



WESTERN RECORDER

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FOR THE RECORD

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Relief trickling in to Myanmar after devastating storm

Yangon, Myanmar—Days after a cyclone's widespread devastation in Myanmar, the first two plane loads of United Nations relief supplies landed in the capital of Yangon May 8. The flights were suspended one day later after the country's military government confiscated the aid shipments intended for the country's hungry and homeless survivors. Observers fear the death toll could rise to more than 100,000 because safe supplies of drinking water and food are not available to large numbers of people.

In addition, visas for relief workers still had not been approved by the country's military leaders as of late last week.

A Southern Baptist relief effort is focusing on establishing reliable communications with partners in Myanmar, noted Jeff Palmer, executive director of Baptist Global Response, a Southern Baptist international relief and development organization.

Cyclone Nargis wiped out much of Myanmar's communications networks and has made it difficult even for the country's own relief system to determine the extent of the damage. In addition to food and clean water, aid organizations expect that the most urgent needs will include plastic sheeting, water purification tablets, mosquito nets and emergency health kits.

Ready to help

Meanwhile, Baptists from around the world are currently in Bangkok, Thailand, awaiting visa application approval to enter Myanmar. The two countries share a common border.

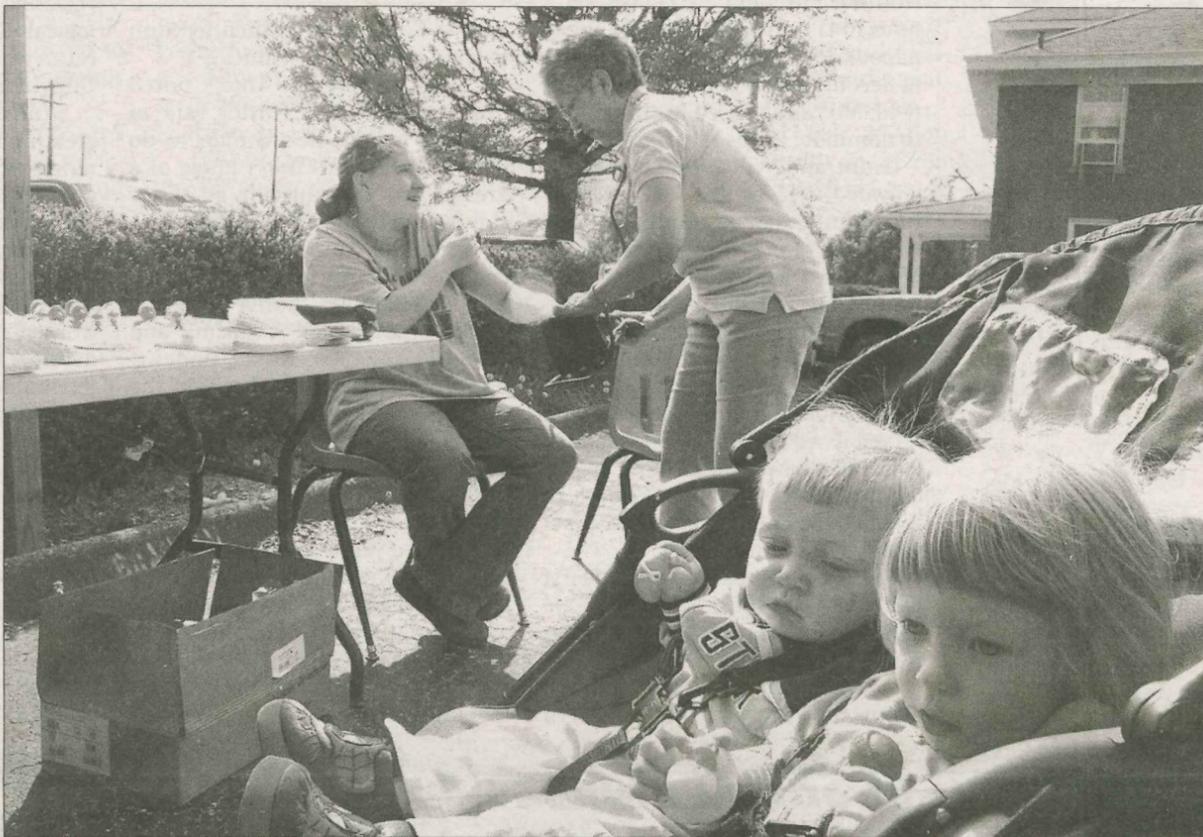
The teams, including Baptists from Hungary and Australia, are part of Baptist World Alliance's BWAid Rescue24, which does search, rescue and relief work. They have bought \$30,000 worth of basic food items, medication and blankets in Bangkok to take into Myanmar. The funds were donated by Hungarian Baptist Aid, which works closely with Baptist World Aid, the disaster relief arm of BWA.

Trained search and rescue personnel from North Carolina and the country of Singapore are expected to join the BWAid Rescue24 team currently in Bangkok.

As of last week, the death toll stood at more than 23,000, with another 42,000-plus people

□ See Relief supplies ... *Page 8*

Boon for Boones Creek



HEALTHY MOM With her children nearby, Jessica Fraley of Winchester has her blood pressure checked by Delores Gilmore at one of several MissionsFEST block parties held in communities around Boones Creek Baptist Association April 26-May 3. Gilmore is a member of First Baptist Church of Henderson and the Kentucky chapter of Baptist Nursing Fellowship. Several BNF volunteers served during MissionsFEST, a week of projects and activities assisting Boones Creek churches and ministries in outreach efforts. Volunteers from as far away as Maryland and Texas participated, and like Gilmore, many Kentucky Baptists from outside the Boones Creek area also donated their time and energy. Working with local Baptists, national Woman's Missionary Union coordinates MissionsFEST events around the U.S. each year. (Photos by Dannah Prather)

MissionsFEST volunteers flock to share Christ in the Bluegrass

By Dannah Prather
Partnerships Editor

Winchester—Imagine serving a ministry area that, at its most far-flung, spans 75 miles and includes 37 churches in nine counties situated among some of Kentucky's most beautiful—and rugged—landscape.

Jim Smith does not have to imagine it. As director of missions for Boones Creek Baptist Association, it is his mission to help those 37 congregations in the mission: To share the gospel with, and minister to, residents of their communities.

Now imagine being blessed for one week with more than 100 "extra" Christian hearts and pairs of hands to pursue the Great Commission. That was Kentucky's 2008 MissionsFEST, April 26-May 3.

"I really feel like it's going to change our association," Smith declared. He said he expects "real revival" and "spiritual awakening" following the flurry of door-to-door visits, work projects, block parties, health fairs and other events made possible by partnerships with local Baptists, national Woman's Missionary Union and volunteers from Alabama, Maryland, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Kentucky.

The Boones Creek event was the 21st MissionsFEST since national WMU began organizing the hands-

on service opportunities for Southern Baptists in 2000. In recent years MissionsFESTs and FamilyFESTs—similar events designed specifically for parents, children and extended family—have drawn about 1,000 participants annually according to Kristy Carr, WMU's volunteer connection specialist. Other MissionsFEST events are scheduled this summer for Baltimore; Kansas City, Kan.; and Tijuana, Mexico.

Carr said MissionsFEST appeals to busy people because national WMU handles promotion and logistics. Participants pay \$325 per person for the week, arrive at the appointed time and place, then are assigned projects developed by people who know the area best.

"The driving force is ministry," Carr noted, adding that national WMU's participation frees up local Baptists to focus on how to make the most of the extra volunteers. "It's so wonderful to work alongside the church members," she added.

Twyla Sheffield, WMU director for Boones Creek association, said local Baptists began planning the event about 16 months ago.

Door-to-door surveys of local residents is a MissionsFEST cornerstone. Volunteers assemble hundreds of packets with devotional materials and information about area churches and the association. Local Bap-



OPPORTUNITY KNOCKING Dottie Eastman of Arlington, Texas, knocks on the door of a residence in Reid Village near Mt. Sterling. With her is fellow Texan Maxine Thompson. The members of Woods Chapel Baptist Church conducted door-to-door surveys with members of Reid Village Baptist Church during MissionsFEST. The surveys record residents' opinions about church attendance, and will assist local congregations in future outreach efforts. In some cases, surveyors have an opportunity to share the gospel with, or pray for, people in need.

tists accompany out-of-towners, asking residents their opinions about church life and inquiring about spiritual needs they may have.

The surveys often are a congregation's first step toward developing a more comprehensive strategy □ See MissionsFEST workers ... *Page 3*

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, May 14.

Hunt, Willis jump into crowded SBC presidential contest

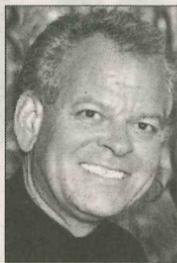
Pensacola, Fla. (BP)—Johnny Hunt, pastor of First Baptist Church of Woodstock, Ga., and Avery Willis, former missionary and senior vice president for the Southern Baptist International Mission Board, will be nominated for president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Ted Traylor, pastor of Olive Baptist Church in Pensacola, Fla., said May 6 that he intends to nominate Hunt for president during the SBC's June 10-11 annual meeting in Indianapolis. John Marshall, senior pastor of Second Baptist Church of Springfield, Mo., announced his intentions to nominate Willis the same day.

Hunt and Willis join an already crowded field of five SBC presidential nominees to be announced. The two join Frank Cox, pastor of North Metro First Baptist Church in Lawrenceville, Ga.; Bill Wagner, a former Southern Baptist missionary and seminary professor, and current president of Olivet University International in San Francisco who served as SBC first vice president in 2003-2004; and Wiley Drake, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church in Buena Park, Calif., who was SBC first vice president in 2006-2007.

Hunt has served as pastor of First Baptist, Woodstock, since 1986. He also has served two churches in North Carolina.

Traylor noted a "deep concern about the future of the Southern



Johnny Hunt



Avery Willis

Baptist Convention" which led him to want to nominate Hunt.

"I just believe the Lord's raised him up to do it," Traylor said of Hunt. "I believe he's a man to do it for our future. I don't know of a greater Acts 1:8 church in all of our convention than First Woodstock."

According to the 2007 Southern Baptists' Annual Church Profile, First Baptist Church of Woodstock reported 462 baptisms and \$393,798 (2.2 percent) of undesignated receipts given through the Cooperative Program from total undesignated receipts of more than \$17.8 million.

Since 1987, the congregation has sent out more than 135 missionaries and started more than 78 churches. The church also has developed ministries such as the "City of Refuge," which provides assistance for ministers in crisis.

"I believe Southern Baptists are looking for a future that is marked

by unity, not division," Traylor said. "Johnny Hunt has one fight in him and that is the good fight of faith. He is a leader who can forge a hopeful future that is centered around the gospel and connected to the local church."

He and his wife, Janet, have two daughters and four grandchildren.

Hunt is a graduate of Gardner-Webb College in Boiling Springs, N.C., and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., where the Chair of Church Growth is named for Hunt.

Willis, perhaps best known for creating MasterLife discipleship materials while serving as the president of the Indonesian Baptist Theological Seminary in Semarang, Indonesia, was first commissioned as an IMB missionary to Indonesia, along with his wife, Shirley, in 1964. He worked as an evangelist and church developer for six years before transferring to the seminary in Semarang, where he served as president for six years.

