



WESTERN RECORDER

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FOR THE RECORD

Baptists
Evangelists offer Baptism Assistance Project to SBC churches. *Page 2.*

Missions
IMB regional director resigns over policy disagreements. *Page 2.*

Financial Forum
Faithful stewards: Heart and treasure reveal priorities. *Page 4.*

Guest editorial
Pastors must address social and moral issues. *Page 5.*



Kentucky
Kentucky Changers program earns statewide recognition. *Page 6.*

Nation
Arkansas disaster relief crews stay busy following multiple disasters. *Page 8.*

KBC President Bill Henard nominated for SBC 1st VP post

Louisville (BP)—Bill Henard, senior pastor of Porter Memorial Baptist Church in Lexington will be nominated for first vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention, a fellow Kentucky Baptist pastor announced May 19.



Bill Henard

Kevin Ezell, senior pastor of Highview Baptist Church in Louisville, said he will nominate Henard for the post during the SBC's June 10-11 meeting in Indianapolis.

Henard is the second announced nominee for SBC first vice president this year. He joins John Connell, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Savannah, Ga., whose nomination was announced April 29.

Henard has served the Lexington congregation since 1999. Prior to that he was pastor of churches in Birmingham, Ala., Lawrenceburg, Tenn., Decatur, Tenn., and Decatur, Texas.

He currently serves as president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention and is trustee chairman for LifeWay Christian Resources. He also is assistant professor of evangelism and church growth at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

"Porter Memorial has averaged more than 100 baptisms per year for seven of the last nine years under Dr. Henard's leadership, setting a new record both in the number of baptisms in one year and in consecutive 100-plus baptism years," Ezell noted. "The church is a strong supporter of the Cooperative Program and this year will reach the \$7 million-dollar mark in total cumulative giving to the Cooperative Program."

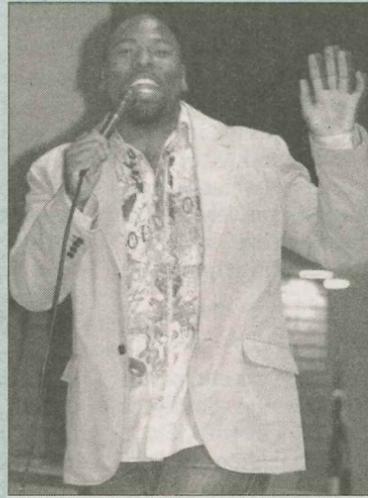
According to the 2007 Southern Baptist Annual Church Profile, Porter Memorial Baptist Church reported 43 baptisms and \$241,650 (10.6 percent) of undesignated receipts given through the Cooperative Program from total undesignated receipts of \$2,277,203.

"Porter Memorial also has a strong commitment to missions, sending nearly 400 volunteers on short-term mission trips each year," Ezell added. "Porter Memorial is a strategy coordinator church with the (Southern Baptist) International Mission Board for church planting in the Acari Valley in southern Peru. In addition, the church gives 10 percent of its Capital Stewardship offerings for relocation to missions."

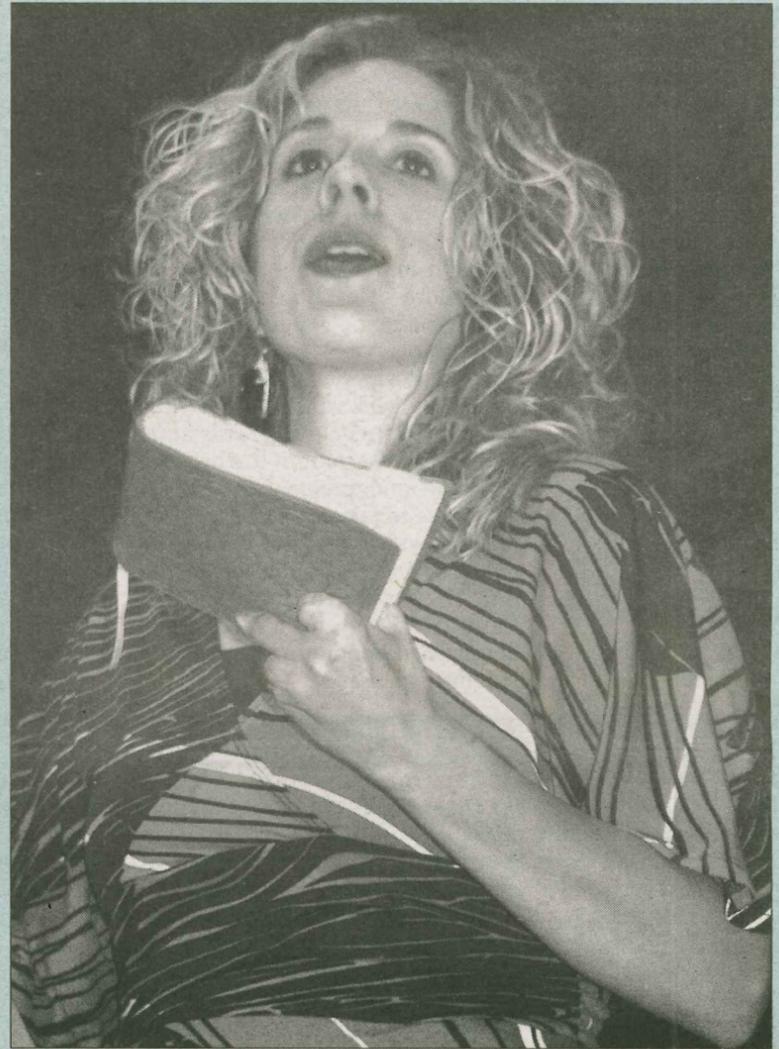
Henard is a graduate of University of the Cumberlands in Williamsburg and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, and completed work on a Ph.D. at Southern Seminary in 2006.

He and his wife, Judy, have three children and two grandchildren.

At hope's horizon



Right: As she grasps her Bible with an injured left hand, Carrie McDonnell tells Kentucky Baptist women how the deaths of her husband, David, and three other Southern Baptist workers strengthened her faith in Christ. McDonnell required 10 surgeries following the 2004 attack by terrorists in Iraq. Most of three fingers on her left hand were lost. McDonnell was among the speakers at this year's Women of Worth Lifestyle Evangelism Conference provided by the Kentucky Baptist Convention. **Above:** Anthony Evans shared several songs and led conference goers in worship. About 650 women attended the event in Somerset last week. Hundreds more came to the second conference in Princeton. See page 3 for a story and more photos. (Photos by Dannah Prather)



R/6 program helps ex-offenders regain livelihood

More KBC churches needed to assist and disciple participants

By Garrett Wishall
Kentucky Baptist Convention

Crestwood—One week before she was to be released from a 33-year term in a correctional facility, Dawn Albert learned that her living arrangements at a halfway house had fallen through, leaving her with no place to go.

Knowing she needed a home in order to be released, but without any other options, Albert turned to the prison pastor.

