

February 26, 2008  
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**NFL relaxes rules limiting churches' Super Bowl parties**

New York (RNS)—The National Football League will now allow churches to air live showings of the Super Bowl on a screen of any size, reversing a previous ban on widescreen televisions.

Members of Congress, including Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, and church leaders had objected to the NFL's rule that churches could not hold Super Bowl parties featuring TV screens larger than 55 inches, even though sports bars routinely do.

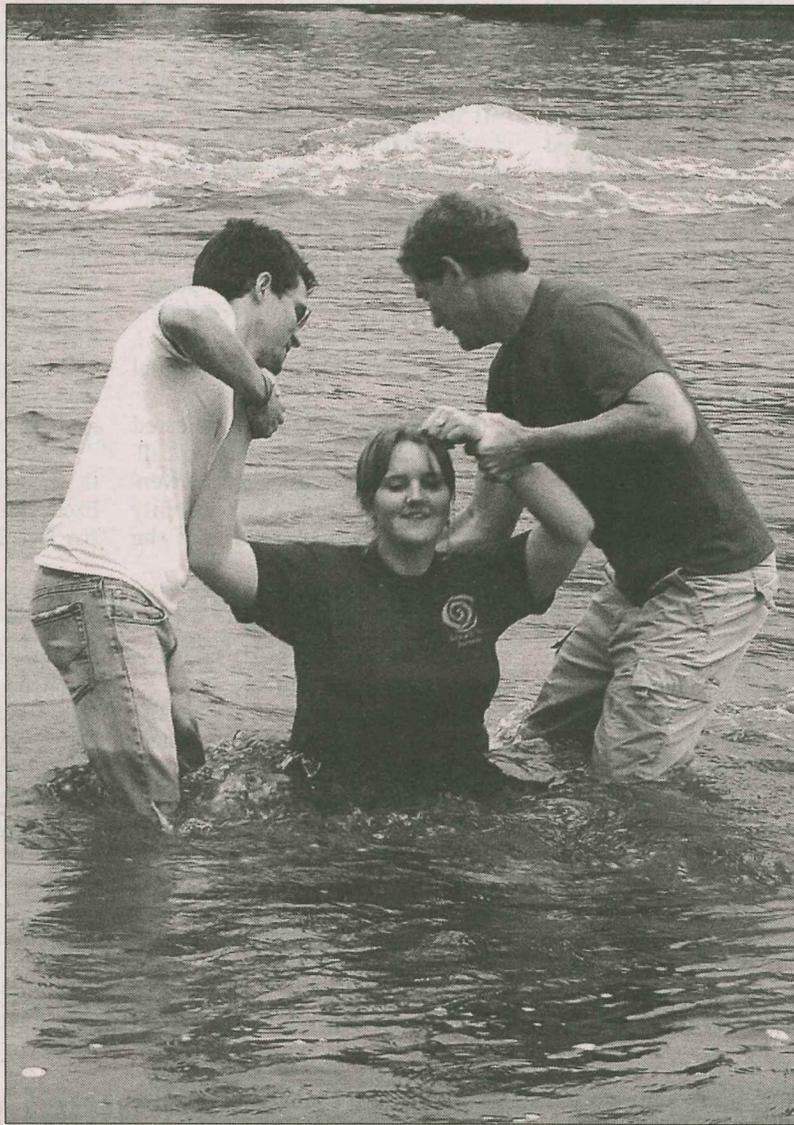
"For future Super Bowls, the league will not object to live showings—regardless of screen size—of the Super Bowl by a religious organization when such showings are free and on premises used by the religious organization on a routine and customary basis," NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell wrote in a Feb. 19 letter to Hatch.

The senator had written to Goodell on Feb. 13, asking a series of questions about the policy and saying he wanted to ensure that "all Americans" could watch the game with "loved ones and neighbors."

"I am grateful that this accommodation was made to allow the NFL to protect its copyrighted material, while respecting the interests of churches," the senator noted.

Goodell told Hatch the league will begin its policy with Super Bowl XLIII in 2009.

**Claiming campuses for Christ**



**RAISED TO NEW LIFE** Jordan Minnick (left) and North American Mission Board church planting missionary David Proffitt (right) baptize new believer Allyn Clark, a student at Virginia Commonwealth University, in the chilly James River in Richmond, Va. (NAMB photo by Alice Rusher)

**Church planter says Virginia's collegians know urgency of life**

By Mickey Noah  
SBC North American Mission Board

Harrisonburg, Va.—For North American missionaries David and Shirley Proffitt, their passion is winning the next generation to Christ by planting new churches near college campuses. And that passion has turned into a family affair.

Seven years ago, the Proffitts left Southern California—where the couple and their grown son and daughter had been planting churches for 25 years—for Virginia where they have been planting collegiate churches as missionaries supported by the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board and the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia.

David and Shirley Proffitt 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. The Proffitts will be featured as part of the annual Week of Prayer, March 2-9, the theme of which is "Live with Urgency: Seize Your Divine Moment." This year's offering goal is \$61 million, 100 percent of which is used for missionaries like the Proffitts.

At James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Va., the Proffitts' first Virginia church plant, Aletheia (which is Greek for "truth") Church, has grown from four members in 2002, to nearly 400 who regularly at-  
□ See NAMB missionary ... Page 6

**Boots, hats, blue jeans and dogs all welcome at Cowboy Church**

By Erin Roach  
Kentucky Baptist Convention

Paris—Kentucky has its first Southern Baptist church geared toward reaching a crowd more comfortable in boots, hats and blue jeans than traditional worship attire.

Blue Grass Cowboy Church, which meets at Bourbon County Fairgrounds in Paris each Tuesday night at 7 o'clock, is part of a growing national trend of affinity churches meant to reach people with similar interests and preferences.

"This opens the door to reach some people that we're not normally going to reach," said Larry Baker, director of new work and associational missions for the Kentucky Baptist Convention. "These niche churches are reaching people who do not know Jesus Christ. I'm all for it."

According to Baker, Blue Grass Cowboy Church is working toward affiliation with the KBC and Elkhorn Baptist Association. Both organizations are helping support the church plant by assisting with rent

payments for its facilities.

It all started last January when Dewayne Waldrup learned about a cowboy church meeting at an agricultural center near his home in Asheville, N.C. The congregation was part of the Cowboy Church Network, a national organization of Southern Baptist churches meeting in non-traditional locations in order to target a specific demographic.

"Their advertisement was 'Come as you are. Boots, hats, jeans welcome,'" Waldrup recalled. "I got off work and went to the barn and fed, and of course my boots and pants got muddy. I knew I wasn't going to a traditional church with carpet and such, so I went as I was."

When he arrived "it wasn't, 'Well, I've got a \$500 suit on and you're dirty.' It was, 'Good to see you, glad you're here, and hope you come back,'" he said.

For several months, Waldrup was active in the North Carolina church, participating in a parade, giving horseback rides to kids at the state's Baptist children's home and cele-

brating the Fourth of July in a special "God and Country" service.

When his wife received word that she would be transferred to Kentucky with her job at AT&T, Waldrup asked his pastor in North Carolina where a similar church could be found in Kentucky. The answer was, "Well, we don't have one planted yet."

So when Waldrup moved to central Kentucky in October of last year, he immediately began looking for a place to start a cowboy church. When he attended a horse sale at the Paris stockyards, he knew that was the place. He negotiated a three-month commitment to hold services there and began spreading the word.

Attendance at the church's first few services ranged from 24 to 61 people with 10 of those accepting Jesus Christ as Savior.

Waldrup said a typical cowboy church service begins with announcements and a reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance. That's fol-  
□ See Paris church plant ... Page 3



**COWBOY PASTOR** Dewayne Waldrup, pastor of Blue Grass Cowboy Church in Paris, prepares to deliver his message. The pastor, like the rest of the congregation, is usually decked out in a cowboy hat, blue jeans and a belt buckle. The church encourages members, visitors and even dogs to come to church just as they are. (Photo by Christi Arnette)

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, Feb. 27.

## SBC leaders affirm \$205 million CP budget

Nashville (BP)—Members of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee approved a 2008-09 Cooperative Program allocation budget of \$205,716,834 for recommendation to the SBC during its June 10-11 annual meeting in Indianapolis.

The budget continues traditional allocations to the convention's mission boards, including 50 percent of receipts to the Southern Baptist International Mission Board and 22.79 percent to the North American Mission Board.

The SBC's six seminaries, Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission and SBC operating budget each received slight percentage increases after GuideStone Financial Resources President O.S. Hawkins announced last year that GuideStone would be willing to forgo the 0.76 percent of the CP allocation budget it had been receiving.

The percentage allocated to the seminaries is 21.92 percent, up from 21.4 percent last year. The ERLC would receive 1.65 percent, up from 1.49 percent last year.

The SBC operating budget, encompassing the SBC annual meet-

ing costs, the work of the convention between annual meetings and the Executive Committee, would receive 3.4 percent of the CP budget, up from 3.32 percent last year.

The Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives would continue to receive 0.24 percent.

In other business, the Executive Committee:

- Adopted a recommendation to be submitted to messengers at the June 10-11 SBC annual meeting in Indianapolis, stating the Southern Baptist Convention encourages "all SBC entities, churches and new church plants to intentionally involve people with disabilities in ministries, create appropriate new ministries in which they can participate, and remove as many impediments as possible to fully engage people with disabilities." The recommendation was in response to a motion referred from the 2007 SBC annual meeting.

- Responded to a motion referred from the 2007 annual meeting calling for the SBC to ask each convention entity to "study the feasibility of providing regular reports of the

voting and attendance records of all trustees ... on all matters on which voting occurs and that these reports be available in a timely manner online and offline." The Executive Committee responded that it will report "the attendance record of any member to an inquiring Southern Baptist, but declines to supply individual voting records, believing that doing so would invite efforts to further politicize trustee selection and service and would also undermine the principle that decisions of a board are rendered as a body."

- Received as information the report from the SBC Funding Study Committee, an 11-member ad hoc committee appointed in 2002 to research funding issues facing Southern Baptists' national entities. Three issues cited in the report will receive further study by the Executive Committee's Cooperative Program subcommittee, who also will handle any other matters related to the ad hoc committee's work.