During his service there, the Southeast Asian nation experienced a revival in which 2 million people gave their hearts to Christ. The large number of converts prompted Willis to pioneer innovative strategies for extension education and develop the prototype for what would become the MasterLife disciplining process. During the next 15 years

as head of the adult discipleship department at LifeWay Christian Resources, MasterLife was translated into more than 50 languages and used in more than 100 countries.

"I don't know of anyone more loved and respected than Avery Willis," Marshall noted. "When someone first approached me about this, I thought, good grief why have we waited this long to do this?"

Willis left LifeWay in 1994 to become the IMB's senior vice president of overseas operations during a time of expansion and strategy changes in the Southern Baptist missionary endeavor. All totaled, Willis spent 25 years in missionary service, retiring from the IMB in 2004. He is currently executive director of the International Orality Network and serves on the board of Table 71, an alliance of evangelical mission agencies.

According to the 2007 Southern Baptists' Annual Church Profile, Bella Vista Baptist Church in Arkansas, of which Willis is a member, reported 18 baptisms and \$119,225 (16.7 percent) of undesignated receipts given through the Cooperative Program from total undesignated receipts of more than \$712,000.

Willis is a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee, Okla., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

He and his wife have five children and 16 grandchildren.

Page: Half of SBC churches dead by 2030

Cary, N.C. (ABP)—The Southern Baptist Convention is rapidly dying and resistance to change could kill more than half of the denomination's churches by 2030, outgoing SBC President Frank Page said May 1.

Unless something is done to reverse the downward trend, Southern Baptist churches could number only 20,000—down from the current total of more than 44,000—in fewer than 22 years, according to Page, who is pastor of First Baptist Church of Taylors, S.C. His comments came during a conference call with pastors, hosted by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

Page said the problem "resided in the churches" that refuse to change in an effort to stop their inevitable demise. He emphasized that the SBC downturn is not the denomination's fault—because of poor programming or lack of emphasis on the denominational level.

"The reality is it's our fault," Page told the Pastor's Disciple-Making Network, an initiative of the North Carolina convention. "People rarely rise above the level of their pastor's spiritual life and it is critical that pastors maintain a vibrant walk with Christ."

Page acknowledged the "busyness" which often accompanies life in modern ministry, with committees and administrative responsibilities overwhelming a pastor's schedule to the point that he has no time for serious study of the Bible, prayer or meditation. "Pastors can easily get distracted and they must fight against it, because pastors must remain learners of Jesus for as long as they live," Page noted.

"Many Southern Baptist churches are small groups of white people who are holding on (until) the end," he added. "Not only have we not reached out to younger generations, but we have failed to reach out to other ethnic minorities who are all around us."

Rather than embracing a "whatever it takes" mentality to change and restore a local church to health, Page said that many pastors and churches have "chosen to die rather than change, and they are doing it."

He explained that the vision of pastors must be biblical, firm and resolute, or else when they face "the horizon of trouble, their vision is the first thing out the window." Pastors must stay the course or risk being blown off course by the trials that accompany any change in any church, the SBC president emphasized.

"Church members must be helped to catch the vision, and pastors must work to bring their people to a place of trust" so they will follow the pastor's vision, he said.

Personal interaction with the pastor and times of pastoral care and concern also are essential to establishing relationships capable of embracing change, Page continued.

"Until I pastored a congregation of more than 1,000 people, I always personally called every member on their birthday," he recalled. As a result, in times of personal crisis or church-wide change, they knew "that their pastor was involved in their lives and cared about them."

Page's recent book, "The Incredible Shrinking Church," discusses the declining status of churches in America. The book attempts to help churches make the transition from the mentality of an inevitable decline, without resorting to non-biblical organizational tactics.

Although change is a church imperative, Page noted, there is "no national entity currently helping them do that."

Making that transition was the topic of discussion by the pastors after Page left the conference call.

"I see no more courageous call for any pastor than to lead their people to leave behind unbiblical methods of ministry and embrace new ways of accomplishing biblical goals," declared Rick Hughes, BSCNC's senior consultant for discipleship. "We must face the fact that much of the American church is declining for a very biblical reason: We have failed to be and make disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ."

The Pastor's Disciple-Making Network was established to provide fellowship, instruction and opportunities for interaction with evangelical scholars and church leaders.

IMB picks Southern's Lawless for theological education post

Richmond, Va. (BP)—In an effort to get solid theological training to grassroots leaders and strengthen ties between the Southern Baptist International Mission Board and overseas Baptist seminaries, the IMB has appointed a consultant for global theological education.

Chuck Lawless, dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Church Growth at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, will offer theological guidance to IMB personnel and Baptist partners serving throughout the world.

Lawless begins his new role June 1. He will continue serving full time as dean of the Billy Graham School. As a consultant, Lawless will travel abroad about four times a year to meet with missionaries, local believers and seminaries. He also will teach short-term courses at overseas seminaries and during missionary orientation sessions.

"My first hope is just to learn what the IMB is already doing and to come alongside the efforts that are already taking place and strengthen what's there," Lawless said.

"I will help them look at what's working, what's not working and at how it can be strengthened. We want to help produce churches (overseas) that are grounded in the Word and theologically strong, and they can reach out beyond themselves."

IMB President Jerry Rankin said Lawless' role is not a unique partnership between the IMB and Southern Seminary, but a way to connect overseas mission opportunities with Bat-

tist seminaries and partners here in the U.S. Lawless will represent the IMB as a liaison to all six SBC seminaries in encouraging their partnership and involvement with overseas seminaries.

"I am excited about the momentum of a Great Commission resurgence in our convention that would see state-side churches and denominational entities claiming more ownership of our mission task and becoming more strategically involved around the world," Rankin noted.

"Over the years, we have seen the cutting-edge task of theological education training is not in these Western institutional models of theological education," he added, "but in decentralized theological education for grassroots leaders in the growing church planting movements around the world."

The IMB partners with about 140 residential Bible schools and seminaries worldwide, which enroll a total of 22,000 students each year. An additional 200,000 students are being trained in non-residential programs of decentralized theological education.

Ron Wilson, IMB associate vice president of leadership and ministries development, sees the new role as a strategic way to locate areas that need theological training and to build relationships.

"I see this role as a great connecting role, connecting with U.S. seminaries to be involved with overseas seminaries and all of it together," he noted.



Chuck Lawless

KBC board approves budget, calls Witham as team leader

Bagdad—Kentucky Baptist Convention Mission Board members voted last week to endorse the details of a \$24 million Cooperative Program budget for 2008-2009.

Meeting May 5-6 at Cedarmore Camp and Conference Center in Shelby County, board members also appointed Alan Witham as church development team leader and approved additional annual funding for the Kentucky Baptist Foundation.

The CP budget goal, approved by KBC messengers last November, reflects no change over the current budget. It includes 62.96 percent for Kentucky Baptist ministries and 37.04 percent for Southern Baptist Convention causes.

The budget proposal came amid a report that Cooperative Program giving in the month of April exceeded \$2.3 million. According to Cathi Roy-Sanders, director of the KBC's accounting services, CP receipts remain 0.6 percent behind budget, but more than \$825,000 ahead of last year's pace eight months into the fiscal year.

Witham appointed

In addition to endorsing the budget, Mission Board members appointed Alan Witham as team leader of the KBC's church development team. He has served as interim team leader since last November.



Alan Witham

Witham previously served as regional church development strategist and strategist coordinator for the KBC. He joined the convention in 2000 as an associate in church planting and multi-housing ministries.

"I greatly appreciate the opportunity to serve Kentucky Baptists in this role," Witham noted. "I feel my ministry will be one of leading the church development team in its mission of helping equip (KBC) churches to experience increasing levels of health and growth."

Witham acknowledged the challenge Kentucky Baptist churches face in turning around congregations that are in decline, but expressed excitement about the forthcoming Comeback Churches Process, a program based on "common key factors among healthy churches in our state and across the nation," he said.

"I want to teach, promote and model these key factors and see them become reality in the churches in our state," he added.

Witham is a graduate of Campbellsville University and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

KBF funding increase

Mission Board members also approved a recommendation to grant Kentucky Baptist Foundation access to two new sources of funding. The

action was in response to a request made by the Foundation last November for an increased funding base. It was proposed by the Kentucky Baptist Foundation Study Committee, which was appointed to research and respond to the KBF's appeal.

The recommendation did not meet the initial request for an annual increase of \$372,000, instead granting KBF authority to retain 25 percent of any undesignated bequest to the Foundation with the balance going to the Cooperative Program endowment fund. The funds previously were allocated by the Mission Board to the CP endowment fund.

The Mission Board also will make available up to \$40,000 in additional year-end funds from sources other than excess CP and Restricted Kentucky Only funds for the current fiscal year. Beginning with the 2009-2010 fiscal year, the additional funds will be included in the annual budget, distributed proportionately from all other CP recipients.

In other action, board members:

- Approved a new structure for the KBC's partnership missions department that will enable it to mobilize churches for missions efforts throughout the world rather than through targeted partnerships with select countries or regions. The new structure is designed to better complement the strategies of the SBC's International Mission Board and North American Mission Board.
- Approved a recommendation

to adopt the SBC's definition of the Cooperative Program, along with an additional statement of clarification defining a CP gift. Both definitions will be presented to Kentucky Baptist messengers at the annual meeting in November.

■ Approved the administrative committee's recommendation to dissolve the Kentucky Baptist Archives Advisory Board and simultaneously recognized the creation of a new independent organization—to be known as the J.H. Spencer Historical Society—that will continue to preserve Kentucky Baptist history.

■ Approved nine new Mission Board members to fill unexpired terms. New board members include Larry Baker of Russellville, Gary Brooks of Pineville, Jimmy Brown of Water Valley, Tommy Floyd of Monticello, Tom McKim of Fredonia, Douglas Simpson of Versailles, Jason Sipes of Hickman, Susie Stivers of Shelbyville and Wayne Walters of Pineville.

■ Approved Rusty Ellison of Louisville to serve an unexpired term on the board of trustees of the Kentucky Baptist Assemblies; Lester Watson of Cadiz to serve an unexpired term on the board of trustees of the Kentucky Ethics League; and Dean Warren of Bowling Green to serve an unexpired term on the board of directors of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation.

Compiled from reporting by News Director Drew Nichter and KBC Media Relations Associate Kristie Randolph

KBC's Mackey returns to work following illness

Louisville—After a month-long hospital stay, KBC Executive Director Bill Mackey continues to recover from illness and is transitioning back to full-time work.

Mackey was admitted to the hospital on March 13 for treatment of an intestinal bacterial imbalance and remained there until April 10. He resumed part-time work on April 14, and hopes "to be in the office full time by May 12, and to resume field engagements by the end of May."

"I am grateful for Kentucky Baptists and the many others who have prayed for my recovery, and that God intervened and continues to answer those prayers," Mackey said.

According to Mackey, doctors have approved him to gradually begin physical activity. He anticipates that "it will take several months for a full physical recovery."