"I had no family in Kentucky. I went to the pastor and he recommended me for the R/6 Mentoring Program," she recalled. Albert was accepted into the program and began the process of re-entering society soon after.

The R/6 Mentoring Program is an extension of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's ongoing prison ministry. Its goal is to help ex-offenders become self sufficient upon release from prison.

R/6 uses local church support and mentors to help former offenders re-

acclimate to society by offering guidance in discipline, discipleship and devotion.

Crestwood Baptist Church in Oldham County agreed to help Albert through the program and went on to pay the deposit and first month's rent on an apartment for her. A mentor from Crestwood Baptist, Betty Stringer, began regularly meeting with Albert.

"Betty listened to me whenever I needed someone to talk to as I worked at getting established," Albert noted. "She would go to Crestwood and say, 'We need to get Dawn some more clothes,' and they would send me care packs with shoes, jeans and body wash."

The concept for R/6 began in February 2005 when a Kentucky pastor who was concerned about ministering to ex-offenders contacted the KBC about the need, according to Gary King, director of the R/6 Mentoring Program.

King worked with Randy Foster, director of the KBC's Baptist Men on Mission department, to develop the initiative, which officially began in June of 2006. King has served as the program's director ever since.

According to King, R/6 stands for

the six program goals of release, re-entering, re-adjustment, relationships, responsibility and reward.

"Our goal is to help those who will be able to support themselves if we can help them get their feet back on the ground," he explained. "Whether it is offering temporary financial support, spiritual support, employment or housing assistance, we do what we can to get them established."

The program has been successful, King said, but more churches are needed to help meet the great need. He pointed out that congregations can help either by becoming sponsoring churches who take on ex-offenders or by providing financial assistance.

R/6 works with participants for 12 weeks, then reevaluates their situations to see if they need and warrant further assistance, King noted. He added that R/6 seeks to make contact with potential participants six months prior to their release date.

"We interview guards, chaplains and others who have been associated with them," he said. "We do some background work on them and check on their family situations."

□ See Program allows ... Page 6

Evangelists offer Baptism Assistance Program to churches

By Mickey Noah
SBC North American Mission Board

Alpharetta, Ga. (BP)—With nearly half of the 43,000 churches in the Southern Baptist Convention baptizing three or fewer people, according to 2007 statistics, the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists, the North American Mission Board and state and local Baptists are partnering to reverse that trend.

The number of baptisms across the convention fell to just less than 346,000 in 2007, nearly 19,000 less than the more than 364,000 baptisms in 2006. SBC churches have not recorded 400,000 annual baptisms since 2000; the all-time record was 445,725 in 1972.

With financial assistance from NAMB, the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists launched a "Baptism Assistance Project" to help address the "no and low" baptism trend among Southern Baptist churches.

BAP provides a COSBE-certified evangelist who will preach at any SBC church requesting assistance. Churches must commit to a detailed planning and preparation process and agree to take a "sacrificial" love offering which does not directly go to the evangelist, but back to the BAP. The project, in turn, provides the COSBE evangelist a modest predetermined honorarium, travel and lodging expenses.

The Baptism Assistance Project is available to any church, regardless of size or demographics.

"Many churches feel they are too small to use the ministry of a full-time COSBE vocational evangelist," said Brian Fossett, COSBE's current president and an announced nominee for SBC second vice president. "These churches feel they could not meet an evangelist's financial needs.

"However, COSBE members have a passion for harvest evangelism and are committed to this project even though, for most of us, the honorarium is significantly lower than our ministry's budget needs for a week.

"Our goal is to conduct at least 100 meetings under BAP each year," he added. "We conservatively project that we could see well over 1,000 professions of faith resulting from these 100 meetings."

Successful start

Walt Gragert, 68-year-old pastor of Washington Avenue Southern Baptist Church in Rocky Ford, Colo., is one pastor who has seen the Baptism Assistance Project's impact.

Washington Avenue, which started out with only a dozen members, recently had 65 in church, noted Gragert, a bivocational pastor who recently retired as an engineer with Hewlett-Packard.

"We used Dr. Darrell Robinson

of Texas who had preached for me in four different churches," Gragert said. "I was trying to decide how to afford him at this church. Then I learned money was available through the Baptism Assistance Project.

"It worked for the church. ... Darrell got our people out knocking on doors. We had 16 conversions and baptized nine of them."

Eric Fuller, a 26-year-old up-and-coming evangelist based in Fort Worth, Texas, sees three advantages of churches using COSBE evangelists for revivals and harvest meetings.

"First, you'll see more lost people respond to the gospel," he declared. "Second, the church will experience revival and renewal, allowing many of their members to get their joy back.

"Last, it gets the pastor out of the pulpit so he can listen to a fresh message, take part in worship and recharge—without worrying about preaching. He can just sit back and soak it all in," Fuller said, noting that many pastors become so bogged down with the pressures of leading a congregation that evangelism becomes less and less of a priority.

"I've had many pastors tell me they don't have time to be actively involved in outreach in their communities," he noted. "That's why Ephesians 4 tells us that the evangelist is a gift to the church, for the

equipping of a church."

Fossett cited Billy Graham's assessment that revival meetings are 45 percent preparation, 45 percent follow up and 10 percent actual presentation.

The preparation includes advance prayer, getting church members to attend and reach out to lost friends, and in local promotion.

"I know some believe revivals no longer work," Fossett acknowledged. "But I like what Dr. Roy Fish (long-time evangelism professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary) says: 'Revivals work when people do.' Evangelists do not pull revival out of their back pockets."

Meanwhile, Graham, in the latest COSBE resource guide, stated: "I know of no higher calling than that of the itinerant evangelist. But evangelists also have a responsibility to work side by side with pastors and churches in reaching the lost and bringing them into the fellowship of God's people.

"No organization has sought to link the ministry of the evangelist and the pastor more than the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists," Graham remarked. "I urge churches to prayerfully consider using a member of COSBE."

For more information about the Baptism Assistance Project, visit the COSBE Web site at www.sbc-evangelist.org.

BAPTIST DIGEST

Texas pastor charged in sex sting. A minister to married adults at Prestonwood Baptist Church, a prominent Dallas-area Southern Baptist megachurch, has resigned after being charged in an Internet sex sting. Joe Barron, 52, was charged May 16 with soliciting a minor online, the Associated Press reported. Police said he had communications of a sexual nature with undercover officers posing as a 13-year-old girl for a couple of weeks and then drove almost 200 miles to meet her in Bryan, Texas, where he was arrested. "We are appalled by the disgraceful and grievous actions and subsequent arrest of one of our ministers," Prestonwood pastor Jack Graham, a former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, told his congregation. "I am so very, very sorry for the injury this has caused to individuals and certainly our testimony in the community." A written statement from the church in Plano, Texas, added that staffers will cooperate with the police investigation.

