materials will feature resources customized for children with special needs.

"Outrigger Island: Special Friends" is a VBS resource that provides leaders with tools for working with children, youth and adults with special needs in either self-contained or mainstream environments.

Additionally, LifeWay recently launched Special Buddies, a Sunday School line for children with special needs.

"As churches began using this Sunday School material, we wanted them to have something to offer when it came vacation Bible school time," said Jerry Wooley, LifeWay's VBS specialist.

The package features:

- An all-in-one leader guide. This single, reversible guide features all the resources necessary for both children and adults.

- An entirely self-contained program with the flexibility to rotate through recreation and activity times with the entire VBS group.

- Helpful tip sheets for VBS teachers and rotation leaders as well as a resource for a self-contained class.

- Daily themes which mirror that of the overall Outrigger Island curriculum.



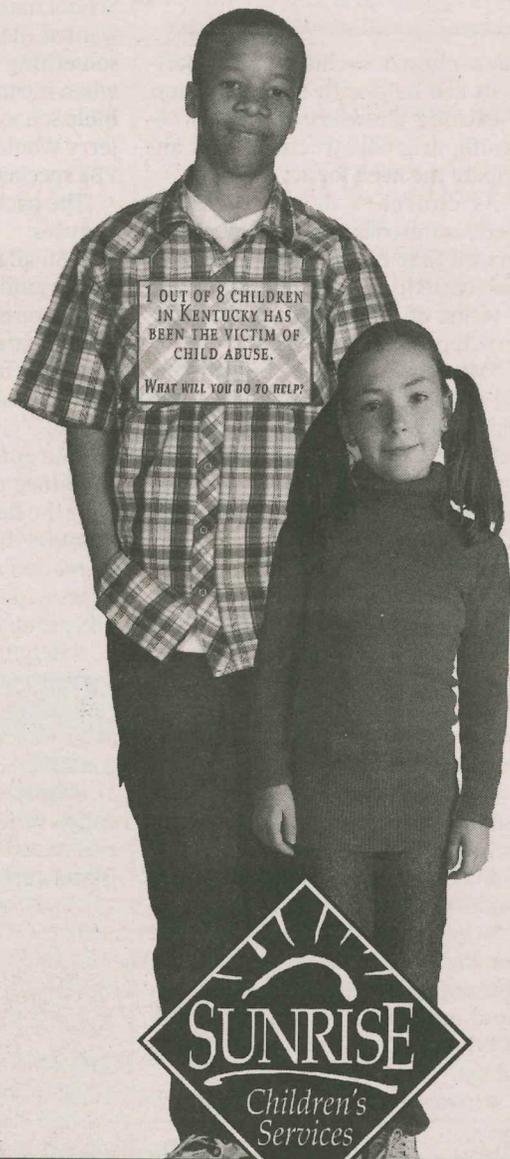
**HELPFUL INFORMATION** *Special Education Today*, a quarterly publication offering information and encouragement for special needs families, is published by LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.



# TAKE A STAND

*against child abuse*

*Imagine a world without child abuse. When children come into our care, they may not be able to imagine such a world.*



Four Feet Tall! Sponsor for only \$300!

Join us and others from your community on April 23rd as we TAKE A STAND against child abuse. We will gather on a main thoroughfare in eleven cities to show our commitment to breaking the cycle of child abuse. Participants can collect donations for Sunrise from others who may not be able to participate in the stand, but want to help. These donations will help Sunrise continue to break the cycle of abuse and rebuild the lives of the children in our care.

Four-foot-tall "stand ups" are available for a \$300 sponsorship. These cutouts can be placed in lobbies or other visible areas to spread awareness of child abuse and invite others to Take a Stand. Together we can make a difference.

For more information about the closest Take A Stand event or to sponsor a "stand up," go to our website, [www.SUNRISE.org](http://www.SUNRISE.org).

**TAKE A STAND** *against child abuse*

Visit [www.SUNRISE.org](http://www.SUNRISE.org) to find out how!

## SUNRISE CHILDREN'S SERVICES

*Therapeutic Foster Care • Residential Treatment Facilities  
Crisis Stabilization • Adoption Services  
Counseling Centers • Youth Support Center  
IMPACT Plus Service Coordination*

[www.SUNRISE.org](http://www.SUNRISE.org)