MissionsFEST workers flock to Boones Creek Association

Continued from page 1

gy for meeting people and needs in their community. "This is a great support for our churches," Smith explained at the halfway point of MissionsFEST. "We're already meeting prospects."

Maxine Thompson, a member of Woods Chapel Baptist Church in Arlington, Texas, was a MissionsFEST volunteer previously in Maine and Massachusetts before coming to Kentucky. She said she enjoys encouraging fellow believers.

"A lot of the smaller churches need help" in outreach, Thompson pointed out. "They are busy doing normal things just to keep the

church going."

Ruth Hayes, WMU director of Reid Village Baptist Church near Mt. Sterling, said her congregation is ready to sustain outreach efforts begun during MissionsFEST.

"It wouldn't be any use of having it if we didn't follow up," Hayes noted. "If it hadn't been for MissionsFEST we probably wouldn't have started on this survey."

Door-to-door evangelism

Just as important as the survey were moments of ministry a knock on the door might reveal. Thompson's group met a young man whose wife recently left him. "He was hurt-

ing," Thompson recalled, noting that the man seemed to appreciate the prayers they offered on his behalf.

Physical health also was a platform for service at the event. Members of the Kentucky chapter of Baptist Nursing Fellowship participated in block parties and hosted their own events to share practical health care tips and the love of Christ.

"Nursing and medicine sometimes opens a door for ministry in the local communities," explained Gayle Mulberry, president of national BNF. Mulberry directs a Christian crisis pregnancy center in Tennessee and made the trip to Kentucky for MissionsFEST. Medical volunteers also are needed for the Mexico event this summer, she noted.

Nurses from outside the state joined Kentucky BNF members to host two Baby Boot Camps providing mothers-to-be information on caring for their infants. A baby shower for participants followed the workshops.

At the block parties, BNF members gave children jump ropes, encouraging them to exercise regularly. They even shared healthy snacks and samples of low-sugar drinks. They demonstrated proper hand-washing techniques and gave boys and girls tips on staying safe in their neighborhoods.

Carr said because of the WMU connection, many people assume that most MissionsFEST volunteers are women, but many pastors, ministers and other Baptist men enjoy participating in missions without being called upon to organize or lead the trips.

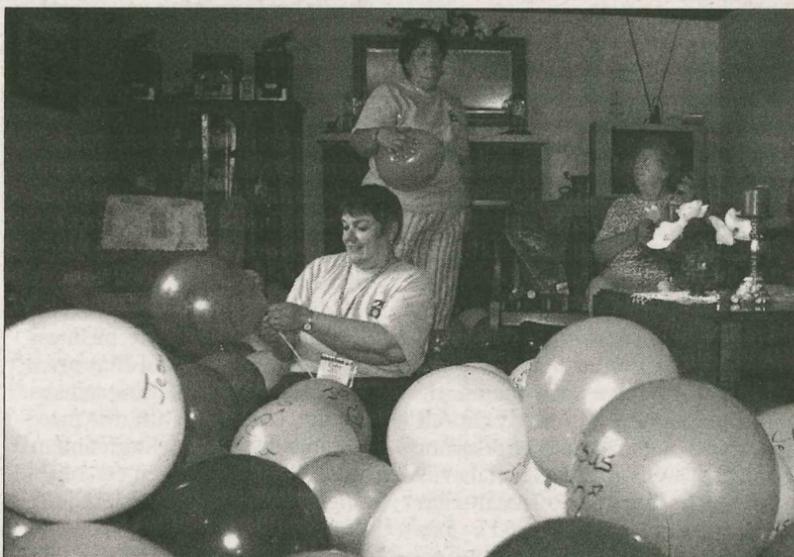
Men and women also rolled up their sleeves around the Boones Creek area to help needy residents with light construction, home repair, painting and other projects. The association's 54-year-old camp facility also benefited from the elbow grease.

"This is really neat," said Lee Kerr III, a member of Central Baptist Church in Winchester. "It always seems like we're going someplace else to do missions. Why not do it for people here?"

Central Baptist organized 11 work projects around Winchester during the week. Phyllis Lewis was on a local non-profit agency's waiting list for four years before MissionsFEST volunteers arrived to help her. "I didn't know what I was going to do," remarked Lewis who has chronic lung ailments and recently was released from the hospital.

Lewis lives, along with her daughter and son-in-law, in a house Lewis' parents bought many years ago. The front steps were in disrepair and the back porch required attention. She called the MissionsFEST volunteers an answer to prayer. "It means everything."

The Kentucky event was Sara Jarnigan's first mission trip outside her home state of Tennessee. "I love working with WMU and I knew it would be organized," noted the member of Calvary Baptist Church in Oak Ridge. "As my kids are getting older, God can take me away from home more." Referencing Christ's "great commandment" recorded in Acts 1:8, Jarnigan said the Boones Creek trip "was kind of my Samaria."



GETTING READY (From left) Cathy Chinn, Peggy Leach and Doris Satterwhite attach plastic sticks to balloons printed with the message "Jesus Loves You" in preparation for an event at a Clark County mobile home community. During MissionsFEST Satterwhite, WMU director for New Hope Baptist Church, served lunch for the five-member clown ministry team from Hartford and helped coordinate outreach efforts at three mobile home parks in the area.



BRIGHTENING UP Linda Edgington, a member of First Baptist Church of Lawrenceburg, paints the front-porch railing of a home in Winchester. "I'm sold on missions," she said. "The Bible doesn't say if we want to do missions, it says 'go.'" Edgington has served in New Orleans, West Virginia and throughout Kentucky through MissionsFEST, Kentucky Changers and projects organized through her church. (Photos by Dannah Prather)

WESTERNRECORDER

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

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What is 'the whole point?'

By Dick Staub

Seattle (RNS)—I awoke this morning with a lot to do and one thing on my mind. My waking thought was a simple phrase: "The whole point." Why "the whole point"?

Maybe because I've been observing how few people experience wholeness in this fragmented age. I've been thinking a lot about the quote from the late Dutch theologian Hans Rookmaaker: "Jesus didn't come to make us Christian. He came to make us fully human." I've been researching the Hebrew word for peace, "shalom," which really means completeness.

Before I went to bed, I read a recent issue of Time magazine with its cover article, "There Can Only Be One." On the cover is a spooky picture—one presidential candidate consisting of half of Barack Obama's face and half of Hillary Clinton's pasted together. Maybe I was trying to make wholeness of our disintegrating presidential politics?

On the way to the office, I listen to the news and hear animated chatter about the Miley Cyrus photo scandal. Reporters who spent serious tuition dollars to study journalism yammer on about Hannah Montana. Yet another innocent teen star is going from good girl to bad girl, her seductive Vanity Fair photos the first step on a downward path to ruin.

I remember Annie Dillard's advice to writers: "Assume you write for an audience consisting solely of terminal patients; that is, after all, the case. What could you say to a dy-

ing person that would not enrage by its triviality?"

FIRST PERSON

With all the serious societal issues facing us, I wonder how long the media will be the enablers of our codependent need to amuse ourselves to death.

I think about this column about faith and culture and cannot bring myself to write about inconsequential matters. I go back to thinking about "the whole point."

I think about my own life. I moved to an island last year in part to detox from busy-ness on the mainland. Now I am tyrannized by deadlines and commitments off island and the compelling draw of being involved with relationships on the island.

Wholeness is more than balance and it is more than fullness. The "life more abundant" Jesus talked about is not just spinning the plates better, nor is it about adding more good things to an already full plate of good things.

I get to the office and begin my morning routine of reading, meditating and praying.

This comes from Tolstoy: "Remember," he said, "you do not abide but rather pass through this life. You are not in a home, but on a train that takes you to death. Remember only your body will die and only the spirit is truly alive."

I know this much for sure—fully human is sacredly human and requires attentiveness to the spiritual.

Then I turn to my "Celtic Daily Prayer: Prayers and Readings from

Church controversy

At first glance, the controversy that is tearing apart Broadway Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas, might appear they are spitting in the wind or "shooting their cannon at sparrows."

Of real significance, however, is the issue of whether the Bible is believable and trustworthy as a guide for faith and

practice.

Some confuse it with God Himself, hence making more of it than its Author intended.

Even worse are those who make too little of it. With them there is the fatal conceit that they can rewrite the Bible to accommodate it to the "wisdom of the world." A constant effort is kept going to reduce the discrepancies between the Bible



We are family

I recently read an article by Steve Davis in the Indiana Baptist Monthly titled, "We are family." This month and next we celebrate family with Mother's Day and Father's Day, and Davis' analogy about earthly family and the family of God captured me.

Davis, who serves as executive director of the State Convention of Baptists in Indiana, said that not only is the church a family but that associations, state conventions and even the Southern Baptist Convention are also families. They are not just organizations and buildings, but a family of churches choosing to cooperate with each other for the sake of sharing Jesus Christ, strengthening churches, planting churches, sending missionaries and developing leaders.

"What does it mean to be family?" Davis asked and then answered it with the words "togetherness," "encouragement" and "love".

Families get together on special

occasions. My family loves to be on vacation together and to gather at Thanksgiving and Christmas.

It seems to me that should be the same for churches, associations, state conventions and the SBC. We are not just fraternal organizations or political parties; we are the family of God joined together by our relationship to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

We have opportunities to come together Sunday mornings and during associational, state and SBC meetings. These times provide opportunities to renew acquaintances, make new friends, share ideas and learn about missions and ministries.

The SBC annual meeting in Indianapolis June 10-11, will provide a wonderful opportunity for the family of churches to be together. I hope that Kentucky Baptists will have the largest representation.

The second characteristic of family mentioned by Davis is that family time is a time of encouragement, fun and refreshment. People are hav-

ing person that would not enrage by its triviality?"

the Northumbria Community" and read this: "If you cannot cherish what it is the Lord is doing in your life, at least do not waste what He is doing in your life."

I decide I am blessed. My wife, Kathy, and I own a lot we can build on and today we will make one more tour of available homes before deciding to build. She wants to build. I want to hold out for a home that is already built since prices are starting to drop.

The phone rings. It is my friend Phill. In the mid-1970s his wife died of cancer. He remarried a few years later. Then last December, out of the blue, he got the news his wife Sybil has a rare form of inoperable ovarian cancer.

She started treatment immediately and though a long shot, began what looked like an amazing recovery. Last week she experienced a relapse and was hospitalized. Today, Phill is calling to ask if I would preside at her memorial service.

The whole point? Cherishing life and not wasting a minute of it. Knowing it is spirit that lasts. Recognizing our time with friends and family is a gift that can be snatched away at any time.

It's telling my wife I am ready to fulfill her dream—we will build a house and we will make it a home, knowing all the while that ultimately we do not abide, but pass through this life. We'll be content knowing we are spiritual beings having a human experience and dedicated to nurturing the eternal in the here and now.

Dick Staub is author of "The Culturally Savvy Christian" and host of The Kindlings Muse blog

and culture. It is a truism that we do not go very far in the Bible until we meet a God we do not like. In the instance of the Texas church, social change seeks to sit in judgment of the Bible and its trustworthiness. The majority seeks to allow an ostentatious display of homosexuality to sit in judgment of the Bible. Sadly, in our postmodern culture, seldom does the reverse occur.