Steven Curtis Chapman's daughter killed. Maria Sue, the 5-year-old daughter of Christian musician Steven Curtis Chapman, died May 21 after she was struck by an SUV driven by her teenage brother in the family's driveway in Franklin, Tenn. The Tennessee newspaper reported that the brother was driving down the gravel driveway of the rural home around 5:30 p.m., while several children were playing in the area. He did not see Maria in the driveway before the vehicle struck her, according to a spokeswoman for the Tennessee Highway Patrol. Maria, the youngest of three daughters that the Chapmans adopted from China, was taken by medical helicopter to Vanderbilt Children's Hospital in Nashville, where she died of her injuries. The highway patrol representative said the incident looked like a tragic accident and no charges were expected.

Ginn selected as SBCV exec. The executive board of the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia has selected a Richmond-area pastor, Jeffery Ginn, as the state convention's new executive director effective June 2. Ginn, pastor

of Mount Pleasant Baptist Church in Colonial Heights, Va., succeeds Doyle Chauncey, who announced his retirement during the SBCV annual meeting last fall. Ginn and his wife, Nell, have served as missionaries in Cali, Colombia, with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board, where he was a church planter and professor of New Testament and Greek at the International Baptist Theological Seminary. Prior to serving at Mount Pleasant, Ginn was director of Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary's Northeast Campus in Schenectady, N.Y.

CBF commissions missionaries online. An innovative missionary-training process has produced 18 new Cooperative Baptist Fellowship missions personnel, who will be commissioned June 18 during the group's General Assembly in Memphis, Tenn. The appointees are the first to apply through CBF's new online "cohort" process. The 10-week stints allow candidates to learn about CBF Global Missions and hear first-person testimonials from current field personnel and staff through online discussion, video and audio streams. The cohorts are the first step in a process—which includes personal interviews, an exploratory conference and orientation—toward more permanent assignments.

Baptist universities rank high in survey. Three Baptist universities were listed among the top 50 national universities in a new results-based ranking by the Center for College Affordability and Productivity based in Washington. The organization ranked Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, N.C., at 19th; Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., at 27th; and Baylor University in Waco, Texas, at 34th on its list. The Center for College Affordability and Productivity is an independent, not-for-profit organization that studies higher-education issues. Rankings are based on student perceptions of the quality of courses and instructors, graduation rates and such factors as percentage of students winning nationally competitive awards.

IMB regional director resigns over baptism, prayer policies

Richmond, Va. (ABP)—A high-ranking Southern Baptist Convention International Mission Board employee resigned May 5 because of disagreements with policies governing missionary qualifications.

Rodney Hammer, IMB's regional leader for Central and Eastern Europe, cited differences with policies disallowing missionary candidates because of disagreements about their mode of baptism or the fact that they practice a "private prayer language."

"We absolutely love working with our missionary family and the peoples of (Central and Eastern Europe), but I must now resign as regional leader," said Hammer, who has served as an IMB missionary for 18 years. "I am expected as a regional leader to accept, own and support the policies of the IMB trustees. I can do so no longer."

Mark Edworthy, a member of the IMB's regional leadership team, will serve as interim regional leader.

In a personal letter to missionaries in his region, Hammer noted that he also opposed the IMB's "unnecessary, extra-biblical narrowing of parameters for Southern Baptist cooperation in the Great Commission they represent."

In 2005, board trustees adopted policies that ruled out appointment of candidates who practice either speaking in tongues in public or as a private devotional act. They also determined that candidates must have been baptized in a Southern Baptist church or in a church of another denomination that practices believer's baptism only by immersion, and without regenerative or

sacramental connotations. The policies were revised in 2007 and called "guidelines."

In his letter, Hammer affirmed the Baptist Faith and Message, the Southern Baptist Convention's doctrinal statement. However, he added, board trustees should not exceed those doctrinal parameters.

IMB President Jerry Rankin expressed appreciation for Hammer's leadership in a challenging part of the world.

"We are grateful for Rodney's passion and vision for leading the region to growth and evangelistic impact these last eight years," Rankin said. "We respect his personal convictions and regret that the compelling desire to speak to these issues makes it inappropriate to continue his leadership role."

"We all had opportunities to speak to the issues over the more than two years these personnel guidelines were being considered," Rankin added. "However, once the decision was made it is essential the policies of the board be respected and supported."

According to an IMB press release, Hammer and his family began a stateside assignment on May 5, and they plan to be reassigned to a field assignment as missionaries after finishing their domestic service.

Hammer was appointed in 1990 as strategy coordinator for China with Cooperative Services International, the IMB's former relief and development arm. He served in that position until 1996. Trustees named him leader for Central and Eastern Europe in 1999.

With additional reporting by Baptist Press

Women of Worth

Through powerful testimonies, speakers recall God's faithfulness in desperate times

By Dannah Prather
Partnerships Editor

Somerset—Through powerful testimonies from two Christian women, Kentucky Baptists attending last week's Women of Worth Lifestyle Evangelism Conference heard about miracles and the sustaining faithfulness of God.

"I was in my valley of the shadow of death, and that is exactly where I found my God" said Carrie McDonnall, the lone survivor of a 2004 terrorist attack in Iraq that killed her husband, David, and three other Southern Baptist workers.

The group had spent the day in an isolated community discussing with local people how to provide clean drinking water to residents. Townspeople were very polite and receptive, McDonnall recalled. "We were excited about returning to build on those relationships, but that part of the story would never happen for the five of us." As they drove through Mosul, a vehicle pulled close to theirs. The men inside opened fire with automatic weapons.

Critically injured, McDonnall spent eight days in a medically-induced coma and awakened to learn that her husband, who was alert and walking after the attack, was dead.

"Ladies," McDonnall said to the hundreds of women gathered at Beacon Hill Baptist Church in Somerset, "the room spun." At that point "I needed to know what (God) was going to do to get me through this," she added.

After 10 surgeries and countless hours of physical therapy, McDonnall can walk, much to the surprise of many doctors. No doubt many others consider her ongoing advocacy for spreading the gospel in Iraq a miracle.

"Why would you go to a place like that?" is a consistent question McDonnall said she hears from people in church and secular venues.

She replies that the answer is found in Scripture: 2 Corinthians 5:14 which states that Christ's love compels believers to share the gospel.

"I don't know how we can be surprised when people who don't have Christ behave like people who don't have Christ," McDonnall noted. "They are simply, yet devastatingly, without Christ. They are in the same place we were before grace stepped in."

Ashley Smith Robinson knows too well what it's like to live apart from God. As a teenager, she abandoned her Christian upbringing and became a party girl, eventually becoming addicted to methamphetamines.

Robinson told the Women of Worth crowd that becoming a mom only slowed down her party lifestyle slightly. After witnessing her husband's murder, Robinson said the downward spiral continued. Eventually she relinquished custody of her daughter to an aunt.

After opening her heart again to God, Robinson said she was trying to get her life back on track. Then in March 2005, Brian Nichols forced his way into her Atlanta apartment.



GETTING INTO IT Amy Estes (left) of Lawrenceburg and Heather Askin of Wilmore participate enthusiastically in worship led by Anthony Evans at last week's Women of Worth Lifestyle Evangelism Conference. They attended the event at Beacon Hill Baptist Church in Somerset. A second conference was hosted by Northside Baptist Church in Princeton. (Photos by Dannah Prather)

He was wanted for the murder of a judge, court clerk, deputy sheriff and a federal agent the previous day.