- Approved a 4 percent increase in the staff salary structure of the Executive Committee budget, effective Oct. 1.

## CBF council approves budget, reports shortfalls

Decatur, Ga. (ABP)—Leaders of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship approved a \$16.5 million budget for the 2008-09 fiscal year and heard of budget shortfalls during the CBF Coordinating Council's Feb. 7-8 meeting in Decatur, Ga.

The council's finance committee reported that, as of the end of January 2008, CBF's revenue had reached only 89 percent of its projected 2007-08 budget. Meanwhile, expenditures by the end of calendar year 2007 reached 91 percent of the projected budget. January expenditures

are still being processed, said CBF spokesman Lance Wallace.

CBF supporters who attend the group's General Assembly, scheduled for June in Memphis, Tenn., will give final approval to the budget.

CBF Moderator Harriett Harral said that while CBF leaders are "being practical" about spending, they continue to "leverage every resource we have, and that's dollars of course as well as everything else."

In his coordinator's report, CBF executive coordinator Daniel Vestal discussed the covenant celebration,

held in Atlanta the previous week.

"It had more of the feel of a revival," Vestal said of the celebration. "There were several times when I literally sat in my chair and wept."

Former President Jimmy Carter—one of the main organizers behind the gathering—has invited leaders of participating organizations to meet at the Carter Center March 12 to discuss possible follow-up ministries.

CBF also has begun the partnership application process for the Micah Challenge, a global campaign to mobilize Christians to end poverty.

## NAMB leaders highlight record giving, evangelism, chaplaincy

Alpharetta, Ga. (BP)—Affirming that Southern Baptists' 2007 gifts of \$59.4 million to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions exceeded the year's goal by more than \$2 million, North American Mission Board President Geoff Hammond told trustees, "Never forget that it's the generosity of Southern Baptists in the pews—who are praying for missions and who believe in what the North American Mission Board is doing—who allow us to do what we do to reach this incredible mission field for Christ."

The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering's 2008 goal is \$61 million.

NAMB trustees also heard an evangelism report noting that out of the 336.3 million people in North America, 251 million (three out of four) are non-Christians. NAMB's church planting group shared with trustees its emphasis of focusing on 372 urban centers in North America and the people groups living within them. The report also noted that the urban emphasis is being conducted alongside continued rural evangelism through a people-group strategy.

Hammond told trustees that NAMB is working closely with SBC President Frank Page and state and local partners in developing a na-

tional evangelism initiative to be introduced at this June's Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Indianapolis.

The trustees also heard how NAMB must focus on multiculturalism because in the United States 101 million residents, or one in three, represent a minority. Four states—Hawaii, New Mexico, California and Texas, along with Washington, D.C.—have "minority majorities."

NAMB chaplaincy team leader Keith Travis reported 40 new chaplains were named and endorsed last year, bringing the total number to almost 2,800. The chaplains serve in the military, law enforcement, corporations and health institutions.

Travis added that Southern Baptist chaplains reported approximately 10,000 professions of faith in Christ during 2007.

NAMB trustees also heard a firsthand report on Iraq from third-year Chaplain (Capt.) Neal Hicks, now stationed at Fort Benning in Columbus, Ga. During his duty in Iraq, Hicks was chaplain to 930 soldiers in the "Arc of Death" region of central Iraq.

"I believe it's our responsibility to take the Word of God where soldiers are serving," Hicks declared.

## Southern acquires Broadus papers found on eBay site

Louisville (BP)—Several folders of original material authored by John A. Broadus more than 100 years ago have been added to the archives of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary through an eBay online auction.

Broadus served as Southern's first professor of New Testament interpretation and homiletics and was the institution's second president. Southern already housed a substantial collection of Broadus' papers, including the original manuscript of his classic book, "On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons." But according to Jason Fowler, Southern's archives and special collections librarian, the new papers will help researchers understand Broadus more fully.

"We already have a substantial collection of Broadus material," Fowler said. "Having these items in the archives makes it easier for researchers to access various collections of Broadus materials in one place."

Southern acquired the new materials when Don Whitney, associate professor of biblical spirituality, saw them for sale on eBay. Whitney notified Gregory Wills, professor of church history and director of Southern Seminary's Center for the Study of the Southern Baptist Convention, of his find.

"When I looked at the photo of the letters, I saw that it was indeed Broadus' handwriting, and I grew excited about the possibility of acquiring these for the seminary that Broadus gave his life to establish," Wills said.

Southern Seminary President Albert Mohler said the addition of the papers serves as a reminder of the depth of the Broadus legacy.

"This really is an historical achievement for us," Mohler said. "It is restoring a part of Dr. Broadus' legacy through the institution he served and helped to found. It means a great deal to us to have these materials. Just looking at them, touching them, reviewing them, reminds us of the greatness of this man and the length of his legacy."

The seller stumbled across the papers when she bought some glassware at an auction and discovered letters and manuscripts in the bottom of one of the boxes.

The collection includes material created by Broadus as well as items written by his daughter, Alice Broadus Mitchell, and her husband. The portion authored by Broadus includes letters, sermons and clippings.

The additions to the Broadus collection, Fowler said, "are part of the heritage of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. ... They shed further light on Broadus' life and thought."



### KINGDOM FOCUS

SBC President Frank Page reminded members of the SBC Executive Committee, "We are a Jesus convention and we are here to promote the Kingdom of God on this earth." (BP photo by Morris Abernathy)

### BAPTIST DIGEST

**Betty Jo Lewis dies at 64.** Betty Jo Lewis, wife of Larry Lewis, former president of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, died Feb. 10. She was 64. The Lewises had lived near Centralia, Mo., the past several years. Mrs. Lewis served alongside her husband when he led the former HMB from 1987-96; during his presidency of Hannibal-LaGrange College in Hannibal, Mo., from 1981-87; and when he was pastor of Tower Grove Baptist Church in St. Louis and in other ministry positions in Ohio, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Missouri from 1960-81. She is survived by her husband, three children and three granddaughters. Memorial gifts may be made to the Betty Jo Cockerell Lewis Scholarship at Hannibal-LaGrange College.

**Waggoner elected VP of B&H Publishing.** Brad Waggoner has been named vice president of LifeWay Christian Resources' B&H Publishing Group. Waggoner succeeds Ken Stephens, who retired Jan. 15. The trustees' Feb. 12 action came during LifeWay's semiannual trustee meeting Feb. 11-12 in Nashville. Waggoner, who currently is vice president of LifeWay's research and ministry development division, came to LifeWay in 2006. He previously was dean of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's school of leadership and church ministry in Louisville.

**Graham returns home from hospital.** Evangelist Billy Graham returned home Feb. 19 after undergoing a procedure to relieve pressure in his brain. Graham, 89, underwent the elective procedure on Feb. 13 at Missions Hospitals in Asheville, N.C. Physicians said he was progressing well after they replaced a valve for a shunt that regulates the pressure within his brain. Graham has hydrocephalus, a buildup of fluid on the brain that can cause symptoms similar to Parkinson's disease. Graham's wife, Ruth, died last June at the age of 87.

# Kentucky's women take casino opposition to Frankfort

By Drew Nichter  
News Director

**Frankfort**—The voices of more than 200 Kentucky women and men filled the Capitol Rotunda in Frankfort Feb. 19, declaring their opposition to expanded gambling in the commonwealth as part of a rally organized by the group Women Against Gambling Expansion.

Before turning their attention to protest, the women joined together in singing "Amazing Grace," a moment inspired by the story of Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles 20, according to Joy Bolton, executive director of Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union and one of the coordinators of the WAGE rally.

"Today the mamas in this room are not happy with the proposal to expand gambling in Kentucky," she declared during her address. "And when mama ain't happy, ain't nobody happy."

Bolton was one of several women who spoke out against Gov. Steve Beshear's proposal to allow casinos in Kentucky. On Feb. 14, the governor laid out his plan to build 12 casinos in the state. On the day of the WAGE rally, a House task force charged with studying expanded gambling, recommended reducing that number to nine.

The rally, which was originally scheduled for Feb. 12, but postponed due to snow, featured, among others, Bolton; Nancy Jo Kemper, executive director of the Kentucky Council of Churches; and Laura Marie Trout-



Joy Bolton

man, executive director of the non-profit organization, Friends of the Good Samaritans.

Kemper argued that the state government is simply looking to expanded gambling as a "short-term fix" for the state's financial crisis, adding that taxes should be explored before casinos.

"Tax is not a dirty word," she noted. "Taxes are the very cheap price we pay to live in the most wonderful land on the face of the earth."

Kemper added that her opposition to gambling stems from her role as a mother and grandmother.

"I do not want my grandchildren to grow up in a culture where their government is engaged in encouraging its citizens to amuse themselves to financial destitution," she said.

Armed with statistics confirming gambling's harmful effects, Bolton aimed her opposition at slot machines, calling them the "crack cocaine of gambling."

"Do we really want the most vulnerable of our society coming out of the grocery store and spending the last of their money in a slot machine?" she asked. "Or worse, stopping at the slot machine on their way in and never buying groceries because they were mesmerized by the lure of easy money?"

Bolton added that gambling often destroys families, and groups like Kentucky WMU are left to provide for the children affected.

"We are tired of having to care

for kids who don't have enough to eat because mommy or daddy wasted the grocery money," she declared. "We are tired of seeing families destroyed because of a problem gambler."

"The cost far outweighs the revenue (expanded gambling) might generate for state government."

Adrian Holloway, a Versailles resident and mother of three children, spoke about the destructive effects casinos have had on her family. Living near Las Vegas as a child, she said both of her parents became gambling addicts. Holloway's mother still struggles with the addiction and has squandered her life savings.

Holloway's brother also grapples daily with gambling addiction. However, she noted, he has come to terms with his problem, but only after declaring bankruptcy and "losing everything."