John Huffman
Louisville

ing a tough time in the world so they need churches, associations and conventions to be families of encouragement, joy, refreshment and challenge.

Let us learn to evaluate without being critical, to share opinions without being opinionated, and to disagree without being disagreeable. The world does not need another excuse to resist Jesus.

The third characteristic of family is forgiveness and love. There is a lot of unconditional love and forgiveness in the human family. And the same should be true in churches, associations and conventions.

The world should be able to observe how much we love one another as experienced by the early church at Antioch (Acts 11:26). Love does not mean that we ignore sin, social evils or injustice, but it does mean that the lost can discover God's love through us.

The most important reason to come together as families of God is that God, our Father, will be there. We are the family of God.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

GIVING

Stewarding your family business requires planning

By Laurie Valentine

Planning is the key to being a good steward of your estate. One aspect of estate planning that may not get enough time and attention is planning for succession of a family business.

A 2002 MassMutual Financial Group/Raymond Institute American Family Business survey of 1,143 family-owned businesses revealed that 68 percent of companies reported that the senior generation of family owners had a good understanding of the amount of estate taxes that would be due at their death, while 81 percent had completed their estate planning. However, less than half conducted regular formal valuations of company share values or had a formal redemption/liquidity plan.

Failure to keep tabs on the current value of your business can result in your family being faced with a larger-than-expected death tax bill at your death. Lack of a formal redemption plan can result in family disharmony, lack of sufficient financial resources outside the business to pay the death taxes, and/or the possibility that the business may not stay in the family.

Buy-sell and shareholder agreements can play a key role in achieving your wishes for succession of the ownership of a family business and help avoid some of the pitfalls a lack of planning can create.

Such agreements can create a right or an obligation of either the business or the other owners, or both, to purchase the deceased owner's interest, thereby providing the funds required to pay death taxes and better assuring that the remaining owners have some say about with whom they will be in business after your death. Funding for the buyout can come from business-owned or other-owners-owned life insurance or through a combination of an upfront cash payment and installment note from the purchaser(s).

If the deceased owner's estate is obligated under the agreement to sell the business interest at a fixed or formula-determined price to the business or other owners, and that price applies for both lifetime sales as well as those at death, the price established in the agreement should be honored in establishing the estate tax value of the business interest.

Take time to plan so that your family business succession objectives will be met.

Laurie Valentine is trust counsel for the Kentucky Baptist Foundation



Past sexual abuse can exhibit powerful hold over a marriage

Q: My wife and I got married in December. I love her very much, but it has not been easy. I knew she had been sexually abused as a child, but I was not ready for her reaction when I have wanted to have sex. I am not sure if we will ever be able to. I try to reassure her, but it doesn't seem to make a difference. What are we to do?

Your wife has the imprint of trauma on her brain, her heart, her body and her spirit. It is not unusual for the body to have a powerful reaction because it holds its own memory. It is likely her body associates certain touch with the trauma and naturally protects itself.

MARRIAGE

It is important for her and for your marriage that professional help is sought. There is nothing beyond God's power to heal, but healing does not occur simply with time. The intensity of the experience may lessen with time, but can be triggered by events or circumstances that bring associations attached to the original trauma. Healing occurs through insight, understanding, acceptance, information, trust and the presence of God to reveal the truth through all these.

Often the feelings experienced from a trauma are quite complex. Sorting through these feelings and what created them is an intentional process. Though your reassurance to your wife is meant to comfort her, it is not enough to combat the complexity of the system at work to help protect her from anything that reminds her of the trauma.

Your wife may even feel guilt and blame herself that she cannot move beyond her past and enjoy her marriage. Such feelings add to the already chaotic mass of painful feelings she carries. This is not her fault, nor is it your fault. It is the horrible consequence of sinful behavior.

Encourage her to seek counseling and support. To face her past may seem overwhelming, so help your wife to realize she is not alone. Seek out skilled professionals who recognize the power of God at work in the world to bring healing to the deepest wounds. Seek support for yourself as you continue to love your wife and require your own encouragement during a difficult time.—Valerie Vincent

Q: What are you feeding your child?

Several weeks ago, pastoral counselor Wade Rowatt handed me a copy of an old story called "Two Wolves." As the story goes, a Cherokee Indian tells his grandson about a battle that goes on inside of all people. The battle rages between Evil (anger, envy, jealousy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority and ego) and Good (joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith). In the story, Evil and Good are each represented by a wolf.

After listening to his grandfather, the boy asks, "Which wolf wins?" The old man replies, "The one you feed."

Most parents pay close attention to the food they feed their children, knowing what is at stake in terms of health and physical development. The story of the two wolves challenges parents to likewise pay attention to that which develops character and morality in their children.

To ensure that the right wolf wins, parents may need to restrict or limit a child's intake of certain ideas and information, just as we would limit sugar or fat in their diet. This may pose more of a challenge than managing a diet. Most of a child's meals are prepared by and/or eaten with parents. In contrast, the food that fuels our inclination to that which is bad comes from a variety of sources, many of which are outside the home and somewhat outside of our control.

Children need to learn the importance of the choices they make—which may be a good enough reason to tell them this story.—David Garrard

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Lessons for ministers navigating transition

Transition is defined as "the act of passing from one state or place to the next." William Ralph Inge, the Dean of St. Paul's in London during the first half of the 20th century, correctly identified the origin of this act when he said, "When our first parents were driven out of Paradise, Adam is believed to have remarked to Eve: 'My dear, we live in an age of transition.'" That reality is especially true for Southern Baptist ministers since their average tenure with a local church is less than 24 months.

Since it takes one to know one, I write as one of those ministers. While my transition was not unexpected, the feelings and expectations surrounding it have surprised me. I have counseled with family and friends, listened to possible employers and prayed with a newfound urgency. But perhaps more than anything else, I have been encouraged by the writings of another fellow "minister in transition."

Early in my process of peering into the future, a friend suggested I read Barbara Brown Taylor's "Leaving Church: A Memoir of Faith." While her denominational affiliation is different than mine, her spiritual reflections on ministry were frighteningly faithful to my own.

The heart of my identification with her came when she talked about the loss of "power" she felt as she moved from a weekly "starring role in the drama" of "being identified as the holiest person in the congregation." She artfully articulated her response to the loss of this role and its inherent power.

First, Taylor felt a great welling up of tenderness for those—the clergy and the laity—who are still making a go at being the local church. Her tenderness for the clergy revolves around the battle fatigue coming from the strong "resistance they sometimes roused in their parishioners." Her tenderness for the laity comes from the act of courage it takes to trust other human beings to give voice to one's prayers.

Second, Taylor got a fresh taste of spiritual pover-

ty. She said with so much "effort being poured into church growth, so much press being given to the benefits of faith, and so much flexing of religious muscle in the public square, the poor in spirit have no one but Jesus to call them blessed anymore."

Perhaps this is a good reminder for all of us ministerial professionals. Following Christ starts and ends with an "emptying" process that has nothing to do with what we do professionally if it does not first identify who we are personally. D.T. Niles said as much when he identified Christianity as

"one beggar telling another beggar where he found bread."

Finally, Taylor discovered that her priesthood emptied into the world. Her move from an official role on a church staff to unofficial position as priest of humankind, allowed her to renew her membership in that cherished Baptist belief of the priesthood of all believers. She concluded, "No longer responsible for one particular altar, I began to see altars everywhere."

Before renowned author and management consultant Peter Drucker passed away at the end of 2005, he observed: "People now have two lives—life one and life two. ... They are overprepared for life one and underprepared for life two." He concluded, "There is no university for the second half of life."

As I journey with this second life, I am learning well the lessons gleaned from Taylor's memoir and I would offer them as keys for any minister who navigates the waters of transition. I am learning to nurture my tenderness about those involved in leading and being led in the local church; it encourages me. I am regularly seeking ways to taste and be satisfied with my condition of spiritual poverty; it humbles me. I am intentionally looking and finding ways to invest my life in being salt and light for Kingdom sake; it empowers me.

Dan Francis is interim pastor of Harrodsburg Baptist Church

GUEST EDITORIAL



Dan Francis

Royal Ambassadors Pledge lasts a lifetime

By Jim Burton

Alpharetta, Ga.—The changes our nation has seen over the past 100 years are mind boggling. Transportation, communication and education barely resemble what existed at the turn of the previous century.

Fortunately, there have been some constants since 1908 that represent a continuity of core beliefs for Southern Baptists. One of those is the value of teaching boys about missions.

As Southern Baptists celebrate the 100th Anniversary of Royal Ambassadors on May 15, it's not hard to see all the changes that have taken place through the years. If only some of the first 2 million-plus boys to become RAs could see it today, they would probably be surprised to learn that it now includes first through third graders and that the quality of the material exceeds their imagination.

However, an RA in 1908 would likely recognize one dimension of the ministry that still remains today: the RA Pledge. Though it has changed some, the essence has remained the same.

"As a Royal Ambassador I will do my best to become a well-informed, responsible follower of Christ." Missions discipleship does not happen

by accident. It takes intentionality to learn the biblical basis of missions and to understand how Southern Baptists do missions cooperatively. Missions learning is the foundation for missions sending.

People generally do not respond to opportunities they don't know about. Through the study of missions, memorization of Scripture, evangelism training and mission projects, the RA ministry equips boys for a missional lifestyle.

"To have a Christ-like concern for all people." Missions is about other people—all people everywhere. RAs learn that missions means crossing cultures so that everyone can hear the Good News of Jesus Christ. An RA knows that today the crossing of cultures often starts in their neighborhood or school.

"To learn how to carry the message of Christ around the world." Missions learning is not just about how others do missions. It's about how even a young boy can carry the message of Christ to the four Acts 1:8 zones through his tithes, prayers, encouragement and personal participation that begins at home.

"To work with others in sharing Christ." RAs learn that missions is rarely a singular effort. Even as Jesus sent the disciples out by

twos, RAs learn that missional teamwork strengthens the missionary effort. They learn why it's important to work with missionaries, church planters, pastors and nationals in other countries to accomplish the Great Commission.