For seven hours, Robinson was trapped in her apartment with Nichols. They talked. When he asked if she had drugs in the house, she said "yes," and gave him the crystal meth she still was struggling against.

It was at that moment, Robinson recalled, God set her free from the drug. Nichols "asked me three times," to take the drugs with him. She refused. "It was the first time I'd ever turned down drugs," she said, "and I've never had to since."

Robinson talked to Nichols about her growing faith in Christ, reading Scripture and excerpts from Rick Warren's book, "The Purpose Driven Life."

During the ordeal, Robinson recalled a conversation with her aunt. Confident in her niece's salvation through Christ, the aunt told Robinson that she was praying God would "take you home" if Robinson was unable to break free from drugs. Sitting in her apartment with a man armed with three guns, Robinson said she assumed God was answering her aunt's prayer.

Instead, she was spared. Nichols let her go, and when Robinson was safely in her car, she called the police. Nichols was arrested.

Robinson said she asked God why He saved her. "Four people died and you choose the widow, drug-addict mom (to spare)?" She said she "dug into" the Bible, to learn more about God. With His help, she said she defeated drugs and regained custody of her daughter. Later she remarried and, with her husband, leads a small group Bible study at church for recovering substance abusers.

Many women attending the conference were moved to tears by Mc-



SPARED Ashley Smith Robinson told Kentucky Baptist women how God protected her in 2005 when a suspected murderer held her hostage in her Atlanta home for seven hours.

Donnall's and Robinson's testimonies. Kay DeKalb Smith also had many women wiping their eyes, but this time in laughter.

She recalled how the window of her van got stuck in the down position just as an automatic car wash took control of the vehicle. Smith called the experience a perfect reminder that people are not always in control of their circumstances.

Smith said she felt God telling her later, "I'm God when the window is up and I'm God when the window is down."

She summarized the 10 "Red Sea Rules" explored in the book of the same name by Robert Morgan.

- God means for you to be where you are.
- Be more concerned for God's glory than your relief.
- Acknowledge your enemy but

keep your eyes on Jesus.

- Pray.
- Stay calm and confident. Give God time to work.
- When unsure, take the next logical step in faith.
- Envision God's enveloping presence.
- Trust God to deliver in His own way.
- View current crises as a faith-building lesson for the future.
- Don't forget to Praise Him.

Vocalist Anthony Evans, son of pastor and author Tony Evans, gave a brief testimony about how he has been blessed to sponsor a child through World Vision. He brought bios of 150 children from a community in Tanzania to the conference, encouraging women to assist the children and their families in meeting everyday necessities.



Kay DeKalb Smith of Nashville was the closing speaker for the conference.



Gayla Parker, executive director of Woman's Missionary Union in the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware, led a small-group study on how Christians multi-task even as they pursue the single task: to glorify God.



Ava Bingham Reynolds of Louisville led a small-group study on the importance of having a daily time of prayer and Bible reading. The Women of Worth Lifestyle Evangelism Conference is a ministry of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's leadership development team.

WESTERN RECORDER

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

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Accountable as Christians

By David Gushee

Atlanta (ABP)—One of the most vexing issues in Christian life is the question of accountability.

At every level of Christian community, the question arises. We know that Christians are accountable to God for their lives and will one day actually give an account (Matthew 25:31-46; 1 Corinthians 4:4, 2 Corinthians 5:10). But are we accountable to each other? Which others? Are you accountable to your pastor? Fellow church members? Fellow Sunday school classmates? All members of your church? All Baptists? All Christians everywhere?

And if the answer is "yes" to any of these, how is this accountability exercised?

It might be helpful to begin with those relationships in which accountability seems clear and then move from there to the gray areas. I will speak in a personal voice here and you can draw the parallels to your own life.

I know that I am accountable to God for the entirety of my life. Even though I trust Christ for salvation, I do not presume that this frees me from accountability for the conduct of my life. Quite the contrary—it heightens my accountability as one who has publicly confessed to serve Jesus Christ as Lord of my life.

As a Sunday school teacher at a local church, I know that I am accountable to the church leaders who appointed me to this role and to the members who choose to attend the class. I am accountable to them for the fulfillment of my specific duties—most particularly competent Bible teaching, but also a measure of pastoral care for the little community under my charge.

As a teacher at McAfee School of Theology and Mercer University, I am likewise accountable to the dean, provost and president; to the students and in a sense to my colleagues. I am accountable in a specifically Christian sense because of the nature of my work, but also in a general "workplace" sense like any-

one else who has a job that comes with specific accountability relationships.

As a husband, I am accountable to my wife for the conduct of my life in every area that relates to her and touches on her life—which is nearly everything. I am accountable to my children for a number of specific responsibilities, as I am to my parents for other responsibilities and my siblings for yet others. As a citizen, I have certain responsibilities for which I may be held accountable.

I can think of only one biblical category that can encompass all of these types of accountability and yet can set some coherent limits on them: the covenant. So my tentative thesis is that we are accountable in every relationship in which we have explicitly covenanted with a person or a community for the fulfillment of specific promises and responsibilities.

We do that explicitly at weddings, baby dedications, baptisms, ministerial installations and in starting work at most jobs. We even do it implicitly in many instances in which our conduct affects the well-being of others. One might say that a restaurant has a covenant with its customers to serve them clean food and a car company has a covenant with its customers to offer them a road-worthy vehicle.

Still, this leaves us with a number of murky and unresolved questions of accountability. Am I accountable as a church member to every other member of First Baptist Church? Am I accountable as a Baptist to all other Baptists? Am I accountable as a writer to everyone who reads my columns and books? Am I accountable as a Christian to all other Christians?

Errors abound on all sides, leaning either toward hyper-accountability or toward non-accountability. Probably many of us have known Christian friends or fellow church members who believe it is their God-given role to correct us for our

FIRST PERSON

Authentic worship

Worship is an experience that cannot be captured or even easily described. It is that sense of being totally tuned in to God and focused only on Him. I recently had opportunities to experience that worshipful connection in three Kentucky Baptist churches.

The first two came as I visited the new church facilities at Hope Church in Lawrenceburg and Ashland Avenue Baptist Church in Lexington. However, the most outstanding experience in visiting these new facilities was not the beautiful buildings or the worship through music. As great as those things were, it was the pastoral preaching of expository messages that really spoke to my heart. They were two of the finest sermons I have heard on challenging issues in living the Christian life.

At Hope Church, the music became reflective as time came for the sermon. Pastor Jeff Eaton was very re-

lational in his presentation of a message based on 1 Corinthians 10:13—"No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to humanity. God is faithful and He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation He will also provide a way of escape, so that you are able to bear it."

Pastor Eaton made it clear that temptation is common to all people and that temptation is not sin. Sin is when you choose to act on temptation.