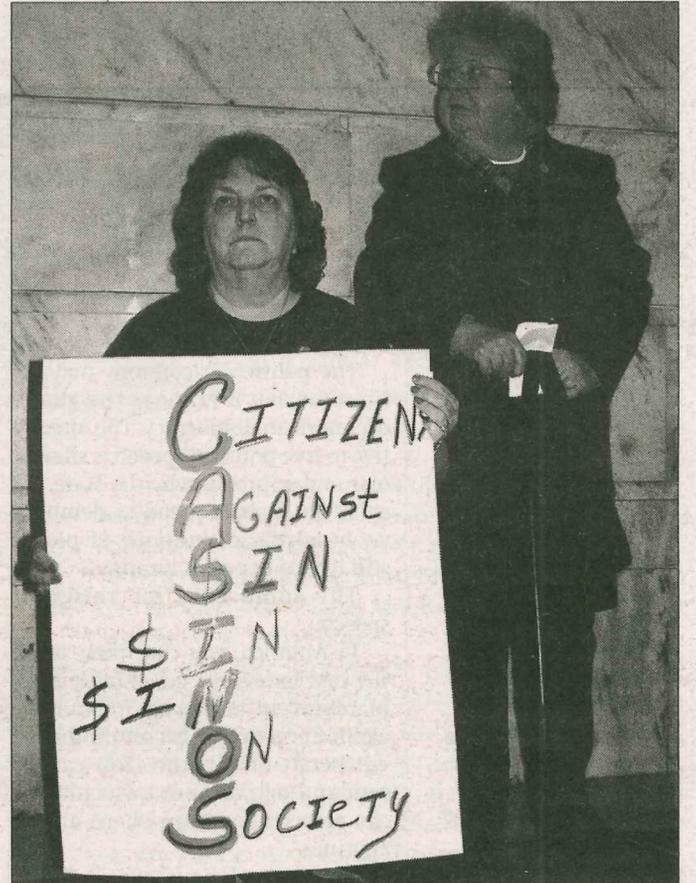
Holloway explained that he has even signed an agreement with two casinos near his home in Phoenix, that he can be thrown in jail if he is caught gambling in those facilities.

"This gambling addiction does lead to ... devastation and financial ruin," Holloway said. "This is not what we want in Kentucky for our families or our children."

## Proposal status

Gov. Beshear's Feb. 14 proposal to bring 12 casinos to the state has been initially met with opposition, not only by religious groups, but also many state representatives.

Members of the House task force on expanded gambling recommended reducing the governor's proposed



number of casinos to nine and voted to require county approval for all non-racetrack operated facilities.

The difference of opinion among many House leaders has some casino opponents optimistic about the amendment's downfall. A House staff member recently told the Louisville Courier-Journal, "I can see the handwriting on the wall. We'll be back in May because we'll have no budget and no expanded gambling."

**SIGN OF RESISTANCE**  
Saundra Adams from Bardstown shows her opposition to expanded gambling in Kentucky. (Photos by Drew Nichter)

## Conference set to renew Baptists' passion for prayer

**Louisville**—The Greater Work Prayer Conference, designed to help people renew their passion for prayer and develop prayer strategies for worldwide evangelism, will be held March 15 at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

"We put a lot of effort into many things, but nothing we do is more important than prayer," said Eric Allen, director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's mission service and ministries department, who is co-sponsoring the one-day event with Southern Seminary. "This conference will encourage pastors and church leaders to recognize prayer as the needed power for reaching our community and building healthy churches."

Guest speakers include Southern Baptist Convention President Frank Page and author T.W. Hunt.

This year's conference will feature three plenary and dialogue sessions. All are geared toward improving an individual's prayer life and mobilizing others to pray.

The registration fee before March 1 is \$25 per person. For more information, visit [www.kybaptist.org/greaterwork](http://www.kybaptist.org/greaterwork).

## Paris church plant part of larger cowboy network

Continued from page 1

lowed by about 30 minutes of bluegrass gospel music and a message he said he provides based on what he believes God wants him to communicate.

At each service, participants are encouraged to fill out visitor's cards, which go toward a drawing for a Cowboy Church Network belt buckle. The more times a person attends, the better chance he has of winning the buckle, Waldrup noted.

So far, the pastor said he has been amazed at the ways God has used the church plant. He recalled the time he invited a neighbor who was known for having a sketchy past.

"I don't know a whole lot about his past or anything like that, but he told me he got the flyer on the cowboy church and that he may be able to come and he might not," Waldrup said of the man.

"He said, 'I'm not too religious a person,' and I said, 'Well, thank God. I'd rather people get salvation than religion.' The man and his wife haven't made a profession of faith yet, but they have been there every service so far," Waldrup noted.

So far, visitors have traveled to the cowboy church from Louisville, Lexington, Bardstown, Harrodsburg and many other places across the state, Waldrup said.

"I think this is something we should encourage because they reach people that our traditional-based churches—those that have their services at one particular block



**PICKIN' ON WORSHIP** Local bluegrass duo Steve and Robin Patrick perform several songs during Blue Grass Cowboy Church's worship service. The Patricks are one of four groups that serve as the church's worship band on Tuesday evenings. (Photo by Christi Arnette)

of time every Sunday—can't necessarily reach," Baker affirmed.

Earlier this month, the congregation relocated to the Bourbon County Fairgrounds because the small offerings the church takes in did not accommodate continued meetings at the Paris stockyards. At the fairgrounds, the church has facilities capable of holding horse-related events, in addition to church services. Waldrup has already obtained permission to hand out flyers and

copies of the New Testament at the Bourbon County Fair in June.

"Everyone's welcome. We're trying to reach people who wouldn't go to a traditional church," Waldrup declared. "If they come in their work clothes—whether they come straight out of the barn, out of the field, still got their riding boots and britches on—that don't bother me. It's there for them, and if they're coming, we just try to present the gospel to them."

## 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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## Free speech: Use it or lose it

By **Erich Bridges**

Richmond, Va. (BP)—It's peak season for free (or very expensive, if you're buying TV time) political speech.

Presidential candidates fill the airwaves and cyberspace with arguments for their election. Their campaigns issue claims, promises, pleas, attacks and statistics hourly—some true, some false, some absurd. Their supporters verbally duke it out in the public square.

The political cacophony may get tiresome, but it is one of the glories of American democracy. The alternative to free political speech is silence, fear and oppression by the state. Despite the global spread of democracy, hundreds of millions of people still live under such tyranny.

The same goes for religious speech.

In America, you can freely make the case for every kind of faith imaginable, or no faith at all. You can proclaim Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, witchcraft or atheism. You can invent and market your own cult. You can preach almost anywhere, almost anytime.

But free religious expression in our nation did not come easily or cheaply, and it won't endure without vigorous exercise and defense. State church tyranny imported from Europe was the main opponent of true religious freedom in America's early days. Today the threats come from other quarters—including secular extremists who see biblical faith as "intolerant," evangelism as "hate speech" and cross-cultural missions as "cultural imperialism."

When American evangelicals raise concerns about free religious expression, critics often laugh. "There is a church on every street corner," they say. "You can't switch the TV or radio dial without hearing a preacher proclaiming the gospel." "Christian books and CDs sell in the millions."

Fair enough. But Nat Hentoff, a tireless champion of the First Amendment guarantee of free

speech for more than 50 years, is not laughing.

"How many Americans know that before the Constitution and our revolution, 'Massachusetts hanged Mary Dyer for her Quaker views?'"

asked Hentoff, quoting a new history of the First Amendment. "I would add that before (James) Madison and (Thomas) Jefferson surfaced in Virginia, Catholics were not allowed to hold office and priests were barred from even entering the colony."

Baptists, who had experienced the lash of persecution by state-controlled churches in Europe and America, played a key role in helping Madison and Jefferson forge religious freedom in Virginia—and in the new American nation when independence was won.

Hentoff defends the right of contemporary Americans, religious or otherwise, to say and think what they please. And he emphatically parts company with his friends in the American Civil Liberties Union who favor the expanded "hate speech" legislation being pushed by some members of Congress. The proposed law would add extra prison time, not for the commission of a violent crime, but for the words that accompany it.

"Once our republic began, James Madison expected that no American would be punished for his 'thoughts,'" Hentoff warned. "But 'hate crimes' laws ... are what Madison feared. If these added penalties for thought crimes ... reach the Oval Office, the president should veto the legislation."

You may be wondering what "hate speech" has to do with religious expression. After all, aren't proposed "hate speech" laws designed to punish violent bigots who spew venomous epithets as they attack various minorities? Maybe, but who decides what kinds of speech—and thought—are hateful? Will words and actions always have to be linked for prosecution, or will the logical next step be to criminalize words alone? Some advocates of speech restrictions view

## COMMENTARY

## Do Kentucky Baptists care enough?

Do Kentucky Baptists care enough to stand with those who are risking their political careers in fighting against casino gambling? Gambling proponents are currently exerting incredible pressure on legislators to secure votes in the General Assembly.

It is, therefore, very important that our legislators hear from Kentucky Baptists now.

I understand the reluctance to take action. Our lives are busy and it is easy to think that our individual efforts are not important or that they are unnecessary because "someone else will do it."

Your voice does matter and your silence speaks volumes. Even though you may recognize the devastating problems that will result from casino gambling, if you do not act, the voices of gambling interests will be the only ones heard in Frankfort.

Passage of the proposal now on the table will be devastating for all

Kentucky citizens—both those who gamble and those who do not. With

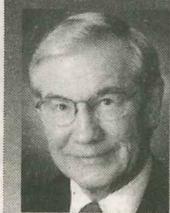
12 casinos strategically located across the commonwealth, no family will be outside the gambling frequency zone.

It is therefore likely that you will experience a family member or friend who becomes a pathological gambler (an estimated 80,000 people) or a problem gambler (an estimated 200,000 people). In addition,

research shows that a person with a gambling problem impacts the lives of between 11 and 15 people in addition to themselves, including family, friends and co-workers.

With more than 800,000 Baptists in Kentucky, we have the numbers to make a major impact for good on this issue. But if Kentucky Baptists do not care enough to act, I believe the Commonwealth of Kentucky will soon place its seal of approval on a practice that has led many into addictive and destructive lifestyles.

## PARTNERS IN THE MISSION



Bill Mackey

statements such as "Jesus Christ is the only way to salvation" as bigoted and hateful. Such statements, some believe, actually incite violence against religious minorities. Hence, they qualify as "hate speech" to be outlawed and punished.

Let's hope such extreme interpretations never become law. But if you want a glimpse of what it's like to live under draconian speech codes, visit any of the hundreds of college campuses where they are used to punish students or faculty members who speak words that might conceivably offend numerous "protected" groups. This goes on in the very institutions that are supposed to encourage our brightest young people to engage in free inquiry and spirited debate about the nature of truth.