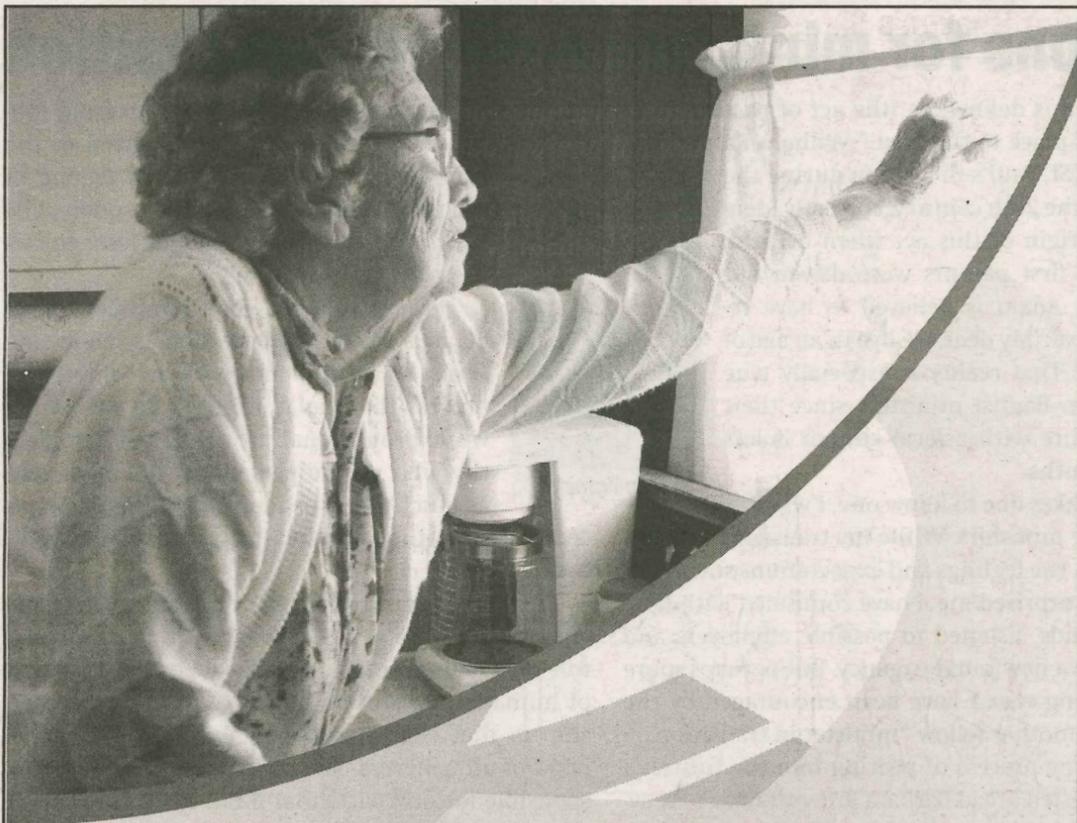
"And to keep myself clean and healthy in mind and body." RAs are God's vessel for Kingdom work. They learn that purity and personal health discipline position a boy for meeting missional challenges.

The return on investment that churches make in boys through RAs is more difficult to calculate than 100 years of enrollment. However, Southern Baptist pulpits and missionary appointments have historically been filled by men who trace their first understanding of God's missional call to RAs.

Often when speaking in churches, I will recite the RA Pledge and watch men and boys of all ages across the sanctuary mouth the words with me. They might not remember it verbatim, but the essence is still there because the RA Pledge is a powerful life promise.

Just as RAs make a pledge for missions, RAs need churches that will pledge to nurture their boys for missions. It is a pledge to invest in the future.

Jim Burton is mission education team leader for the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board



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HONORED STUDENTS Georgetown College President William Crouch (third from right) with Bishop Scholars, (from left) David Boyle, Ralphael West, Jamar Smith, Ashley Gordon and Ashley Carter-Colwell, stand outside the Rayburn Building in Washington. The five students and President Crouch were recognized by the Congressional Black Caucus for the Bishop Scholars program at Georgetown.

Congressional Black Caucus honors Georgetown College

Washington (ABP)—Extraordinary efforts at fostering diversity and building relationships with African-American Baptists earned Georgetown College special recognition in Washington.

In a United States Capitol ceremony April 30, officials of the Congressional Black Caucus recognized the Kentucky Baptist school for its Bishop Scholars program. The scholarship, established in 2006, currently provides funds for five Georgetown students.

The program is named after Bishop College, a historically black institution in Dallas that was forced to close in 1988. During its more than 100 years of existence, Bishop earned a reputation as a solid training ground for African-American Baptist ministers.

In 2006, Georgetown "adopted" the school's approximately 7,000 living alumni and established the Bishop Scholars program to carry on the defunct school's legacy. To qualify for the Bishop Scholarship, students must be the children or grandchildren of Bishop alumni and demonstrate strong academic achievement. Upon graduation, Bishop Scholars receive Georgetown diplomas that note their connection to the legacy of Bishop College.

"I am pleased to welcome the Bishop College Scholars in our nation's Capitol in order to recognize their tremendous achievements," said Rep. Barbara Lee (D-Calif.), first vice chair of the caucus. "I commend Georgetown College and the Bishop College alumni for forming this his-

toric partnership to promote academic excellence."

"Being a Bishop Scholar means being a part of a historical black college that produced many successful black leaders," said Ralphael West, one of the scholarship recipients. The five students attended the Capitol ceremony along with Georgetown President William Crouch.

The scholarship program is one of several ways that Georgetown has attempted, in recent years, to expand its diversity and build relationships with African-American Baptist groups. In 2005, Crouch announced a Georgetown partnership with the four largest black Baptist denominations in the United States that featured a new Georgetown archive for African-American Baptist historical artifacts. The school also houses the Kentucky Underground Railroad Research Institute in a campus building that originally operated as slave quarters.

In addition, Georgetown officials are raising funds to erect a replica of a Bishop College building on campus, and plan to host a Bishop College reunion.

Crouch, according to a press release, said the students are not the only ones who have benefitted from the Bishop Scholars program. "A richness has been added to my life and the life of Georgetown College because of the spirit found in the lives of Bishop College alumni," he noted. "For the Congressional Black Caucus to recognize the uniqueness of this partnership is a great endorsement of this initiative."

Valentine elected ACGA secretary

Chicago—Laurie Valentine, trust counsel for the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, was elected secretary of the American Council on Gift Annuities board of directors executive committee at its biennial conference in Chicago last month.

Valentine, who also is chief operating officer for the KBF, has served on the ACGA board of directors since 2000 and has been a member of several committees within the organization.

According to its Web site, the ACGA is a nonprofit organization, formed in 1927, that provides "educational and other services to American charities regarding gift annuities and other forms of planned gifts."

Valentine has served at the Kentucky Baptist Foundation since 1994. Prior to her tenure at KBF, she practiced law in Florida for 12 years specializing in estate planning, probate and guardianship law.



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Developing missions-minded youth

Crossings campers connect with youth around the world

Well, it is hard to believe that summer is almost here again. Every year I get confused as the wintry weather seems to linger. Then all of a sudden, warm weather and May seem to arrive together.

This spring, we have been blessed as the effects of past camps remain strong. Each year our students and adults make contributions to a missions offering that is used overseas. For the past four years, we have been sponsoring youth camps in Moldova. These offerings have amounted to more than \$236,000 to help Moldovan youth attend camp.

In an amazing way, we have witnessed our campers become very connected to the tangible target gift of \$15—the cost to send a Moldovan student to camp for one week. Even more impressive is that students are thinking about missions long after summer is over.

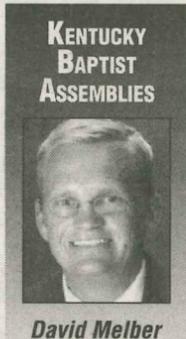
In the last weeks, we have been notified that two different churches are already raising money to prepare in advance for this summer's offering. Younger's Creek Baptist Church in Elizabethtown and Magna View Baptist Church in Talbot,

Tenn., have combined gifts that will send 171 students to camp in Moldova. More importantly, in the last four years approximately 40 percent of the campers in Moldova have accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior. Applying the historical trend, that means that approximately 68 students will come to know Christ as a result of these fund-raising events.

Our purpose with Crossings is to see students encounter Christ personally and to grow in such a way that they become Great Commission-minded youth seeking ways to share their faith. Not only are we seeing students come to camp and return to their schools as ambassadors for Christ, they are becoming missions-minded for places around the world as well.

We humbly ask for your prayers for the coming camp season. Pray for safety for all campers and staff, for the clear presentation of God's Word, and for a great harvest among students and adults. Camp begins soon and we would love for you to come and see us. Please call our office at (502) 491-7000 to schedule your visit.

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



David Melber

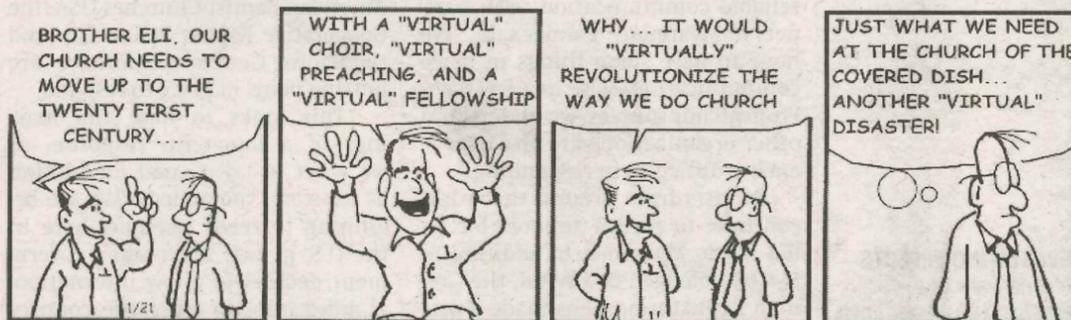
For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



Church of the Covered Dish

Thom Tapp



Bible Crosswords

By Michael J. Landi

Across

- 1 "There is nothing from without a man, that entering ... can ___ him" (Mark 7:15)
- 4 "At home in the body, we are ___ from the Lord" (2 Corinthians 5:6)
- 8 Article
- 9 "___ your enemies" (Matthew 5:44)
- 11 "Thy rod and thy ___ they comfort me" (Psalm 23:4)
- 14 "The captain of his host was Abner, the son of ___" (1 Samuel 14:50)
- 15 "The Lord hath made bare his holy ___" (Isaiah 52:10)
- 16 "As a ___ doth gather her brood" (Luke 13:34)
- 17 Celebrated city of Asia Minor, visited by Paul more than once
- 18 ___ of Sharon (Song of Solomon 2)
- 20 "The ___ is not to the swift" (Ecclesiastes 9:11)
- 22 "At the name of Jesus every ___ should bow" (Philippians 2:10)
- 24 Denial (arch.)
- 26 Part of a castle
- 27 "Who can utter the mighty ___ of the Lord?" (Psalm 106:2)
- 28 King of Israel who was killed by Zimri (var., 1 Kings 16)
- 29 Linking verb
- 32 "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ___ of God" (James 1:5)
- 33 "If thou wilt ___ into life, keep the commandments" (Matthew 19:17)

1	2			3	4	5	6	7
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11		12		13	14		15	
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	18							
19			20	21		22	23	
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27				28				29
						31	32	
33				34		35		
						36		
	37	38		39		40		41
				43				44

- 34 From 1 Corinthians 13: faith, hope, and ___
- 36 Idol worshiped by Jezebel, among many others
- 37 Hard ___
- 40 Not B.C.
- 41 "Which he ___ on us abundantly through Jesus Christ" (Titus 3:6)
- 43 Judah's firstborn (Genesis 38:7)
- 44 Therefore
- Down
- 1 "Lest at any time thou ___ thy foot against a stone" (Matthew 4:6)
- 2 "When thou prayest, ___ into thy closet" (Matthew 6:6)
- 3 ___ Al, airline known for its security measures
- 4 "___ not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath" (Romans 12:19)
- 5 Son of Zophah (1 Chronicles 7:36)
- 6 "But let a man ___ himself" (1 Corinthians 11:28)
- 7 "The tongue can no man ___" (James 3:8)
- 10 City of Benjamin built or restored by Shamed (1 Chronicles 8:12)
- 12 "Arise, ye princes, and ___ the shield" (Isaiah 21:5)
- 13 How to describe Nebuchadnezzar's furnace
- 19 "The ___ for height, and the earth for depth" (Proverbs 25:3)
- 21 "Tarsus, a city in ___" (Acts 21:39)
- 22 Map info
- 23 "As also in all his ___, speaking in them of these things" (2 Peter 3:16)
- 25 Past somnolent
- 30 "For the ___ is red and lowring" (Matthew 16:3)
- 31 Gypsy ___ (sight in big city)
- 32 Father of Saul's concubine (2 Samuel 3)
- 35 "Be not ___ with thy mouth" (Ecclesiastes 5:2)
- 38 Neh. is part of this
- 39 Biblical pronoun
- 42 "Of all that Jesus began both to ___ and teach" (Acts 1:1)

Last week's solution

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
S	T	A	R	B	U	Y	S	M	A
H	O	P	E	D	E	P	O	T	L
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P	Y	E	A	H	P	O	L	E	
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S	H	A	D	E	O	N	E	S	T
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Relief supplies slowly enter Myanmar following cyclone

Continued from page 1

ple missing, according to Myanmar's state media. Up to 1 million people are homeless. Relief organizations are concerned about outbreaks of mosquito-borne diseases such as malaria and illnesses such as diarrhea that often occur in the wake of natural disasters because of dirty water and poor sanitation.