He also made it very clear that God always provides a way to escape alongside the temptation because of God's faithfulness. In conclusion, Eaton cautioned that he was not talking about perfection, but the faithfulness of God. We can choose the way of escape with God's help.

At Ashland Avenue, there was also great music in an impressive building and a true spirit of worship.

PARTNERS IN THE MISSION



Bill Mackey

faults on a regular basis. Here the words of Paul resonate: "It is a very small thing I should be judged by you or any human court. I do not even judge myself. ... It is the Lord who judges me" (1 Corinthians 4:3-4). Paul here says that while servants of Christ are indeed "stewards of God's mysteries," their master is God and only to God will they give an account.

On the other hand, probably many of us also have known of cases in which outrageous stuff is going on in a family, church, workplace, school or nation—and no one is holding anyone to account. This silence may be occurring in the name of personal freedom or a commitment to non-judgmentalism or fear of confrontation or in a diffusion of responsibility in which no one is accountable to anyone else for anything. Paul himself was certainly unwilling to accept that the congregations he founded would be characterized by such laxity (1 Corinthians 5).

One possible solution for us is to do better in clarifying on the front end what vision of accountability, if any, will characterize our relationships. If we voluntarily covenant together—in a friendship or congregation or workplace—to have X level of accountability to each other, related to Y matters, exercised in Z fashion, then uncertainty about accountability can be diminished.

I am coming to believe that only when we covenant together about how accountability will work in a relationship should we expect either to hold others accountable or to be held accountable ourselves. Otherwise, all accountability is left to God alone—who alone can be trusted to get accountability right, in any case.

David Gushee is distinguished university professor of Christian ethics at Mercer University in Atlanta

What are you thinking?

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

In his sermon from Proverbs, Pastor David Prince focused on godly use of the tongue. He described how people misuse words and challenged those people to be responsible. The application that captured me was that our words are always to bring praise and glory to God.

The third experience of worship was at Memorial Baptist Church in Frankfort where I had the privilege of being part of a special recording of the congregation's 10 favorite hymns and praise songs. Music minister Rod Ellis had made all arrangements and it was obvious to me that everyone was prepared to engage in authentic worship.

Pastor Chuck Beighle sang with the choir and provided prayers and a brief message. Worship was followed by a groundbreaking for a \$2 million addition and renovation of present facilities.

I praise God for authentic worship and faithful proclamation of the Word of God. It is not optional; it is a matter of spiritual health and life.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

CHURCH

Faithful stewards:
Heart & treasure
reveal priorities

By Doug Strader

It has been suggested that all of us can determine our true priorities by looking at our calendars and our checkbooks.

When we examine how we spend our time and money, we quickly discover our priorities. In Matthew, Jesus said, "Where your treasure is there will your heart be also." I believe the reverse also is true: Where your heart is there will your treasure be also.

There are some basic biblical principles—when properly understood and practiced in everyday life—that can help Christians become good financial stewards of their possessions. Practicing these principles also demonstrates that one's heart and treasure are in the right place:

■ Everything belongs to God, including our time, talents, possessions, money, family, spiritual gifts and anything else we possess. When Christians understand that everything we have is a gift from God and we are responsible to God for the way we use those gifts, we will be more likely to demonstrate good stewardship.

■ God has entrusted us with His possessions and we are to be good stewards. The Apostle Paul said that as stewards of God's gifts we are to be found faithful. That includes every gift. It also includes being good stewards of all we receive; not just giving a tithe.

■ God will hold us accountable for how we use what He has given us. 1 Peter 4:10 states, "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace."

■ Faithfulness is the measure of our stewardship. Stewardship is a 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week, 365-days-a-year responsibility.

■ Faithful stewards will discover life is fulfilling both now and in eternity. In Galatians 6:9, Paul wrote, "And let us not grow weary in doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up."

Being good stewards of our time, talents, money and spiritual giftedness is of utmost importance since today is the only time we are assured to have in which to be faithful stewards. Good intentions go down the drain unless we take action.

Reprinted from Western Recorder,
May 16, 2006

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

Strong family communication requires attention, openness

Q: What can we learn from Jesus' family about family communication?

Luke 2 tells the familiar story of Jesus' trip to the temple as a 12-year-old boy. On the way home, Mary and Joseph cannot find Jesus. They return to Jerusalem where they find Him in the temple, listening and asking questions. In a recent sermon, Les Hollon, pastor of St. Matthews Baptist Church, outlined what their subsequent conversations can teach families about communication.

FAMILY

Find meaningful ways to be together. In this case, it was an annual trip to the temple for worship. Special together times create the foundation and context for good communication. Plan them for your family.

Stay updated with each person's stage of life. Pulling away from family at age 12 typifies adolescence and should not come as a total surprise to parents. Take life stages into consideration as you communicate with your family.

Track down your assumptions. When Mary and Joseph discovered that what they were thinking about Jesus' whereabouts was incorrect, they took action (verses 44-45). Sometimes we completely misunderstand what others are saying. When that happens, we need to take the initiative and see if we can find out how we missed the message.

Be open to each other's insights. Verse 47 tells us that all who heard Jesus' words were amazed at His understanding and answers, including His parents. In the midst of their frustration and perhaps even anger, they were able to listen to His explanation—even though they still did not completely understand (verse 50).

Talk about your feelings. Jesus' parents shared their anxieties with Him and let Him know they had been worried about Him (verse 47).—David Garrard

Q: Do you have any suggestions on how to meet new people—either as a friend or a potential spouse?

This is a universal question for single adults and providing an answer is an opportunity for churches to reach out and offer fellowship in as many ways as possible for the adult population that happens to be single. Try these suggestions on for size and do what fits you:

SINGLES

■ Take advantage of events where people dress up and there is a designated time for mingling. When it is appropriate, make the choice to go. When you arrive, resist the urge to be shy. Make eye contact and find things that you have in common with others. Remember, conversation is like a game of ball. Someone has to throw out the first ball, someone else has to catch it and keep it going, then throw it back, and so on.

■ Contact local churches, associations, conventions and denominational agencies to discover opportunities for Christian single adult fellowship. On June 7, Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington will be hosting its fourth annual Single Adult Conference. During Labor Day weekend at LifeWay's Ridgecrest Conference Center near Asheville, N.C., there will be a singles "adventure weekend."

■ Keep your eyes open during the daily experiences of life. If you walk your dog, go to the library, shop at the grocery store or browse at a book store, you will see people who might have a lot in common with you. If you have a business card handy it can help by making for an easy exchange of information.

Your world is as big as the pathways of your life. If those pathways are small, enlarge them. Be aware of others as you go. Remember the proverb that says, "To have a friend, show yourself friendly." If you put this into practice in your everyday life, you will find many experiences of joy and connection that God can bless in His Kingdom and eternal plan.—James Stillwell

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



Pastors must address social, moral issues

I just finished reading Paul's second letter to Timothy once again and I am continually impressed with the agelessness of Scripture. In 2 Timothy 3:1-4, Paul says to Timothy, "But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God having a form of godliness but denying its power." Wow, that sounds just like the world you and I live in doesn't it? We live in a world of moral deterioration.