Perhaps the greatest current threat to American religious expression, however, is the self-censorship practiced by believers. A recent study confirms that most Americans approve of free religious expression—as long as it makes no demands of others or judgments about them. Too many Christians buy into that philosophy with their silence. Too many of us fear offending someone more than we care about telling him or her the truth. We do not want to be thought "intolerant." We do not want to go against the relentlessly pluralist grain of society.

But we can't have it both ways if we believe the gospel of Christ. It is good news to those who believe it and an offense to those who reject it. It will always be controversial.

If American Christians, who still enjoy the blessing of free expression, voluntarily silence themselves, what message will that send to persecuted believers around the world struggling to find their voice?

Erich Bridges is senior writer with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board

## What are you thinking?

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

Kentucky will be sanctioning a false hope of instant wealth that has resulted in abandoned children, divorce, financial ruin, theft and even suicide.

I believe that Kentucky Baptists care about the quality of spiritual, moral and social life in the state and I hope you will act before it is too late. Please make this issue a matter of prayer. Then call or write your representatives and senators. Thank those who are standing strong in opposition and encourage those who are supporting casinos to reconsider their positions.

Please also make it clear that you do not favor the issue being on the ballot in the fall. The "let the people decide" argument is a ruse to allow the big gambling corporations to pour millions of dollars into false advertising campaigns.

Do you care enough to take action today and enlist others to help? Learn more about this issue online at the KBC's Committee on Public Affairs Web site at [www.kybaptist.org/publicaffairs](http://www.kybaptist.org/publicaffairs).

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

## STEWARDSHIP

## Take proper steps to protect yourself from fraud &amp; theft

By **Don Spencer**

Identify theft is a major concern these days. It occurs when someone gets your Social Security number, bank data or other details that can be used to go on a buying or borrowing binge. Law enforcement agencies work hard to address this problem but the best solution is consumers taking precautions to prevent it.

■ Protect Social Security, bank account and credit card numbers. This includes PINs, passwords and other personal information. Never provide this information in response to phone calls, faxes, letters or e-mails you may receive.

■ Avoid giving your Social Security number to any business unless you're convinced it is absolutely necessary. Be aware that friends, family members, roommates and workers are often involved in identify theft.

■ Guard your mail which may include credit card or bank statements, checks, or other documents with confidential information. Pick up delivered mail promptly. Take outgoing mail with checks or confidential information to a post office or hand it directly to a mail carrier. Do not put it in your outdoor mailbox or door to be picked up.

■ Keep your financial trash "clean." Do not throw away receipts, bank statements, tax returns or any other document containing personal information without shredding them first.

■ Use extra care with personal data on the Internet. Sites should be clear on how sensitive data is protected, including the use of encryption to safely transmit and store data. Be on guard against incoming e-mails claiming to be from trusted sources (such as banks or the IRS) asking you to "update" or "confirm" personal data. Reputable organizations do not contact you to verify this information online. If you get an e-mail like this—do not click on any of the links.

■ Always beware of offers that seem too good to be true. Be suspicious of any offer that involves "easy money" or "quick fixes." Beware of any transaction for which you receive a cashier's check made out for more money than the amount due to you with a request to wire back the difference—you could lose a lot of money if the check is fraudulent.

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



## Ending a difficult marriage may lead to further pain & anxiety

**Q: My husband and I have recently started marriage counseling. The last few years have been very difficult and it seems like it would be so much easier to just divorce. What should I do?**

This is a very difficult decision faced by couples who have become dissatisfied with their marriages. And yet, it is a decision the two of you will need to make.

### MARRIAGE

There is a strong message in our culture that we all have a right to be happy. I have been confronted before by a spouse asking me, "Would God want me to stay in the marriage and be miserable?"

Part of our challenge is our limited view. God is able to see a much greater picture of our lives than we can. This makes decisions difficult and even painful as well as creating a situation in which we must trust God.

Let me share some research from the University of Chicago that addresses the issue of unhappy marriages:

"With the important exception of helping spouses escape violent marriages, divorce typically failed to deliver the promised psychological benefits for adults. Five years later, unhappily married adults who divorced or separated were, on average, no happier ... and showed increased alcohol use compared to unhappily married adults who stayed married. Almost two-thirds of unhappy spouses who stuck with the marriage forged happy marriages down the road."

One of the scholars who contributed to this research offers the following suggestions for those couples choosing to stay in the marriage.

**Wait it out.** With time, job situations improve, children get older and become less demanding, and you can develop a new perspective.

**Work on your marriage.** See a marriage counselor, get advice from friends and books, and make time for fun.

**Focus on your own happiness.** Get social or follow your personal bliss. Your marital problems may not go away, but having a source of personal joy allows you to build a happy life, no matter what.

It is natural to want immediate relief from pain. Before making the decision to end the marriage, consider all your options. Sometimes what we hope is a quick fix to relieve pain may result in a different kind of pain.—Valerie Vincent

**Q: How much control should a parent have over a teenager's room?**

Keep in mind that the teenage years are, at their best, a training ground for launching young followers of Christ into the world. Generally speaking, it is to both the parents' and teens' advantage to give and receive increasing freedom as the young person moves through adolescence. This burgeoning freedom is contingent on teenagers making responsible choices. When this is the case, perhaps nothing symbolizes the freedom to discover and claim one's identity as much as a teen's bedroom.

The less control that parents can exercise over a teenager's room, the better. Teens benefit from increased freedom to decorate and arrange their room, choose their own furniture and posters, and to know that their privacy will be respected. Parents should knock before entering if the door is closed and refrain from going through teens' belongings.

With freedom always comes responsibility. Standards should be clearly communicated in regard to a reasonable degree of order and cleanliness, but parents must discipline themselves from over-control in this area. Teens who create trust issues through dishonesty and use of drugs and alcohol must understand that they compromise their rights to privacy. Family members must hold in tension the wisdom of the Scriptures that instructs parents to "not provoke your children to anger" while reminding teens to "honor your parents" (Ephesians 6:1-4).—Scott Wigginton

Family Forum writers are:

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



## Proclaiming the Easter message all year

*Cristo é levantado!* Christ is risen!

It's the greatest lead sentence to the greatest news story ever communicated. I could say it in English, or I could say it in the Portuguese language that I learned to speak while serving as a Southern Baptist international missionary in Brazil. Whatever the language, the power behind the phrase is the same: "Christ is risen!"

But if we were to take a look around us this time of year, we would probably notice how North America is slipping farther from the things of Christ. Sometimes it is discouraging to see the direction in which our culture is headed. This is, after all, the season when "Christ is risen!" And to see that powerful message ignored or rejected by those we work with, live among and care about should break our hearts.

The first Easter began with broken hearts as well. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary woke up that Sunday morning to a world that seemed lost. Christ was dead and buried. The disciples were scattered. The enemy had won. Or so it seemed.

But for Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, the Easter experience became one of hope, joy and purpose when an angel delivered the most important news in history. The report they heard is the same one we have been charged to deliver to the world today—"Christ is the risen Savior!"

For a world searching for meaning, there is not a more encouraging and inviting message. And that's the message your Southern Baptist North American missionaries are helping you share with a continent in need.

"Christ is risen!" It's the message Jon and Mindy Jamison are taking to young people in Des Moines, Iowa. Many of the teens they work with live in a world of violence, gangs and drugs.

"Christ is risen!" It's what missionary Melanie Lawler is sharing with young children in Nevada through her Kids Club apartment complex ministry.

Throughout North America more than 5,000 of

your Southern Baptist missionaries are looking for and finding lost people who need to take to heart the Easter message, "Christ is risen!"

It's what drives Daniel Caceres, a missionary who helps start Hispanic churches all over Oklahoma. Daniel escaped his home in El Salvador when communist guerillas tried to kill him. Today, he is introducing Hispanics in North America to the One who can take them from death to life.

"Christ is risen!" It's also the driving force behind missionaries David and Shirley Proffitt in Virginia. They're starting churches near college campuses. They often work in communities which are openly hostile to

Christianity.

In a very real way, your Southern Baptist missionaries in North America celebrate Easter all year long by consistently proclaiming the message of the season, "Christ is risen!" But ultimately, the responsibility that God has given our North American missionaries is not just theirs—it is also ours.

You and your church are partners in the task of reaching North America and there are many ways you can be a part of that work: You can pray for your missionaries, that they would earnestly seek God's heart. You can help others understand the depth of the need in North America. You can give through your church to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions. And you can join our mission force through short-term, long-term or career mission opportunities.

Finally, it is my prayer that you and your church will see this Easter season as an opportunity to reach out to the lost in your community who need Christ. Remember, there are still millions around us who need to hear and understand the most powerful message of all—the message of Easter.

Christ is risen!

Geoff Hammond is president of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board

### GUEST EDITORIAL



Geoff Hammond

## Share the gospel tractfully

By Victor Benavides

**Alpharetta, Ga. (BP)**—I was in Nashville recently and at the end of a long day of meetings, I stopped at a convenience store for a late-night snack. I stood in line, paid for my ice cream and passed a gospel tract to the clerk who politely smiled and stuffed it into his pocket. I smiled and left.

As I was opening my car door, a man yelled my way. "Great," I thought without turning around, "I'm exhausted and this guy's going to want money. God, please help me talk to this man." I turned around to face this young man who had a desperate look on his face.

"That booklet you gave," he said. "I need that."

"Really," I replied.

It turns out the guy had been standing behind me in line watching my transaction.

I pulled another booklet out of a pocket and handed it to him. Then I said something I had not said all week, though I had been passing out tracts and sharing the gospel with people at my hotel. "You want me to tell you how you can have peace in your life?" I asked him.

The man immediately said, "Yes. That's exactly what I need."

So I told him my story and shared the gospel with him.

Our conversation ended with his salvation and his head bobbing on my shoulder as he wept.

This is not always the way my tract conversations end, but it does show what a tool we have in those little booklets that have grown out of style in recent years. While handing

someone a gospel tract or leaving one with your waiter's tip can't replace the call to share our personal relationship with Christ, those little booklets of truth still work.

Here are some practical ways you might share your faith with this tiny tool as you are out and about or with your loved ones.