"Our priority is now to establish reliable communication with partners in Myanmar," Palmer said. "We hope to have some things in place communications-wise in a few days. From all our sources, we understand other organizations are also experiencing difficulty in responding."

Baptists from around the world continue to pledge support for relief aid to Myanmar. In addition to \$50,000 pledged by BWAid, the German Baptist union has made a provision of more than \$60,000 for disaster relief.

Southern Baptists have allocated an initial \$100,000 to provide ba-

sic necessities for people affected by the cyclone, Palmer noted. Once a comprehensive on-ground assessment of the situation can be made, relief efforts will proceed in partnership with key Myanmar nationals, who will be instrumental in any response Southern Baptists are able to implement.

In addition to the SBC, three other national Baptist conventions—American Baptist Churches USA, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and the Baptist General Conference—are putting plans in place to respond.

"This looks to have the makings of a long-term response, so we want to lay a good foundation as we start," he added. "We are beginning to ready partners here in the U.S. in case Myanmar's government decides to allow international aid groups to enter the country and we are able to mount a response from here."

In the meantime, Palmer said, Southern Baptists can get involved in relief efforts for Myanmar's people by doing the most important thing Christians can do: Praying that God would reveal His love to the country's suffering multitudes.

"You can get involved right now by praying for those who are trying to recover from this disaster and those who are racing to help them restore their lives," he urged. "Pray that God would open the doors to allow our trained disaster response people into the country. This is still a huge barrier."

Compiled from reporting by Baptist Press and Baptist World Alliance

DEVASTATING EFFECTS

An aerial view of a devastated Myanmar town shows the destruction of Cyclone Nargis, which struck the Asian country on May 2-3.



Meet the class of 2008, part 4

It was certainly not a wrong turn when "Rhonda" found her way to Oneida

One of the many areas where God has blessed this ministry has been our work with boys and girls who have been adopted. Often there are more than a few difficulties to overcome. The frustrations within the family can be very serious. Personally, I think the adoption issue is too complicated to indicate that the biggest problem may simply be a "bonding" issue. I am very pleased that OBI has been able to provide a respite for many families dealing with conflicts associated with adoption. When "Rhonda" (not her real name) came to Oneida, she said she wanted to "find myself." We believe she has. Here is part of what Rhonda wrote in her senior essay:

"Life before I came to Oneida was horrible. If I had not come to Oneida I would not be graduating. All my mom and dad were trying to do was to help me succeed in life. But of course, I didn't want to listen. Before I came to Oneida I would never do my homework, I never listened to my parents and basically, I just got into a lot of trouble. All of my brothers and sisters were adopted except for two. My parents were the best parents a child could ever want. This whole thing about me coming to Oneida was my decision. My dad asked me if I wanted to go.

"When we arrived at Oneida my first impression was, 'No Dad, we need to turn around right now. I think this is the wrong place. Please tell me we made a wrong turn.' When my dad was about to leave I was very sad—you know how a daughter and her dad are. But Oneida has basically changed my whole education. Now I study, do my

homework and pay attention. During my three-and-a-half years at Oneida, I have only made the honor roll four times but making the honor roll at all for me was a great honor in itself. Having the smaller classes really helps when you don't pay attention very well or need extra help.

"All of the teachers I have had were the best. They were not only my teachers, they were also good friends. Mr. Kelley was my favorite teacher. He not only helped me with my math studies, but he also helped me with other issues too.

There are many ways Oneida has prepared me for college. One of those was living in the dorm with a bunch of girls. Also, the one subject that I know is going to help me a lot when I get to college has been English IV. Mr. Self was a great teacher and he didn't let you get away with anything. He wouldn't even give you a break with your homework if it wasn't done the way he wanted. That is how it is going to be in college.

"The worship opportunities at Oneida have been great. I don't think it could have been any better. Throughout my years at Oneida, I have learned many new worship songs that I never knew before. The worship team on Fridays did a wonderful job too. Most of their songs were the type that would really draw you closer to God. Before I came to Oneida, I was a Christian but of course like everyone does, I had my weak points. But being able to go to chapel every single day was one of the steps that brought me closer to God.

"Oneida has taught me the value of friendships and how to handle relationships."

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

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood



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Senior-led chapel service

2008 graduates reflect on their time at Clear Creek

Our last chapel service of the year always is led by the seniors. I know you will enjoy reading some of their reflections on their time at Clear Creek.

Brian Persinger: "I could just stand up here and cry because I'm leaving Clear Creek. I know my relationship with this school is not over because now I am an alumnus. I hope to lead the church where I serve to support this good work. I will always remember Clear Creek as a time in my life where God pulled me aside and said 'Brian, listen to me.'"

Kirk Kirkemunde: "I praise God for Director of Admissions Billy Howell who helped me get through everything during the admissions process and get accepted to come here. Through God's provision, I have lacked for nothing since I have been here."

Todd Latham: "I want to thank everyone for my time here. As I look back, I recall instances where I did not always focus on being the best for God that I could while I was here. I implore everyone to follow after God with all of your heart, with all of your mind, with everything you have while you are here."

Kevin Bruns: "God has shown me the importance of true Christian love during my time here. Whether you are graduating or continuing on as a student, I encourage everyone to love one another as Christ loved us."

G.P. Simmons: "I came here four years ago a broken man. He used my time here to pick up the pieces and build me anew. To me, Clear Creek is not a dot on a map some place with physical buildings; Clear Creek is people. When I came to this campus four years ago, I was scared. As I leave now I know I won't be alone because I take a little piece of each of you with me."

Greg Hurdle: "I thank God for friends who would call me late at night and encourage me when they knew I was struggling with my studies. You have been with me through all the hard times. I praise God for the love and fellowship you have given me."

Sean Lee: "In the last four years God has blessed me so much. I thank God for Clear Creek Baptist Bible College."

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Donnie Fox

Fulfilling Christ's mission is focus of SBC annual meeting

Indianapolis (BP)—Fulfilling the mission Christ gave His followers—bringing lost souls into God's Kingdom—will be the focus of the 151st session of the Southern Baptist Convention when it convenes June 10-11 at the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis.

The meeting will extend a theme of spiritual awakening that has characterized the tenure of Frank Page as SBC president, pressing on to the evangelistic outreach that flows naturally from renewal.

"The motivation and power for evangelism arises out of spiritual awakening," said Page, who is completing his second term as president. "I keep going back to Acts 1:8, which says, 'When the Holy Spirit comes, you shall receive power.' And when we have been stirred by God's spirit, we reach out to the lost and God draws people to Himself."

That is why Page said he selected Acts 2:47b as the watchword for this year's gathering: "And every day the Lord added to them those who were being saved."

"The recent report of a decline in baptisms and membership in the Southern Baptist Convention re-emphasizes that for too long we have been attempting to raise baptisms among non-revived people in non-revived churches," Page noted. "The lack of connection with lost people and the lack of urgency for soul winning and personal evangelism is a direct indication of our lack of spiritual passion and love for the lost."

SBC Pastors' Conference to screen Ga. church's latest film, 'Fireproof'

Indianapolis (BP)—Pastors planning to attend the SBC Pastors' Conference in Indianapolis June 8-9 will need to arrive early this year. In an unusual move, the Pastors' Conference will open on Sunday afternoon to screen "Fireproof," the new movie produced by Sherwood Baptist Church in Albany, Ga.

"The SBC pastors will be the first large group of people to see a screening of 'Fireproof' before it is released in September," said Catt, pastor of Sherwood Baptist, which produced two earlier movies, "Flywheel" and "Facing the Giants."

This year's Pastors' Conference will focus on a call to prepare for revival—and the outpouring of wit-

ness and ministry that results. Using the theme, "Prepare for Rain," participants will focus on the role of prayer and brokenness in spiritual renewal.

Featured speakers during the Sunday evening session will be Johnny Hunt, pastor of First Baptist Church of Woodstock, Ga.; Daniel Simmons of Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Albany, Ga.; and Tom Elliff, IMB's senior vice president for spiritual nurture and church relations.

Featured speakers during the June 9 sessions will be Hayes Wicker of First Baptist Church of Naples, Fla., and James Draper Jr., former president of LifeWay Christian Resources, among others.

Other featured speakers include National WMU executive director Wanda Lee and President Kaye Miller; missions field personnel with the International Mission Board and missions representatives from the North American Mission Board.

General sessions June 9 are scheduled for 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. One-hour breakout sessions, scheduled for 1:30, 2:45 and 4 p.m., will explore such topics as developing and using leadership skills, how to grow as a Christ follower and how to ignite a passion for missions.

Reservations to attend the June 8 dinner with Frank Page must be made by May 19. Tickets are \$30 each and space is limited. To reserve a ticket, visit www.wmu.com or call (888) 968-0322.

WMU meeting to host Page as guest

Indianapolis (BP)—Southern Baptist Convention President Frank Page will be the guest speaker at a Woman's Missionary Union dinner June 8 kicking off its Missions Celebration and annual meeting at the Hyatt Regency in Indianapolis June 8-9.

Page, pastor of First Baptist Church in Taylors, S.C., will share insights from his upcoming book, "The Nehemiah Factor: 16 Characteristics of a Missional Leader."

The theme for Monday's WMU sessions is "For God So Loved ...," drawn from John 3:16. The keynote speaker that evening will be Ed Stetzer, director of LifeWay Research and co-author with Philip Nation of the 2008 WMU emphasis book, "Compelled by Love: The Most Excellent Way to Missional Living."

"Even when there is a love and a concern for the lost, sometimes we have a total disconnect with the culture in which we live," he added. "Many of our people simply do not know how to relate to people in 21st-century culture and have been frustrated at their inability to communicate the gospel. Many believers do not know people who are outside the Kingdom and often do not even know their own neighbors."