For this very reason it is imperative that preachers preach about the moral and social issues facing our society. Today, our world needs pastors more than ever who will stand in the gap and deliver the truth from God regarding issues such as abortion, gambling, same-sex marriages, adultery, cohabitation, drug and alcohol addiction, pornography, etc. The list could go on and on. Pastors need to share the truth about these destructive behaviors as well as share the healing and restorative power of Jesus Christ to transform us from all sin.

Now this all seems elementary, but the unfortunate thing is that many pastors are not willing to tackle the tough issues facing our culture. Why? I think there are three main reasons pastors do not preach about the moral and social ills of our society—and all of them stem from fear.

Many are fearful of being terminated. Unfortunately we live in an age where many pastors' jobs are about as secure as a college basketball coach's. This insecurity keeps many pastors from tackling tough issues. It is the sad state of affairs in many churches today and it must stop. Pastors need to deliver God's message without fear of termination. Churches need

to stand behind their pastor as he delivers the truth of God's Word with boldness, clarity and hope of a divine transformation.

Many are fearful of losing church members or prospective members. A few years ago, a family was attending our church for quite some time and was ready to join. But the Sunday they were to join, I preached on gambling. It was their last Sunday with us. I heard later they thought I had come down too hard on the issue and that gambling wasn't really a big deal. Though I was truly sorry that this family decided not to join our congregation, I was not sorry for preaching God's Word with full conviction. Unfortunately, it's one of the prices you pay for preaching

GUEST EDITORIAL



Wayne Spivey

God's Word.

In John 6, when Jesus was healing the sick and performing miracles, the crowds following Him were large. But when He began teaching about the true cost of being a disciple, the Bible says, "From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him" (v. 66). Jesus shows us that preaching the truth is more important than drawing large crowds.

Many are fearful of being too political. In today's culture, many of our moral issues are closely tied to politics and politicians. However, I have found that you can present God's truth on the issues without saying a word about politics. I would never endorse or condemn a politician, that's not my job. It is my job, however, to speak about the issues of our time.

I'm sure that these fears and others keep some pastors from preaching about these tough issues. But I am reminded of the difficulties that the heroes of the Bible endured for preaching the truth. They really had something to be fearful about, but did not flinch when it came time to boldly speak God's truth. I pray that all pastors would do the same.

Wayne Spivey is pastor of Cynthiana Baptist Church

What teachers need and want

By David Francis

Nashville (BP)—Every Sunday school leader and worker can do a better job. Even though most of them would acknowledge that in reality, it is still difficult to get Sunday school teachers to attend training.

I would like to make some suggestions that will help leaders of church education avoid pitfalls that cause workers to grimace when they hear the words "training session."

Practical vs. theoretical. Most Sunday school workers want to do a better job. So try to cut through the theory and demonstrate practical "how to" examples. For instance, rather than harping on how important it is to make newcomers feel welcome, show a preschool worker how to get down on one knee and greet a child at her level and say, "We're so glad you're here today. We have a lot of fun activities to help us learn about today's Bible story. Please come in and choose what you would like to do first."

Substance vs. announcements. Ever been to a meeting that was billed as a training session, only to end up enduring an hour of announcements? I have not only been to those meetings, I must confess that I have conducted them. If leaders are going to give extra time to attend training, make sure it has some substance. At the very least, make sure everyone leaves with at least

one new idea they can implement in their class. After conducting an event in Texas, a young adult leader came up and said, "We're doing a pretty good job of making guests feel welcome. Greeters, name tags—all that. But starting next Sunday, we're going to start making sure we have a member fill out the forms on new guests, as you suggested. That one idea was worth coming tonight." People will come back again if they know they'll get new ideas.

Planned vs. winged. Ever been to a training session where you know the leader is winging it? Again, I have been to them and, regrettably, I have conducted them. If you are going to conduct a training session or take leaders to a training event, plan for it. Write out a plan. Make the room attractive. Get your presentation material ready well in advance. Put candy or snacks in the chairs. Know what you're going to say and practice it. That way, instead of running around at the last minute trying to get things ready, you can relax and interact with your workers.

Interaction vs. sittin' and soaking. Make your training sessions active. Get people into buzz groups to discuss a concept you've presented. Include ample time for questions in your planning. A temptation on the part of the leaders (yes, I am confessing again) is to try to cram too much into a training session "while I've got them there." Try to avoid that temp-

tation and instead focus on a few key objectives and cover those thoroughly.

Coaching vs. scolding. Ever felt scolded instead of motivated at a training session? "You leaders are not following up on guests," can become, "Most of us could probably do a better job of follow up with visitors, so today we're going to spend some time sharing some ideas for doing that better." That's coaching. Do not just talk about the concept. Model it. Role play. Have fun.

Stories vs. principles. There are a lot of important principles Sunday school leaders need to understand. Those principles are best understood in the context of stories. Tell stories—preferably ones that are true, as well as those where your own leaders are the heroes. Principles educate; stories motivate. They are a good way to start and end every training session. Watch and listen for good ones. Log the stories when they happen and share them with your Sunday school leaders.

For more information about training Sunday school leaders, visit www.lifeway.com/sundayschool. In addition, the upcoming LifeWay Sunday school events are excellent training opportunities for church staff, Sunday school trainers and teachers. The events will be July 11-14 at LifeWay's Ridgecrest Conference Center in North Carolina and July 21-25 at LifeWay's Glorieta Conference Center in New Mexico.

David Francis is director of Sunday school for LifeWay Christian Resources

COMMENTARY

Kentucky Changers earns state recognition

Frankfort—The Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and Service has selected the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Kentucky Changers program as the recipient of the Faith-Based Group Award.

Kentucky Changers was one of 17 recipients of the 2007 Governor's Volunteer Awards, presented by First Lady Jane Beshear during a May 9 ceremony at the state Capitol in Frankfort.

"Volunteers add tremendous value to the lives they touch and the communities they serve," Beshear said. "I want to thank you all for the difference you make and the example you set by carrying on one of Kentucky's most cherished traditions, lending a hand to a neighbor in need."

The Faith-Based Group Award recognizes a group of volunteers that has demonstrated significant volunteer service and is coordinated through a faith community organization in Kentucky.

Kentucky Changers received the award for the Monticello/Wayne County project, completed in July of 2007. More than 200 volunteers participated in the effort, completing renovations on 20 low-income homes.

A panel of judges with volunteer and community service backgrounds chose 17 winners in 15



CHANGERS IN ACTION A group of volunteers help fix up a home during a Kentucky Changers project in Russellville last June. The program, coordinated by the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Baptist Men on Mission, was honored May 9 with the Faith-Based Group Volunteer Award by the Kentucky Commission on Community Volunteerism and Service.

categories. The Governor's office launched the volunteer awards program in 1975.

Sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention, the Kentucky Changers program provides a weeklong missions experience for teenagers, college students and adults. Participants complete light construction work for low-income families. Since the program's inception in 1994, thousands of students have partici-

pated in projects across the state.