### Where to share

**At the restaurant.** A tract is an ideal way to share with someone on the run. Waiters make their livelihood by volume so you do not want to get in their way at a busy restaurant. Instead, simply ask them if there is anything you can pray for them about and then pass them a tract.

The key is to plant the seed, leave the door open and allow them to approach you. If you miss earlier opportunities, you might also leave a tract on the table with your tip or bill inside. But be sure to leave a healthy tip. Don't stifle the gospel by stiffing the wait staff.

**On the go.** Keep a couple of tracts in your purse or pocket. If you sense God is moving you to do so, ask, "Can I share some information that gave my life purpose?" Depending on how they receive it and if they have time,

you can share your story.

**With your gifts (birthdays, weddings, Christmas).** Instead of typical gift labels, use gospel tracts. Most tracts have a place on the back where you can write notes.

### How to share

**Focus.** Any time of the year is a great time to share the gospel, but Christmas and Easter provide unique opportunities. As an on-mission Christian, these are great opportunities to remind people of God's free gift through His son Jesus.

**Pray.** Before you head out to go shopping or run errands, seek God in prayer. Ask Him to bring to mind any sin in your life. Confess your sins and ask forgiveness. Ask God to give you the words to say. Finally, pray that He would send people into your life who are ready to hear a word about Jesus.

**Share.** How you share the gospel with a tract depends on the circumstances. As I share in urban communities, I typically say, "I'm with such and such church. Can I share a book of wisdom about how much God loves you?" I use tracts that talk about the consequences of sin. This is not to scare people into salvation, but if sin and its consequences are not shared, then you have not shared the gospel. Whatever tract you choose, you will want to read through it several times and become familiar with it.

Victor Benavides is urban center evangelism coordinator with the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board

## NAMB missionary claims Virginia's colleges for Christ

Continued from page 1  
tend worship each Sunday.

The Proffitts' son, Aaron, 29, is Aletheia's worship leader and pastor, as well as a missionary for NAMB and a church planter for SBCV. Their daughter, Amy, 30, serves as a counselor for the church, which meets in a renovated warehouse in Harrisonburg. Aaron's wife, Ashlee, is a semester missionary while Amy's husband, Jon, also is on Aletheia's leadership team.

"Three-quarters of the 400 are students," David Proffitt noted. "The rest of them were probably former students who have gotten married and now have their own children. This is a church that has leadership, supports the Cooperative Program, sends missionaries out, disciples, trains and teaches."

James Madison University is located in the scenic Shenandoah Valley, and has an enrollment of some 17,000 students, 4,000 of them freshman, the largest first-year class in the school's history. Most of the students hail from Fairfax County and northern Virginia.

### Campus challenges

The 57-year-old Proffitt said starting new churches on a college campus has its own special challenges.

"The challenges come when the university is not friendly toward a Christian organization, Christian ministry, churches and Christian campus organizations," he explained.

"We have to realize that each place is a unique setting. Even though they're college and university students, they still are different no matter where."

Proffitt said one reason he enjoys working with college students is because of the diverse demographics they represent.

"College students are mobile. They are ready for risk-taking and challenges," he pointed out. "They're ready to pursue whatever might be next. They're developing their values. They are in transition. Usually they're more flexible. ... They're teachable and open. They love to get together, they love to study and they don't want to be 'dumbed' down."

When it became clear that Aletheia Church was in the capable hands of their two children and their spouses, David and Shirley moved on to Richmond, home of Virginia Commonwealth University, which with 32,000 students, is the

state's largest university. There, they launched yet another church, also called Aletheia.

When they first planted the church, the Proffitts began by holding a series of Bible studies. At each gathering, Shirley would invite and feed up to 18 people in the couple's campus apartment.

"Shirley has been our hospitality leader and always prepares terrific meals for all the people we invite over," her husband noted. "She uses hospitality to assist with the evangelism process."

"Every day a team of US/C2 and semester missionaries are going out on the campus of VCU and to surrounding housing and talking to students, building relationships and doing intentional evangelism," Proffitt added.

"We've seen hundreds and hundreds of people become Christians. We have even baptized new believers in the James River."

According to Proffitt, the VCU campus is multicultural, and includes more than 1,500 international students, many from second-generation, international homes.

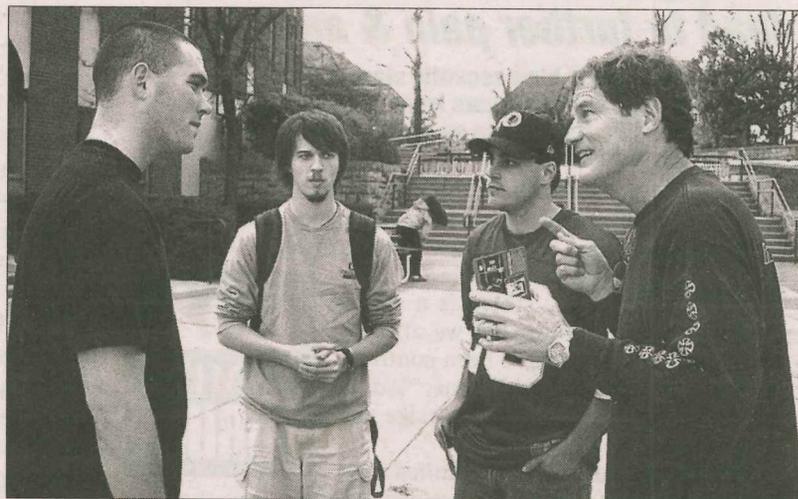
"At VCU, there are lots of Muslims, Buddhists and Hindus, and a lot of people who just haven't made up their minds about God yet," he explained. "Some of our greatest challenges involve seeing the many Muslim friends we've made come to an understanding that Jesus is God and loves them and desires to become connected through repentance and faith."

### Going worldwide

Because of the heavy international student population at VCU, Proffitt said his ministry, Richmond's Grove Avenue Baptist Church, and some other SBC ministries combined efforts and resources to hold an international student Thanksgiving dinner last November. About 300—mostly international students stuck on campus with no place to go during the holidays—attended and enjoyed the 11 roast turkeys Grove Avenue Baptist members prepared.

With Aletheia Church in Richmond now averaging about 200 people in attendance each Sunday, the Proffitts have since moved on to Norfolk to plant a third Aletheia Church at Old Dominion University.

Proffitt said he feels strongly about the need for Southern Baptists to be involved in ministry on college campuses.



**MAKING A POINT** Campus church planting missionary David Proffitt (right) speaks with a James Madison University student (left) while NAMB semester missionaries Reed Bradley (second from left) and Alan Sheriff look on. (NAMB photo by Alice Rusher)

"It's important because it's the future of the Southern Baptist Convention as a denomination," he noted. "I grew up as a Southern Baptist. But the people who were the older people in the church I grew up in are gone now. They're in heaven. So we have to continue to think about the next generation, preparing the next generation, getting the next generation ready."

Students "can go in any direction," Proffitt added. "We want to lead them in a spiritual direction—understanding who God is, understanding that He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, and that they can have a personal relationship with Him."

"Live with Urgency," the theme for the 2008 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, is not just empty words for those in the Commonwealth of Virginia, Proffitt said, because of the tragic killing of 32 students, faculty and staff at Virginia Tech University last spring.

"Because of Virginia Tech, we know how short life can be," he explained. "Because we work among young people, we realize that life can be short and can move on very, very quickly. Before you know it, students are in a phase of life where they're not as flexible, not as willing to hear, to change and to allow spiritual alterations in their lives."

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## Seeking Executive Editor

for the Western Recorder, Kentucky Baptists' weekly newspaper in Louisville. 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 resumé, cover letter and a writing sample by March 10 to:

**WR Editor Search Committee**  
Attn: Skip Alexander, Pastor  
Campbellsville Baptist Church  
420 N Central Ave., Campbellsville, KY 42718



## IMB worker in Asia dies from injuries sustained in accident



**LIFE OF SERVICE** After 45 years together raising two children, enjoying two grandchildren and serving God overseas in two countries, J.P. Lipscomb (right) said goodbye to his wife Linda on Feb. 14. (BP photo courtesy of SBC International Mission Board)

Bangkok, Thailand (BP)—Linda Lipscomb, a Southern Baptist International Mission Board worker, died Feb. 14 in Bangkok, Thailand, from complications following a bus accident. She was 63.

The former nurse and her husband, J.P., were spending their retirement years serving God overseas.

Four weeks before her death, in another part of Asia, Lipscomb stood just inside the door of a bus, preparing to step off. Without warning, the brakes released and the bus rolled forward, throwing her to the ground. The fall resulted in a broken left femur and wrist.

Hours later in a clinic, the red-faced bus driver hunched over in his seat and squeezed his hands as he and a bus company representative waited to see her.

"He needs to lose his job," the supervisor told the Lipscombs. "How much money does he need to pay?"

"Nothing. We forgive you," the Lipscombs responded. "We forgive you because God forgave us. Please do not take his job away from him."

Lipscomb was flown to Bangkok the day after the accident. Throughout the next four weeks, complications set in, her condition worsened and she was placed on a ventilator.

"Linda knew she was dying," her husband recalled. "We never had any respect for death. Death is given too much respect. ... The only way you can get to heaven is to die."

Linda accepted Christ as her Savior at age 13. Five years later, she met J.P. at a drive-in. Four weeks later, they were married.

God had called Linda to missions at age 16, but she did not go overseas full time until decades later.

The Lipscombs were retired when they responded to a call to serve overseas. They first did medical work in the Philippines, sharing food and water with residents.

A fellow overseas worker had been looking for a couple to take on the challenge of evangelizing an unreached city in Asia. The worker knew the search was over when he discovered the Lipscombs, with their straightforward evangelistic presentation and their gray hair—a symbol of age that commands respect in Asia.

The Lipscombs responded enthusiastically to the prospect of being "in a hard place."

Being unable to speak the local language did not inhibit the Lipscombs. They frequented local markets, businesses and homes. In their southern drawl, the couple bridged the cultural divide through their dependence on God. Someone asked J.P. what language he and Linda spoke. His answer was, "Love."

Friends said it was fitting that Linda died on Valentine's Day. From her eyes that showed how much she cared to the effort she made to befriend local shopkeepers, she embodied love.