Under the banner of "Fulfilling the Mission," Southern Baptist leaders will introduce a multifaceted long-term strategy for helping churches evangelize their neighborhoods, states, country and world. The 10-year National Evangelism Initiative was a priority Page set for his time in office when he was elected in Greensboro, N.C., in 2006.

"The moment I was elected, I knew I wanted to encourage a continent-wide evangelism strategy," Page said. "A large number of people have been saying to us, 'Don't just tell us what to do, but show us how to do it.' So I approached the North American Mission Board and they have worked with our state and associational partners to come forward with a strategy that will help us know both what to do and how to do it."

Unlike some programs that drop a big box of material on the desk and leave it to the pastor to figure out, the National Evangelism Initiative will offer a menu of strategies in four areas: praying, engaging, sow-

ing and harvesting, Page explained. Churches will be able to pick and choose strategies that will work in their contexts.

"There will be many elements produced so churches of all sizes and all ethnic backgrounds in all areas of the continent can take part," he emphasized. "They will be able to pick and choose from various strategies, tools and emphases. It will be very flexible."

"Of all the things that could come out of the meeting in Indianapolis, the greatest for our continent would be that we come away with a common direction in presenting a very positive, life-transforming message about Christ."

Among other highlights of this year's annual meeting:

■ Block parties in 27 ethnically mixed neighborhoods will spearhead a drive to launch eight new churches during Crossover '08, the citywide evangelistic campaign set for June 6-7. "I want to encourage Southern Baptists to be part of Crossover," Page said. "I will be out sharing Christ on Saturday and hope hundreds, if not thousands, will join us in that great evangelistic opportunity."

■ An intensified focus on prayer will be another feature of the convention. In addition to the prayer room, signs will be posted around the convention center to help messengers make a "prayer journey" for the annual meeting. A virtual prayerwalk will be available at

www.crossover08.com for those who cannot attend the convention.

■ The North American Mission Board report and presentation is scheduled for Tuesday evening, June 10, and the International Mission Board report and presentation will be Wednesday evening, June 11.

Online registration is available at www.sbcannualmeeting.net through June 7 so messengers can avoid lines upon arriving at the convention. The Web site gives a church a messenger reference number form to be printed out and presented by each messenger at the SBC registration booth in exchange for a name tag and a set of ballots. On-site registration also is available.

Messengers wishing to propose resolutions must submit them at least 15 days prior to the annual meeting, giving the Resolutions Committee a two-week period in which to consider them. Detailed guidelines on submitting resolutions are available at www.sbcannualmeeting.net by clicking on "resolutions."

Shuttles will be available to and from most official SBC downtown and airport hotels. The shuttle service will be complimentary on the afternoon of June 8. Shuttle tickets will be available at the convention center information desk for \$10, with children 12 and under riding free when accompanied by parents.

Childcare (birth-3 years) and a children's conference (ages 4-12) are available, with registration information at www.sbcannualmeeting.net.

SBC PREVIEW

Pastors' Wives Conference. June 9, 8:30 a.m. to noon, Sagamore Ballrooms 1-3 at the Indiana Convention Center. Theme: "Knowing God." Keynote speakers: Donna Gaines, wife of Steve Gaines who is pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Cordova, Tenn. Susie Hawkins, wife of GuideStone Financial Resources President O.S. Hawkins, will lead a discussion titled, "Hot Topics for Pastors' Wives."

Directors of Missions Conference. June 8-9, Sheraton City Centre hotel. Theme: "Growing the Kingdom, Church by Church." Keynote speakers: Jim Futral, executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Convention will preach at a worship service June 8 at 10:30 a.m. Thom Rainer, president of LifeWay Christian Resources will speak that same day at 1:20 p.m., followed by O.S. Hawkins, president of GuideStone Financial Resources, at 4:15 p.m. Geoff Hammond, president of the North American Mission Board, will speak June 9 at 11 a.m.

Evangelists' Conference. June 6-9, Crowne Plaza Hotel. Theme: "Running the Race." Speaker: Johnny Hunt, pastor of First Baptist Church of Woodstock, Ga., will speak during a banquet marking the 50th anniversary of the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists, which will honor the first 30 inductees of the COSBE Hall of Faith. Business meeting, June 9, 11:30 a.m., Illinois Street Ballroom at the Crowne Plaza Hotel.

Seminary luncheons. The six Southern Baptist seminaries will host luncheons for alumni and guests June 11. **Golden Gate:** 12:30 p.m., rooms 208-209 at the Indiana Convention Center. Tickets \$10, (888) 442-8709. **Midwestern:** noon, ballrooms 7-10 on level 2 of the Indianapolis Marriott Downtown. Tickets \$20, (877) 414-3720. **New Orleans:** noon, Sagamore Ballrooms 5-7 at the Indiana Convention Center. Tickets \$12 before June 1, \$15 after June 1, by mail or at the NOBTS booth. **Southeastern:** noon, Sagamore Ballroom

2 on level 2 of the Indiana Convention Center. Tickets \$20, www.sebts.edu. **Southern:** 12:30 p.m., ballrooms 1-5 on level 2 of the Indianapolis Marriott Downtown. Tickets \$20, (800) 626-5525, ext. 4143. **Southwestern:** 12:30 p.m., Sagamore Ballrooms 1-3 at the Indiana Convention Center. Tickets \$10 before June 1, \$15 after June 1, (877) 467-9287.

Hispanic Baptist Fellowship. June 8-9. Theme: "Living with Urgency." June 8, 6 p.m., National Hispanic Celebration, ballrooms 5-6 on level 2 of the Indianapolis Marriott Downtown. Speakers: NAMB President Geoff Hammond and Gonzalo Rodriguez, pastor of Good Shepherd Baptist Church in Metairie, La. June 9, 8 a.m., Hispanic Pastors' and Leaders' Conference, room 209 of the Indiana Convention Center. Speakers: Rene Pereira, pastor of Iglesia Bautista Glenview in Puerto Rico, and Richard Vera, multi-ethnic evangelism specialist for the California Southern Baptist Convention. RSVP required, (770) 410-6330.

National African-American Fellowship. June 8, 6 p.m., Berean Baptist Church. Speaker: T. Vaughn Walker, pastor of First Gethsemane Baptist Church in Louisville, and a professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. June 9, 4 p.m., room 207 of the Indiana Convention Center. Speaker: A.B. Vines, pastor of New Seasons Community Church in San Diego, and second vice president of the California Southern Baptist Convention. June 9, 6 p.m., banquet, ballrooms 6-7 at the Indiana Convention Center. Tickets \$25, www.naafsb.org.

Messianic Fellowship. June 6, 7 p.m., room 208 on level 2 of the Indiana Convention Center. Keynote speaker: H. Bruce Stokes, dean of the school of behavioral sciences at California Baptist University in Riverside, Calif. June 7, 9 a.m., worship service, rooms 208-209 of the Indiana Convention Center.

PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following Kentucky Baptist missionaries and ministries:

The Lord's Store ministry of Trinity Baptist Church in Paducah. Nina Bell coordinates the distribution of food and personal hygiene items once a month to local residents in need. Pray that God will continue to provide food and leadership for effective ministry. Pray for the salvation and spiritual health of those whom the ministry serves.

Mission Service Corps Missionary Keith Decker of Williamsburg. Decker serves as director of Cedaridge Ministries in Williamsburg which distributes food, building supplies, clothing, furniture, Bibles and other donated items. Cedaridge has recently opened a satellite ministry in the Corn Creek area of Whitley County. Pray that God will give clear direction and wisdom to ministry leadership. Pray that many people will come to know Jesus Christ through the consistent witness of Cedaridge volunteers.

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 or call (866) 489-3530.

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **BEDFORD**—Dennis Plank recently retired as pastor of Union Grove Church.

■ **CADIZ**—Liberty Point Church ordained Mark Butts, Nathan Hill, Travis McCloud and Charles Terrell as deacons May 4. Monty Flanigan is pastor.

■ **GREENSBURG**—Fry Church ordained Jim Hackle, Phillip Keltner and Ricky Riddle as deacons May 4. Larry Wisdom is pastor.

■ **LaGRANGE**—Covington Church recently called Evert Staib as pastor.

■ **LONDON**—Calvary Church recently called Dusty Allen as minister to youth and Jeff Jones as minister to children. Harlan Avera is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Cloverleaf Church will host Jubilation in concert May 17, 7 p.m. For more information, call (502) 367-0218. Geoffrey Lacefield is pastor.

■ **MAYTOWN**—First Church will hold revival services May 18-21, 7 p.m., with Larry Keene as evangelist. Robert Varney is pastor.

■ **MOUNT WASHINGTON**—The adult choir and orchestra of First Church will present, "We've Come to Give You the Praise," featuring B.J. Davis, May 18, 6 p.m. For more information, call (502) 955-6539.

■ **NANCY**—Piney Grove Church #2 recently ordained Pastor Tony Hall to the gospel ministry.

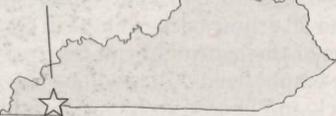
■ **PRINCETON**—Donaldson Church will hold revival services May 18-21 with David Miller as evangelist. Christ Turpin is pastor.

Wayne Duncan recently resigned as pastor of Pleasant Grove Church.

■ **SALYERSVILLE**—First Church will host a golf scramble to benefit the REACH drug addiction ministry May 22, 9 a.m., at the Paintsville Country Club. The cost is \$200 per team and

Spotlight on ...

Hardin



Hardin Church recently honored Pastor Ricky Cunningham for his 25 years of service with a reception and presentation of a new pick-up truck.

\$100 to sponsor a hole. For more information, call Pastor Matthew Gullion at (606) 434-3418.

■ **SEBREE**—First Church will hold revival services May 18-21, with Bob Morrison, director of missions for Little Bethel Association, as evangelist. Bob Hardison is pastor.

■ **TOMPKINSVILLE**—First Church will hold revival services May 18-21, 6 p.m., with Skip Alexander, pastor of Campbellsville Church as evangelist, and Greg Cagle, minister of music at First Church of Pikeville, as worship leader. Tom Stokes is pastor.

■ **WADDY**—Pigeon Fork Church will hold revival services May 19-21 with Everett Hawkins, pastor of Faith Church in Frankfort, as evangelist. Brian Owens is pastor.

■ **WINGO**—New Bethel Church will hold revival services May 19-21 with Ronnie Stinson, pastor of Trace Creek Church in Mayfield, as evangelist. Ron Cruse is pastor.

■ **CORRECTION**—An article in the May 6 issue contained an error about Nicholas Stamps. Stamps is associate pastor of Post Oak Church in Russellville and has not been called as pastor.

KBC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May

- 14 Iron Sharpening Iron, Applebee's Park, Lexington.
- 17 Associational Womens Mission Union Leadership Training, Baptist Building, Louisville.
- 19-21 Youth Ministers Spring Retreat, Georgetown College.
- 19 Women of Worth Lifestyle Evangelism Conference, Beacon Hill Baptist Church, Somerset.
- 20 Women of Worth Lifestyle Evangelism Conference, Northside Baptist Church, Princeton.