Three Kentucky Changers projects will be held this summer in Monticello, June 7-14; Maysville, June 21-28; and Williamsburg, July 5-12.

For more information on Kentucky Changers, contact the KBC's Baptist Men on Mission department at (502) 489-3399, toll free in Kentucky at (866) 489-3527, or visit www.kybaptist.org/kychangers.

Program allows ex-offenders to begin rebuilding their lives

Continued from page 1

"The state says that 33,000 ex-offenders will be coming out in the next 12 months, so we can't help all of them. We hand out applications to chaplains, or our committee members hand them out (to inmates) when they visit prisons."

Mentors for each ex-offender come from a local church and King said the mentors work personally with each participant, helping them line up housing and employment. The spiritual component of R/6 is a high priority, he noted.

"Getting the ex-offenders connected to God spiritually is the goal, because we feel like that is the key to their success," he acknowledged. "The mentors meet with them one time a week doing Bible study and participants are expected to attend church functions or activities a minimum of three times per week."

Other churches across Kentucky have become convinced of the program's importance and have made significant contributions to its growth.

Near the end of 2007, Maranatha Community Baptist Church in Lexington began renting a three-bedroom home to house R/6 participants. Pastor William Farris said the church saw the need to reach out to the ex-offenders.

"Nobody wants to give them a second chance and it is hard to succeed when the deck is stacked against you," he noted. "We presently have a full house with a house manager. The manager provides order and security, cooks food and serves as a trained mentor leading them in Bible study."

Farris said Maranatha decided after one month of working in the program to pursue the purchase of a larger house because of the level of need.

Meanwhile, King pointed out that he is negotiating with a housing organization to rent a portion of their facility in Washington County, which would be able to house up to 25 men. R/6 is also looking into using the organization's 19-bed facility in Lincoln County to house women.

Those who have gone through R/6 said they believe the program was critical to their success.

"It meant the world to me to know there was an organization based on faith that was believing in me and constantly helping me," Albert declared. "That is one of the reasons that I want to become a mentor myself."

For more information on the R/6 Mentoring Program or to become a sponsoring church, call the KBC's Baptist Men on Mission department at (502) 489-3527, toll free in Kentucky at (866) 489-3527, or visit www.kybaptist.org/r6.

Equestrian tracts available from KBC

Louisville—Kentuckians seeking to reach equestrians with the gospel now have access to a themed tract developed by the Kentucky Baptist Convention specifically for those interested in or involved with horses.

Titled, "The Simple Plan of the Master Horseman," the 20-page tract features a variety of equestrian photos and a story line that compares the will of a horse with the will of sinful man.

"Kentucky is the horse capital of the world, and yet there are very few evangelistic resources targeting those in the horse community," said Eric Allen, KBC's mission service and ministries director. "We wanted to offer a resource that would meet those needs."

"The tract is useful for sharing the gospel with anyone who is lost, but it will be most effective with those who work with horses, as well as those who ride for pleasure," he added.

The tract can "be used by chaplains, missionaries and volunteers at racetracks and shared with those at 4H competitions, rodeos, horse shows, riding stables and county fairs," Allen explained. "We envision it being used throughout North America by many different eques-

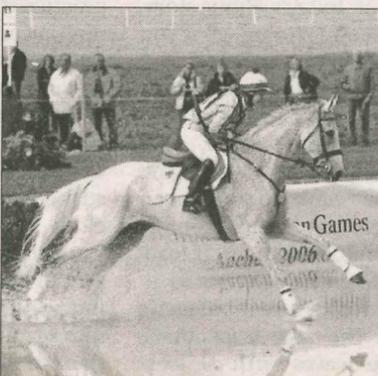
trian ministries, missionaries and churches."

A Spanish version of the tract also has been developed as part of an ongoing emphasis to reach out to Hispanics in Kentucky.

"Many of those working in the horse industry here in Kentucky are Hispanic," Allen noted. "This is an easy way for Christians to share the gospel with their Hispanic neighbors."

Allen said he also believes the new resource will play a key role in the KBC's strategic outreach during the 2010 World Equestrian Games when "hundreds of thousands of horse enthusiasts from all over the world will converge on Lexington." The games will take place Sept. 25 through Oct. 10.

The KBC is making the tracts available for purchase at a minimal cost-recovery rate. To learn more, visit www.kybaptist.org/horseman, or send an e-mail to ministries@kybaptist.org.



Mikel & Marcela Juarez



Josh & Amber Patton

NAMB appoints new missionaries to serve in Ky.

Alpharetta, Ga.—The Southern Baptist North American Mission Board has appointed four new missionaries to serve in Kentucky.

Job "Mikel" and Marcela Juarez are serving four associations and 13 counties in the central part of the state, where Mikel has been named as a church planting missionary.

A native of Mexico, Mikel will serve as a regional Hispanic strategist for the Kentucky Baptist Convention. His duties will include helping local congregations and associations to identify, establish and develop church planting opportunities among Hispanics. He will also work directly in developing new leaders through discipleship classes at Kentucky's Hispanic Baptist Institute.

A native of Mexico, Mikel is a graduate of Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana in Mexico City and Seminario Teologico Bautista. He is currently working toward a master's degree at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

Kentucky natives Josh and Amber Patton are serving in Princeton where Josh has been named as a NAMB US/C2 ministry evangelism missionary.

Josh works alongside Harrell Riley with Hell Is Real Ministries, coordinating volunteer groups and Bible studies, and doing ministry evangelism. He also works closely with H.R.'s job corps ministry in Muhlenberg County and the prison farm ministry at Western Kentucky Correctional Complex in Fredonia. Josh has served with the Western Kentucky ministry since 2006. He is a graduate of Mid-Continent University in Mayfield.

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Ready or not, camp is here

Camp requires great staff, high energy, lots of prayer

In the midst of a cool and wet spring, the commencement of another camp season seems to have arrived yet again—earlier than expected. Our summer staff members are already at the properties and are in full swing with training and preparation for the first week of camp.

I want to offer public praise and thanks to all of our staff at the central office, Jonathan Creek and Cedarmore. I realize that I may be biased, but my appreciation for their long hours, great sacrifice and commitment to work behind the scenes demonstrates that our ministry is incredibly blessed to have such Christ followers working day in and day out.

Perhaps like other ministry positions, camp ministry requires an enormous amount of preparation for what seems to be a quick event. Our “camp” season basically is June and July. While we do have groups at the properties from March to December, the bulk of the activity takes place during the 61-day summer time period. Each year we have experienced record numbers in attendance, and this year will again be another record for Crossings.

With much in progress and our stewardship growing, the

needs are greater now than they ever have been. I respectfully ask each of you to consider praying for Crossings during the summer season. To make your prayer schedule as friendly as possible, I am giving you some very specific topics to pray for each day of the week. You can simply follow this schedule each week of camp throughout June and July.

KENTUCKY BAPTIST ASSEMBLIES



David Melber

Sunday. Pray for safe travel for the churches coming to camp and for the students to have soft hearts.