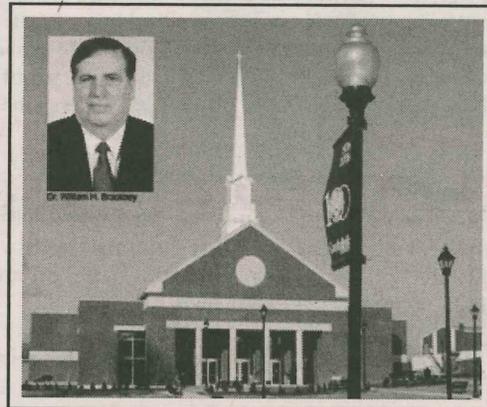
"Her idea was not to sit on the front porch," a friend of Linda's recalled. "I think many in retirement think, 'Now it's my time.' I don't think it was about that for her. All of her time would be His, to give it to His service. That is how she lived."

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## We are different here at OBI

### Oneida's differences can be seen in many ways, especially at meal time

Today I was reading some notes I made in preparation for one of my first board of trustees' meetings back in 1994. I was about to begin my first year as president and we were short six teachers—no small problem for a school administrator days away from the first day of school.

In my notes, I expressed concern about being able to find qualified teachers when the base salary was only \$4,500. I knew my predecessor, Dr. Barkley Moore, had done it for years, but I was no Dr. Moore. In a letter I wrote to our trustees a few weeks later, I told them I had secured all but one of the six teachers I needed. God does answer prayer and He does provide.

The only reason I could secure the services of those teachers back in 1994, and can fill the positions we have today, is not a large salary or a lot of amenities. The reason we are able to attract the faculty and staff we need is that we are different. When prospective faculty and staff learn about our ministry and discover that which makes us unique, they are usually eager to offer their time and talents.

At a student's very first meal at Oneida, he will quickly realize that he has likely never been at a school which allows students to serve themselves. Even when I was in school we did not serve ourselves. There were always a half dozen or so kitchen staff members who put measured portions of food on my tray. Not at Oneida. Here, everyone serves himself. If you don't want it, don't take it. If you want three of an item instead of two, then take three. But whether you take two or three, there is one rule: You cannot waste the food.



W.F. Underwood

You can understand that it is a big temptation for a student to fill his tray with a little—or a lot—more than he can eat. For years, I have made it a point to be in the dining room to be sure students don't waste food. I monitor the dining room during breakfast on school days. It is one of the best parts of my day. I enjoy having the opportunity to tell the students, "Good morning," when they enter and, "Have a good day," as they leave.

I purposely stand by the doors the students use to return their trays to the dish room. And every student knows it is not wise to have a lot of food left on his tray. When I see a student with more leftover food than expected, I remind him to take a little less next time. It takes time at the beginning of each school year for students to understand that wasting food is just not acceptable. Those who know me well know that I do not like waste of any kind.

This afternoon I received a call from one of my 2006 graduates. Jessica was one of my best students and a wonderful young lady. Many Kentucky Baptists heard her give her testimony when she was a member of our school choir. She is now attending a college in central Kentucky. Just before we said our good-byes, she told me that every day when she returns her food tray, she thinks of all those times she heard me tell students not to waste food. She thanked me for instilling in her the importance of not wasting food when so many go hungry every day.

Take all you want but eat what you take. It's just one of the ways we are a little different.

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)

## The average Clear Creek student

### After avoiding God's call, Pitchford begins training

People often are surprised when I share with them that the average age of our students here at Clear Creek is 32 years old.

Many students who come to Clear Creek say they have been running from the Lord's call on their lives for years. They finally arrive at a point where they get tired of running and surrender to God's call. They know that's the only way they are going to really be at peace in their lives.

New student Doug Pitchford reminded me again how that journey plays out in the lives of many of our students.

Doug, his wife, Amy, and their 2-year-old son, Will, are from Scottsville. Doug is 33 and has just started his first semester.

"I was saved when I was 12 years old," Doug said. "I have been in church all my life. I was literally raised in the church where I was saved and have been serving there until I came to Clear Creek.

"I know that God initially called me to preach at age 14," Doug continued. "I was working at a youth retreat and God spoke to me and said He wanted me to preach; I was caught off guard by that." During a

local revival, the guest preacher's message reinforced God's call for Doug to join the ministry.

"I actually began to think seriously about coming to the college a few years ago when I developed a close relationship with a graduate of Clear Creek who came to serve at Scottsville Baptist Church, which is near where I live. I got to know him really well. It was like Clear Creek came to me.

"The last few years God has used me in different ministry roles in our church," Doug noted. "I got laid off from my job in January of 2007. I drew unemployment for a while and took another job but God kept bringing Clear Creek into my mind all the time.

"Amy and I finally decided that we needed to put our house up for sale a few months ago and follow God's call," he said. "We sold it in two weeks and here we are finally at Clear Creek after all these years."

Please pray for all of our new students as they make this transition in their lives.



Donnie Fox

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

## Jehovah's Witnesses becomes fastest-growing faith in U.S.

**New York (RNS)**—Jehovah's Witnesses are the fastest-growing church body in the United States and Canada, now with more than 1 million members, according to new figures that track church membership in the two countries.

Although Jehovah's Witnesses ranked 24th on the list of 25 largest churches, they reported the largest growth rate—2.25 percent—of all churches. The badly divided Episcopal Church, meanwhile, reported the largest drop, at 4.15 percent.

The 2008 Yearbook of Canadian and American Churches, produced by the New York-based National Council of Churches, recorded

growth trends in 224 national church bodies, with a combined membership of 147 million Americans.

The yearbook is based on self-reported membership figures for 2006, the most recent year available.

The Roman Catholic Church, with 67.5 million members, remains the largest U.S. church body, with a 2006 increase of 0.87 percent. The second largest denomination, the Southern Baptist Convention (16.3 million) has more than twice the number of members as the United Methodist Church, the third largest, which documented

7.9 million U.S. members.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, at 5.7 million U.S. members (a 1.56 percent increase) and the Church of God in Christ, with a steady 5.5 million, round out the top five.

Only the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Catholic Church, Southern Baptists, Mormons, the Assemblies of God (2.8 million) and the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (1.4 million) reported increases; all others either posted declines or flat membership from 2005.

Historically, African-American churches make up six of the 15 largest churches, with a three-way tie

for the No. 11 spot among the National Missionary Baptist Convention of America, Progressive National Baptist Convention Inc., and African Methodist Episcopal Church—each reporting 2.5 million members.

Several historically black churches, such as the 5 million-member National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc., have reported the same figures for several years running. Eileen Lindner, who produces the annual report, explained that many black denominations estimate the number of people in the pews.

"They aggregate the whole of their members because many of their congregations are dually affiliated" with multiple denominations, Lindner noted. "The accuracy doesn't come from the count, but from the year-to-year census or estimations."

The 2008 Yearbook also tracks the time and resources spent by churches on responding to health care needs, and financial figures that show an increase in per-capita financial giving by 65 denominations that reported figures. The report showed an average increase of \$28.47 given per member over the past year.

The Yearbook also reported a decline in Canadian and African-American seminary enrollment. African-American enrollment in seminaries has declined 6.75 percent, but there has been an increase in part-time enrollment in both the U.S. and Canada.

### FEATURED SPEAKERS

**T. W. Hunt**  
Teacher; Writer;  
Seminar Leader



**Frank Page**  
Pastor;  
Southern Baptist  
Convention  
President



**Don Whitney**  
Author; Former  
Pastor; SBTS  
Associate Professor;  
The Center for  
Biblical Spirituality  
President



Also Featuring  
PRAISE & WORSHIP LEADER  
**Hiram Rollo**  
Minister of Music & Worship, Walnut  
Street Baptist Church, Louisville

FOR MORE INFORMATION  
502-489-3530 / 866-489-3530 toll free in KY  
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MARCH 15, 2008

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Sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention and The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

### NATIONAL NOTES

**NCAA acts to aid pregnant athletes.** The National Collegiate Athletic Association has approved a rule to protect pregnant athletes from having to choose between giving birth to their babies or having them aborted in order to keep their scholarships. The NCAA board of directors endorsed a measure barring member schools from revoking scholarships because of "pregnancy, depression, addiction, mononucleosis and eating disorders," according to The Daily Aztec of San Diego State University. The rule, however, only applies in the year the female athlete becomes pregnant, making it possible for her scholarship to be withdrawn the following year, the newspaper reported. The board approved the rule last month and it will take effect Aug. 1.

**Group challenges city's mission statement.** An organization that champions separation of church and state is urging a Michigan city to remove from its Web site a reference to city officials striving "to serve God." The Freedom From Religion Foundation, a 12,000-member organization based in Madison, Wisc., sent a letter to Mayor Don VanDoeselaar of Hudsonville, asking the city to remove the reference to God from its mission statement. Foundation Co-President Annie Laurie Gaylor said the group sent the letter after it received a complaint from a Hudsonville resident, writing that it "is not the business of a city in our secular republic to 'strive to serve God.'" The mayor said he was unaware of other complaints about the mission statement, which was approved in 1995.

**University reaches investor fraud settlement.** Charleston Southern University in Charleston, S.C., has reached an agreement with a court-appointed receiver to settle allegations arising from its relationship with Al Parish, a former economics professor at the university. Parish, who pleaded guilty to defrauding hundreds of investors out of more than \$90 million, awaits sentencing in federal court. According to the agreement filed Feb. 5, the South Carolina Baptist Convention-affiliated university's insurance company will pay \$3.75 million and the school will pay \$160,000 to the receivership. Charleston Southern also has agreed to waive its claim to \$8.4 million, which it had invested with Parish, until other investors recover at least 18 percent of their investment.