29 Iron Sharpening Iron, Champion Window Field, Florence.

June

- 1-4 Girls in Action Camp, Cedar Crest.
- 4-7 Girls in Action Camp, Cedar Crest.
- 7 Church Weekday Education Seminar, Crestwood Baptist Church, Crestwood.
- 7-14 Kentucky Changers, Monticello.
- 9-12 Girls in Action Camp, Cedar Crest.
- 12-14 Express Mission Adventure Camp for Girls & Boys, Cedar Crest.

For more information, call (800) 266-6477 or visit www.kybaptist.org

Sweet relief



Students at Oneida Baptist Institute bid on treats at the school's fourth annual silent dessert auction for missions April 28. The event, hosted by OBI's campus ministry, raised \$2,240, which was donated to Union University in Jackson, Tenn., to help with disaster relief as the school recovers from the tornado that struck the campus in February. This year's auction featured approximately 150 desserts and other treats, including "everything from whole meals to bags of pretzels," said Michael Spencer, campus minister at OBI.

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR RENT: Condo: 2-Bedroom, 2-bath. Destin, Fla., across from the beach in Seascape Resort. Available 05/24-06/07; 07/19-09/30. (502) 396-8397.

FOR SALE: Beautiful Christian, patriotic, military neckties: retail value: \$15, cost: \$6. Striped neckties: special price \$4.50. Humor book: "Laughter Doeth Good Like a Medicine," \$6 (1,000 sold). Schofield Bibles: \$69 \$39. Call (606) 285-3051.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for growing traditional and contemporary church—a diverse congregation of dedicated families reaching our community for Jesus. Submit resumé to: Search Committee, Evergreen Baptist, 2698 Evergreen Road, Frankfort, KY 40601. Office@evergreenbaptistchurch.us. Fax: (502) 223-8364.

SEEKING: Full-time senior pastor, First Baptist Church, Hopkinsville, Ky. Graduate of seminary required; minimum 10 years pastoral experience preferred. Provide both spiritual and administrative leadership for a growing congregation. For more information about our church and community, please visit us at www.fbchopkinsville.com. Send resumé to Pastor Search Committee, c/o Andrew Self, 712 Kensington Court, Hopkinsville, KY 42240; or e-mail to andrewself@yahoo.com.

SEEKING: Fern Creek Child Development Center is now accepting resumés from energetic, enthusiastic, committed Christians who are interested in teaching preschool beginning with the 2008-2009 school year. For more information, please contact Dorothy Black at (502) 239-8952; or dorothy@ferncreekbaptist.org. Resumés must be received by May 30.

SEEKING: Full-time associate pastor of student and family ministries. If you are a loving, committed, enthusiastic servant of Christ, hoping to minister to students and families, First Baptist Church of Williamsburg, Ky., may be where God is calling you. Among our many positive attributes are a Christian life center, youth room, one block from University of Cumberlands campus, University student intern program, children music and missions ministries, Upward Basketball, youth and college ministries. A full job description may be found at www.fbcwilliamsburgky.org. Please prayerfully consider this ministry opportunity. Send inquiries and resumés to fbcwoffice@bellsouth.net; or mail to the following address: Associate Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 230 South 5th St., Williamsburg, KY 40769.

SEEKING: Dedicated Christian teachers (K-8, certified preferred) for the 2008-09 school year for small Christian school. Send resumé to SCA, PO Box 636, Stanton, KY 40380.

SEEKING: Full-time general secretary competent in MS Word, Excel, Publisher, and administrative module of Church Windows. Salary and benefits; 35 hours, five days a week. Broadway Baptist Church, (502) 895-2459. Phyllis@broadwaybaptist.org.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music and youth. Responsible for planning youth activities and leadership for choirs of all ages. Send resumé to Pleasant Memorial Baptist Church, 5440 West Fifth St. Road, Owensboro, KY 42301, Attn: Youth & Music Committee.

SEEKING: Full-time senior pastor, Rosemont Baptist Church, Lexington, Ky. Requirements: graduate of seminary, divinity school or Bible college; minimum 5 years pastoral experience; able to work with multi-staff, leadership council and deacons consisting of men and women. Congregation of 500 with 200-250 average attendance. Find more information about our church at www.rosemontbc.net. Send resumé to Rosemont Baptist Church, 556 Rosemont Garden, Lexington, KY 40503. Attn: Pete Barker.

SEEKING: Bivocational pastor for Bethany Missionary Church in rural Lyon County. For more information, please call (270) 522-7670, or send resumé to Bethany Baptist Church, PO Box 1130, Eddyville, KY 42038.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of worship and outreach for a growing church in western Kentucky. We are currently constructing a new worship facility and have two morning services (one traditional and one contemporary) with a combined Sunday morning attendance of 400-plus. Experience preferred; salary negotiable. Send resumés to: Edgewood Baptist Church, 676 North Drive, Hopkinsville, KY 42240; or e-mail to edbc@bellsouth.net. For more information, please call (270) 886-4461.

SEEKING: Part-time student minister (grades 7-12) for a conservative congregation standing on God's Word, with a strong emphasis on youth. Located in Pulaski County, we seek a minister who is energetic and equipped to teach and reach youth for Christ. Send resumé to: Ferguson Baptist Church, PO Box 247, Ferguson, KY 42533.

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.

Children seen and heard

Enthusiastic children's ministry propels Md. church plant to expand its outreach

By Norm Miller
Baptist Press

Roxana, Del. (BP)—Church planters Andy and Tanya Ehlers started High Tide Baptist Church simply by walking their dog in the park.

Though few may regard walking a dog as an evangelistic activity, the Ehlerses struck up relationships and invited other canine enthusiasts to a Bible study in their home. The initial meeting in August 2002 drew a dozen people.

Now, more than 350 attend two weekend services at the fire department building in Roxana, Del., where the church meets—and 30 percent of those attending are children age 12 and under.

"At Southeastern (Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.), I heard the need for church planting and was called to do it," Andy Ehlers recalled. "I just couldn't consider going to an established church unless I planted one first."

"Tanya and I both believe that God called us to minister outside of the Bible belt and go where there weren't a lot of churches," he added, noting that Delaware has but one Southern Baptist church for every 33,000 people.

Dropping in

While Andy is quick to credit the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware's church planting training and support system, he noted, "We chose the parachute method. We dropped into a community ... and said to ourselves, 'Go get 'em.'"

"Our first converts came from that park," Andy said of the location where he and Tanya walked their dog. "We got to know a couple, invited them to dinner and shared the gospel with them."

One such couple accepted Jesus Christ. "They began inviting others, and it just snowballed from there. In fact, word of mouth was our best advertising despite mailers, flyers and giveaways."

Recently concluding its fifth year, High Tide continues to grow, with the Ehlerses crediting the church leadership team's flexibility in trying new methods when others fail—

as well as an intentional focus on children's ministry.

Too often in their lives, the Ehlerses had heard others tell of hating how, as children, their parents had dragged them to church. When Tanya asked Andy why it had to be that way, she said she fell under conviction to spearhead the children's ministries for High Tide.

"I thought the negative comments we heard from people from all denominations represented a failure of the church," Tanya emphasized, "and we didn't want to do that."

"We had no plans for a kids' program right away," Andy acknowledged. "But parents we met talked about the importance of spiritual influence in their kids' lives."

The Ehlerses later attended a Creative Church conference at Fellowship Church in Grapevine, Texas, where Tanya said she was "floored by their children's program and curriculum. They were so different. ... God definitely used that conference to work on my heart."

She brought the curriculum—then called "G-Force," now called "Elevate"—back to their fledgling church plant and customized it for their use.

Growth through kids

High Tide uses its children's ministry in conjunction with evangelistic initiatives such as Parents' Night Out. "We used volunteer mission teams from Georgia, North Carolina and Mississippi to staff this ministry during one summer," Andy recalled. "That's when the growth started to take off."

Far more than a babysitting service, High Tide's Parents' Night Out ministered to children while their parents went Christmas shopping, had a date on Valentine's Day or just spent time together. The first outreach drew 17 children; the second, 63.

Andy said the parents were astounded when their kids asked to go back to church. "Not a Sunday goes by that a mom or dad doesn't say 'thank you' for what we're doing for their kids," he added. "In fact, some



A-MAZE-ING MINISTRY
Above: High Tide Baptist Church in Roxana, Del., offers a community hay maze each fall as an evangelistic outreach and an alternative to other Halloween activities. The children are (from front to back) Camryn Ehlers, Cole Brickman and Raychel Ehlers. Left: High Tide member Gordon Price holds Ava Wilsey (left) and Camryn Ehlers at the church's weekly Bible story time. Started in January, the outreach averages about 30 children and parents. (BP photos)

parents tell us their kids wake them up on Sundays so they won't be late for church."

The curriculum "isn't just entertainment," Tanya stressed, "but real biblical training for children, who learn the main points of the lesson and a Bible verse."

"The kids just love it too. That was my heart's desire."

High Tide recently held a week-long ministry similar to vacation Bible school, but which met in the evening "to see if we could reach unchurched parents too," Tanya said. "That drew lots of people we hadn't met before. They asked, 'You do this for the kids on Sundays too?' God did bring some 30 new families back on Sunday, and many of them continue to attend."

With the success of the children's ministry behind her, Tanya has moved on to the church's youth ministry, which she began a year ago with six teens. Now, 30 to 55 students attend.

Community outreach

High Tide has made other evangelistic efforts as well, including what has become an annual hay maze at Halloween in a public setting that includes free hot dogs, popcorn and candy. The initial maze was so successful that officials from a neighboring town invited the church to sponsor an additional one there. At each site, High Tide uses a portion of the children's curriculum, again resulting in new church attendees.

High Tide also sponsors a gin-

gerbread house building contest around Christmas. The church provides the resources and young participants are given a couple of hours to complete their houses, with the best one winning a prize. Again, a segment of the children's curriculum is part of the outreach.

In another initiative, Andy led the young church to capitalize on its relocation from a rented school to the fire hall where it now meets.

"We decided to have a 'Firefighters Appreciation Sunday' where we honored all the staff of the local volunteer fire department and served them lunch," Andy recalled. "About 55 of the volunteers showed up and 15 to 20 of them continue to attend the church, including the president of the volunteers as well as the fire chief."

"It's a whole new segment of our community that we weren't able to reach while meeting in a school."

The Ehlerses and High Tide Baptist Church members look forward to leaving borrowed facilities for the prospects of constructing a church building—and one of their own has even donated 20 acres for the future site.

"We knew God would do something," Andy said. "But we've been blown away at what He's done. And we never would know that unless we stepped out in faith."

"So many around here don't go to church, and don't want to, and have such a sad outlook on life," Tanya added. "And we just pray, 'Jesus, how can we reach them?'"



FUN AND LEARNING Aiden Brewer gets enthusiastically involved in the Wednesday morning Bible story time for children at High Tide Baptist Church in Roxana, Del. Andy and Tanya Ehlers planted the church in 2002 and have seen it grow to more than 350 people thanks to a strong emphasis on children's ministry both at the church and in the community.

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