## COMEBACK CHURCHES SEMINAR

MARCH 25, 2008

10:00 am - 2:30 pm

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, BOWLING GREEN  
621 East 12th Avenue,  
Bowling Green, KY 42101



FEATURING ED STETZER, author of *Comeback Churches*,  
director of LifeWay Research and LifeWay's missiologist in residence

FOR MORE INFORMATION,  
go to [www.kybaptist.org/comeback](http://www.kybaptist.org/comeback), call  
502-489-3335 or 866-489-3335 (toll free in KY)  
or e-mail [churchdevelopment@kybaptist.org](mailto:churchdevelopment@kybaptist.org)

\$20 PER PERSON  
(includes lunch and materials)



Register online at [www.kybaptist.org/comeback](http://www.kybaptist.org/comeback)

## PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following Kentucky Baptist missionaries and ministries:

**Mission Service Corps Missionary Eileen Mullins of Inez.** Mullins is the founder and director of Haven of Rest Ministries, providing free food, housing and spiritual guidance for the families of 1,600 penitentiary inmates who visit the Big Sandy prison. Pray for carpenters, volunteer laborers and funds to complete the ministry's 19-bedroom dormitory. Pray that the Saturday evening worship will provide encouragement and a clear presentation of the gospel to families.

**Arms Around Families Ministry of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Marion.** Pastor Rob Ison shares that this Tuesday evening ministry provides several programs of support and training for families, including Celebrate Recovery, parenting courses and the Every Body Cares children's program designed to help children of inmates and addicts. Pray for leaders and volunteers as they prepare and provide these ministry opportunities. Pray that participants will find encouragement and support, life improvement skills and new life in Jesus Christ.

If you would like Kentucky Baptists to join in praying for a ministry of your church or association, please send the information to Eric Allen at [Eric.Allen@kybaptist.org](mailto:Eric.Allen@kybaptist.org) or call (866) 489-3530.

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI  
COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **BENTON**—**Billy Hurt**, a longtime Kentucky Baptist pastor, died Feb. 17 at age 76. Hurt was pastor of First Church of Calvert City, First Church of Frankfort, Immanuel Church in Paducah, First Church of Benton and Scotts Grove Church in Murray as well as churches in Tennessee and Missouri. A trustee of the University of the Cumberland, he also was a former chaplain of the Kentucky General Assembly. He is survived by his wife, Scharlyene, three sons, five granddaughters and four great-grandchildren. Memorial gifts may be made to the Billy G. Hurt Scholarship Fund at the University of the Cumberland.

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—**Morgan Patterson**, former president of Georgetown College, has been named scholar-in-residence at Campbellsville University. Patterson also has served as professor of church history and Baptist heritage at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and academic dean and senior professor of church history at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Campbellsville University's school of theology will host a Worship Arts Conference Feb. 28-29, highlighting the theme "Worship and Justice." Conference leaders include **Eric Bryant** of Mosaic in Los Angeles; **Marvin McMickle**, professor

**Spotlight on ...**

**Coxs Creek**



Vine Hill Church will hold a lay-led revival April 13-16, 7 p.m.

of homiletics at Ashland Theological Seminary in Ashland, Ohio; and **Nathan Ivey** of Sojourn Church in Louisville. For more information, visit [www.campbellsville.edu/wac08](http://www.campbellsville.edu/wac08).

■ **LEXINGTON**—Russell Cave Church recently called **Howard Beaman** as pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Hillview Church will host its annual Tasting Party March 9, 12:30 p.m. The event is a fundraiser for the Eliza Broadus Offering for State Missions.

■ **MAYFIELD**—South First Street Church recently called **Wayne Rambo** as assistant pastor. **David Key** is pastor.

## What's going on?

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



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## February

**28-March 1** Handbell Festival, Paroquet Springs Conference Center, Shepherdsville.

**29-March 1** Creative Ministries Festival, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

**29-March 1** Mission Service Corps Basic Training, Baptist Building, Louisville.

## March

**1** All-State Youth Choir/Orchestra Auditions, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

**1** RA Congress Region 5, Mays Lick Baptist Church.

**1** State Vacation Bible School Clinic—East, Porter Memorial Baptist Church, Lexington

**4** Assimilation Tour, Rosebow 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.

**13-16** Adult Kentucky Changers, Cedarmore Baptist Assembly, Bagdad.

**13** Assimilation Tour, Flemingsburg Baptist Church.

**15** Great Commission Prayer Conference, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

**15** RA Congress Region 2, Hyland Baptist Church, Henderson.

**15** RA Congress Region 6, Boones Creek Baptist Camp, Winchester.

**22** RA Congress Region 4, Parkland Baptist Church, Louisville.

**22** RA Congress Region 8, Oakland Avenue Baptist Church, Catlettsburg.

**25** Comeback Church Conference, First Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

**28-29** Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union Annual Meeting, Parkway Baptist Church, Bardstown.

**29** RA Congress Region 7, Elk Spring Valley Baptist Church, Monticello.

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

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**SEEKING:** Full-time church planting missionary for Brookhaven Baptist Church ([www.brookhavenbaptist.net](http://www.brookhavenbaptist.net)) for a Nehemiah project in the Brookhaven community of Atlanta, Ga. Please e-mail resumé to Pastor Don Presley at [dpresley@presleyenterprises.com](mailto:dpresley@presleyenterprises.com).

**SEEKING:** Part-time youth pastor for middle/high school program. Applicants will help fulfill our mission statement: "Encountering Christ through serving people, changing hearts and lives." Send resumé by Feb. 29: Search Committee, North Park Baptist Church, 5015 N First Ave., Evansville, IN 47710; or to [rachelandjeff@msn.com](mailto:rachelandjeff@msn.com).

**SEEKING:** Full-time associate pastor for Oakland Baptist Church, Oakland, Ky. (near Bowling Green). Oakland Baptist is a growing church that is averaging nearly 350 people in attendance each week. The associate pastor will work alongside our lead pastor in seeing that our people have the opportunity to become fully devoted followers of Christ. The primary role of the associate pastor is to assist in our discipleship ministry; this includes overseeing our small-group ministry, our Sunday morning Bible study ministry and one-on-one discipleship opportunities. The associate also will take a lead role in connecting our church members, as well as new members, to our ministry. All applicants should have a genuine love for the Lord and His church. Though seminary is not required, it is recommended. All interested applicants should send resúmes to Oakland Baptist Church, Oakland, KY 42159, Attn: Personnel Committee. To learn more about Oakland Baptist Church, visit [www.oaklandbchurch.org](http://www.oaklandbchurch.org).

**SEEKING:** Bivocational music/youth minister for Wingo Baptist Church. Parsonage provided. Contact Scott Solowey, [solowey@bellsouth.net](mailto:solowey@bellsouth.net); or (270) 247-0405.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of youth and children. Prefer, but not limited to, married couple. Search Committee, Northside Baptist Church, PO Box 129, Science Hill, KY 42553.

**SEEKING:** A Spirit-led, highly motivated individual for minister of music at a growing Southern Baptist church. Send resumé to First Baptist Church, PO Box 327, Paris, KY 40362, Attn: Music Committee.

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister of children. First Baptist Church, Gallatin, Tenn., seeks energetic individual for new position directing our ministry to babies through fifth grade. The ideal candidate will be creative, have a passion for children and have the ability to motivate others. Please mail resumé to Children's Minister Search Committee, PO Box 369, Gallatin, TN 37066; or e-mail to [greg@firstbaptistchurch.com](mailto:greg@firstbaptistchurch.com).

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister to children and families for Broadway Baptist Church of Louisville. For information, go to [www.broadwaybaptist.org](http://www.broadwaybaptist.org) and click on "Position Available."

**SEEKING:** Organist for First Baptist Church, Paris, Tenn. Resúmes now being accepted. The music and worship ministry of FBC is blended/eclectic, ranging from Handel to Fanny 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 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:** Part-time youth minister for Panther Creek Baptist Church in Owensboro, Ky. Please e-mail resumé to [pcbc@bellsouth.net](mailto:pcbc@bellsouth.net) by March 1, 2008.

**SEEKING:** 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 [gcbbc@iglou.com](mailto:gcbbc@iglou.com).

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

**SEEKING:** Worship leader/minister of music. Younger's Creek Baptist Church in Elizabethtown, Ky., is actively seeking a bivocational minister to lead worship and choir ministries. We are an excellent opportunity for someone looking to minister in a truly blended worship setting. If interested, please send resúmes to Search Team, 251 Younger's Creek Road, 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:** 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:** 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).

**SERVICES:** Relocating? Let the professionals at Apex & Robert E. Lee take care of the move for you. Call (800) 766-1902; or e-mail [janet.jones@apex-moving.net](mailto:janet.jones@apex-moving.net).

# Where was God amid chaos?

*From tornadoes to school shootings, does God protect some victims but not others?*

By Brittani Hamm & Adelle Banks  
Religion News Service

**Jackson, Tenn.** (RNS)—As Kristen Fabrizio felt the vibrations of the tornado that ripped across the campus of Union University in Jackson, Tenn. on Feb. 5, she clung to her friends, who in turn, clung to their faith.

"You can definitely see God's hands if you look at our campus," noted Fabrizio, a history major at the Tennessee Baptist-affiliated school. "No one's supposed to be alive."

And yet many are. Those who made it through the storm thank God for protection. But what about the dozens of people across the South who died in the storms, who were not so fortunate, or blessed? Did God not protect them?

It is the kind of question often raised after a disaster, man-made or otherwise. Was God looking the other way when 32 people died in a shooting massacre last April at Virginia Tech University, or when the seas swallowed more than 200,000 souls in the 2004 tsunami?

Put another way: Does God protect some, but not all?

At Union's devastated campus and across Tennessee, religious scholars and students alike say such a disaster raises more theological questions than answers.

"Sometimes you just have these weather events," said Ron Lowery, a United Methodist district superintendent in central Tennessee. "And nobody would wish that upon you, and God would Himself not have

that come upon us."

Lowery was dealt a double blow after the tornado. Two days after the storm, Michael Welch of Lafayette United Methodist Church was helping coordinate relief efforts when his car was hit by a truck. Welch and three family members died.

Which prompts another question: Welch was protected from the storm, but not the oncoming truck? Lowery said he is not spending much time trying to make sense out of the senseless.

"You begin to see there are just circumstances that just come our way," he acknowledged. "These things just happen, and it's not by some divine power that's put upon you."

For now, Union students say they are focusing on gratitude, not questions, as they set out on the long road toward recovery.

"We as humans will question why this is happening and why we were the target," noted Brittany Howerton, a senior public relations major at the school. "Despite all of that, we have to rest assured that God's plan is best. We are not called to understand things. We are called to trust Him."

Harold Kushner, author of the best-selling book "When Bad Things Happen to Good People," said he does not believe the tornado was an act of God—even though insurance companies like to categorize natural disasters as such.

"It was an act of nature," he explained. "Nature is morally blind.



Nature can be beautiful but it has no conscience. ... I find God not in the tornado, but in the many responses to the tornado, whether it's the courage to go on or the resilience to put your life back together or the impulse to help victims."

Kushner, who lived through the 1989 San Francisco earthquake, added that he is inspired by the biblical story of the prophet Elijah, who sought God in the wind, in the fire and an earthquake, but ultimately found God in a "still small voice."

"When we ask 'Why did God let this happen?', what I learned from that ... is God responds not with an explanation but with an agenda," Kushner said.

"In other words, what you do about it is not make sense of it, but do something to help."

David Gushee, a professor of

Christian ethics at Mercer University in Atlanta and a former professor at Union, has a daughter who is a student at the Tennessee school and is thankful for her protection.

But he also thinks of the story in the Gospel of John, in which Jesus' disciples asked if a man was born blind because of his sin or the sins of his parents. Jesus responded that "the works of God" would be revealed in him.

"I think we almost always get in trouble when we then attempt to offer theological explanations of what happened to that other person," Gushee explained. "I'd rather not speculate on the why, as much as when Christians and others reach out to their neighbors and feed them and rebuild their houses ... and do all the concrete things that are needed; then God is present."

**PROTECTED?**  
Students gather for prayer and support at Union University in Jackson, Tenn., after a tornado tore through campus on Feb. 5. (RNS photo by Morris Abernathy/Union University)

## Web site helps those struggling with self-destructive behaviors

By Morgan Jarema  
Grand Rapids (Mich.) Press

**Grand Rapids, Mich.** (RNS)—In spite of depression and obsessive-compulsive disorder that have nagged her since she was a teenager, 20-year-old Krissee is determined to keep the self-destructive manifestations of both conditions in check.

It has not been easy, said Krissee, who asked that her last name not be used. "To this day, I still want to do it," she admitted.

"It" was pulling out her hair, a strand at a time, until she was essentially bald.

"It" also was self-injury. She used a razor blade or X-acto knife to slash her forearms and legs.

Growing up near Grand Rapids, Mich., Krissee remembers a happy childhood, but one that was tinged with feelings of low self-worth. As the feelings persisted and her anxiety grew, she pulled out her hair and eventually started to cut herself as a way to cope, she recalled.

"I had this amazing buildup of stress, and this was a way to release that, a physical way to cope," she said. "I couldn't always hide what I did, so I've got to believe I wanted somebody to know I wasn't OK."

Her parents tried to find her help, she said, and a "parade of every sort of counseling, therapy and medication you can think of" brought some good results. But it did not make her invincible.



**SURVIVOR** Krissee (who asked that her last name not be used) found solace in the online ministry [heartsupport.com](http://heartsupport.com) after struggling with depression and obsessive-compulsive disorder. (RNS photo by Katy Batdorff/Grand Rapids Press)

"I needed a safe place to talk," she declared.

Then a friend told her about [heartsupport.com](http://heartsupport.com) and Krissee volunteered to be one of the first to share her story with a new online community whose organizers want to be a source of hope and healing for those who are hurting.

She posted a video testimony of her experiences on the Web site, and today serves as a live-chat moderator.

"The main thing is, you've got to

talk about it," Krissee noted. "When I finally talked about it to the people I loved, that's when the healing really started."

[Heartsupport.com](http://heartsupport.com) is a new ministry for those with substance abuse or self-injury issues, eating disorders, depression or suicidal thoughts.

The ministry was started last October by friends Jon Bell, 24 (whose brother, Rob Bell, is the up-and-coming pastor of Mars Hill Bible Church in Grandville, Mich.); Web designer Clint McManaman, 27; and Craig Gross, 32, an ordained minister and former youth pastor perhaps best known as the founder of the anti-pornography ministry [XXXchurch.com](http://XXXchurch.com).

McManaman, a drummer for former Christian rock band Sub Seven, said he had heard stories from fans about their personal struggles while on the road touring.

Eventually, the trio of friends decided they wanted to do more.

[Heartsupport.com](http://heartsupport.com) includes features such as live and e-mail support with licensed counselors, chats and message boards where people can share their experiences, as well as the opportunity for people to upload their video stories.

The idea behind the Web site, as described in Bell's online bio, is simple: "Sometimes the most important words for a person to say are 'Me too.'"

An addiction to pornography

was how McManaman connected with Gross. For Bell, it was a struggle with drugs and clinical depression that led to his involvement with [heartsupport.com](http://heartsupport.com).

"I realized I was depressed in seventh grade," Bell recalled.

Instead of seeking help, he said he numbed his pain with drugs.

"I didn't feel like I could let my parents or siblings down, and I didn't feel like church was a safe place to talk about what I was going through," Bell admitted.

"I think that's common, the feeling that people will think 'What do you mean, you're not doing OK? You're in church.' I think a lot of people feel a need to have everything together."

Admitting that he had a problem led Bell to treatment and counseling, and allowed those closest to him to pull him up and out of his misery.

Had someone recommended an online resource, he probably would have used it, Bell noted.

"It's a safer conversation to say 'Go to [heartsupport](http://heartsupport.com)' than 'You should see a counselor,' even though what they're really saying is 'You should see a counselor,'" he added.

"We believe everybody's story is important, and that nobody should struggle alone," Bell noted. "People who are struggling put up walls. We're trying to kick down as many walls as possible."

# Connecting Kentucky Baptists with local church news

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PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

# WESTERN RECORDER

www.WesternRecorder.org

**WESTERN RECORDER**  
PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING  
Gilead Baptist Church Edition  
December 18, 2007

**DECEMBER'S CALENDAR**

- Dec 19 Sunshiners' Christmas Gathering, 5:00P
- Dec 19 2007 Bible Drill Recognition
- Dec 20 "A CAROLING WE WILL GO" Meet @ Church @ 5:30P
- Dec 22 Christmas Basket Delivery for Helping Hand... the Tod Walter No Sunday School and No Evening Service
- Dec 23 Fellowship 9:30A, Combined Worship, 11:00A
- Dec 24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 6:00P
- Dec 26 No Wednesday Evening Service
- Dec 27 Youth 3-Day Student Celebration in Pigeon Forge, TN

**BUDGET INFO**

2007 ANNUAL BUDGET

Weekly Budget: 1200\$ Offering

Year to Date Budget Offering to Date:

On Dec 25 We Will Not Be Having A Well @ 2 A Combined Word There Will Not On the 23rd or 24th On

**216 Jenkins Road**  
P.O. Box 599  
Eddyville, KY 42038  
(270) 358-7693  
eddyville@bellsouth.net

**Pastor:** Tim Pardon 388-2682  
**Minister of Youth & Activities:** Jay Reems 963-8541  
**Secretary:** Pearl Webb 388-9377

**Sunday Schedule**

- 9:30 A.M. Worship
- 9:45 A.M. Sunday School
- 10:45 A.M. Worship
- 6:00 P.M. Church Fellowship
- 7:00 P.M. Worship
- Wednesday Night
- 6:00 P.M. Adult Choir
- 7:00 P.M. Midweek Worship
- 8:45 A.M. Church
- 9:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.

**IT'S THE SUNSHINER'S 2007 CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION!**  
The Sunshiners Invite Everyone To Join Them On Tuesday, December 18th @ 5:00PM  
As They Come Together To Celebrate Jesus!  
The Ham, Turkey, & Drinks are Provided  
Please Bring a Side Dish and A Dessert.

**2007 BIBLE DRILL RECOGNITIONS**  
Join Us This Wednesday, December 19th @ 6:30PM  
As We Recognize All Of Our Youth & Children

**WESTERN RECORDER**  
PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING  
First Baptist Eddyville Edition  
December 18, 2007

**First Baptist Church**

**MAY GOD BLESS YOU AND YOUR FAMILY AS YOU CELEBRATE THE GREATEST GIFT EVER GIVEN, Jesus!**

On Sunday, December 23rd, there will be no 9:30 A.M. worship service. We will only have one A.M. worship service on this Sunday at 10:45 A.M. Discipleship Training will be at 5:00 P.M. on Sunday, December 23rd. Christmas Lord's Supper Service at 6:00 P.M. on Sunday, December 23rd. Adult choir will present "Jesus, No Other Name" on Sunday, December 23rd at 10:45 A.M. worship service.

**WESTERN RECORDER**  
PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING  
Highland Baptist Church Edition  
December 18, 2007

**HIGHLAND BAPTIST CHURCH**  
A thinking, feeling and healing community of faith

**Christmas Eve Services**  
Our Advent Season continues with worship services this Sunday, December 23, followed by two Christmas Eve Services.  
On Monday, Christmas Eve, the 5:00 p.m. Family Service and the 7:00 p.m. Lesson and Church Service will have special music led by children, Sanctuary Choir and a string ensemble.  
Please invite family and friends to join you. Children will be provided for the 7:00 Service.

**Reminder** - We will gather on December 30, for the Bible Study Hour, followed by worship at 11:00 a.m. (The 9:00 a.m. service will not be held.) Jim England will be our preacher.

**An Advent Word of Thanks**  
How can I give glory... I would do my part. The question posed by poet Christina Rossetti has been answered each week this Advent season with wonderful gifts of songs, words, and prayer. The members of Highland's Orchestra, the Sanctuary Choir, our youngest musicians - the Children's Choir, Children and Adult Handbell Choir, and our worshiped musicianship - the Children's Choir. Thank you to everyone for all of their hard work and devotion.

**HBC Welcomes**

**Amendment Creates Interim Director of Young Adult Ministries**  
After considerable discussion and input, a recommendation by Ministry Planning Team Chair, Mary Burke Price, was passed creating a position of Interim Director of Young Adult Ministries. The position is to be filled by the congregation. The position will be filled by Kevin Reppel.

**Thinking Together...**  
I got an early Christmas present meeting... The day was around a new minister after energy, vision, calling, strategy, vision, hope, and faithfulness will be a great gift indeed. A blessed joy to Christmas to you!

**Where and Voice**  
I hope that love and faithfulness will meet, righteousness and peace will kiss each other. Faithfulness will spring up from the ground and righteousness will look down from the sky. - Isaiah 61:1-3