Monday. Pray for the safety for campers and strength for our staff.

Tuesday. Pray for the minds of students to be open to the gospel.

Wednesday. Pray for students to respond to God's leading.

Thursday. Pray for the safety, strength of our staff and the missions offering.

Friday. Pray for safety as groups return home and for a time rest for the staff.

Saturday. Pray for rest for our staff and for our partners in Moldova and Zambia.

Each day we praise God for all that He is doing. Thank you.

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

Caring for 'the least of these' at home

Foster parents recognized as in-home missionaries

For years we have encouraged Kentucky Baptists to recognize those providing foster care through Sunrise Children's Services as “in-home missionaries.” We believe these dedicated and gifted people who sacrificially open their homes to at-risk children for Jesus' sake are fulfilling His call to minister to children and the New Testament's mandate to care for dependent people like “orphans” and “widows.” These contemporary disciples are on the mission field without ever leaving home. They “do missions” in reverse—instead of going to the mission field, the mission field comes to live with them. They are doing far more than social work. They are committed to Kingdom work.

Last month, First Baptist Church of Mount Washington commissioned a committed young family as in-home missionaries. Thanks to the leadership of Pastor Paul Chitwood, Jamie and Allison Stump were recognized, set apart and commissioned to minister through their family. Without leaving their home or church, the Stumps were blessed by their congregation. They were affirmed for answering God's call on their lives, for using their gifts and making a difference in the life of a young man by sharing

their home and family with him.

In-home missionaries are synonymous with what Jesus taught and modeled—ministry to the total person. He healed and taught, often simultaneously. Like Jesus, these missionaries give victims of abuse and neglect the opportunity to see faith in action and then the option to choose faith for themselves. Like Jesus, they care for the total person: body, mind and soul.

As I travel Kentucky speaking in churches, foster parents of ours, or those working for the state, introduce themselves to me. I often wonder if their church understands the sacrifice, commitment and tremendous Kingdom work they are doing.

Dr. Chitwood's invitation was the first for me to participate in a commissioning service for in-home missionaries. I pray it will not be the last, but rather the beginning of a new movement among Kentucky Baptists toward a “pure and faultless” religion to “look after orphans and widows in their distress” (James 1:27). If you have in-home missionaries in your church caring for the “least of these,” recognize their efforts. Pray for and help them as they fulfill the Great Commission without ever leaving home.

SUNRISE CHILDREN'S SERVICES



Bill Smithwick

Bill Smithwick is president of Sunrise Children's Services. Contact Sunrise at (502) 538-1000 or www.sunrise.org

For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



Church of the Covered Dish

Thom Tapp

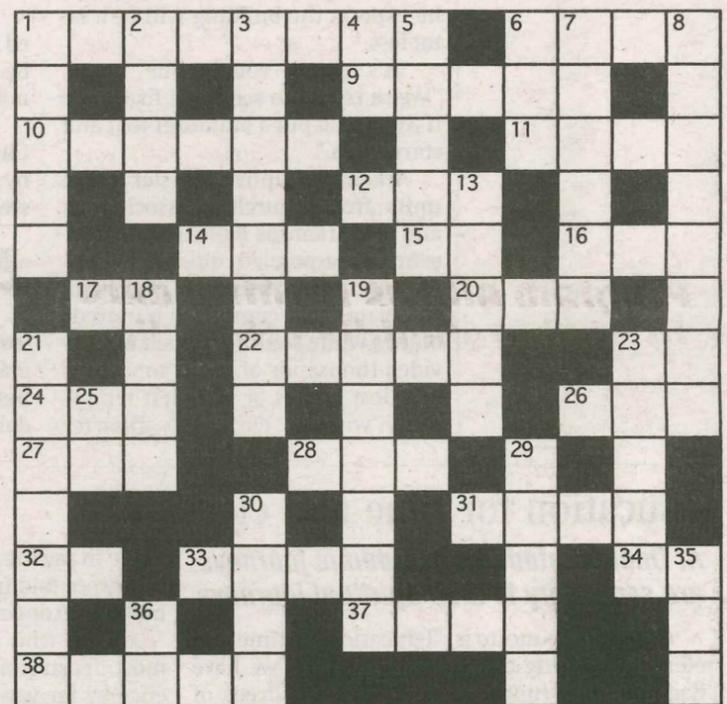


Bible Crosswords

By Michael J. Landi

Across

- 1 Saul fought against them (1 Samuel 14)
- 6 “There shall they rehearse the righteous ____ of the Lord” (Judges 5:11)
- 9 “He shall ____ with his teeth, and melt away” (Psalm 112:10)
- 10 Actress McDaniel
- 11 “My ____ shall be joyful in my God” (Isaiah 61:10)
- 12 “Out of thine hand the ____ of trembling” (Isaiah 51:22)
- 14 Word heard on movie sets
- 15 Preposition
- 16 “By the rivers of Babylon, there we ____” (Psalm 137:1)
- 17 Land of Job
- 20 “____ unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!” (Matthew 23:15)
- 22 Tenth part of one's income
- 23 ____ of the Chaldees
- 24 Town of the tribe of Benjamin (1 Chronicles 8:12)
- 26 “Go and ____ in the ears of Jerusalem” (Jeremiah 2:2)
- 27 Joshua, the son of ____
- 28 Gershwin
- 31 “The Lord make his ____ shine upon thee” (Numbers 6:25)



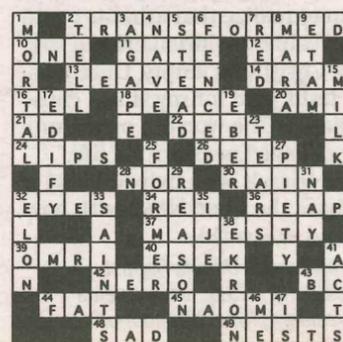
- 32 Word with grade or braid
- 33 Father of Ehud (Judges 3:15)
- 34 Scale unit (abbr.)
- 37 ____ Behind (LaHaye/Jenkins book)
- 38 “All we like ____ have gone astray” (Isaiah 53:6)

- 8 “He went out, and departed into a ____ place” (Mark 1:35)
- 13 “To see thy ____ and thy glory” (Psalm 63:2)
- 18 “David took the strong hold of ____: the same is the city of David” (2 Samuel 5:7)
- 19 Without end
- 21 Languages (arch.)
- 23 Father of Michaiah (2 Chronicles 13:2)
- 25 Greek letter
- 29 “If ye have ____ as a grain of mustard seed” (Matthew 17:20)
- 30 “I ____ where I sowed not” (Matthew 25:26)
- 35 Nephew of Abraham, the son of Nahor (Genesis 22:21)
- 36 Biblical pronoun

Down

- 1 Item worn by the high priest (Exodus 28)
- 2 “Because the Lord loved you, ... he would keep the ____” (Deuteronomy 7:8)
- 3 “The tongue is a fire, a world of ____” (James 3:6)
- 4 Common abbr.
- 5 “As a jewel of gold in a swine's ____” (Proverbs 11:22)
- 6 Balaam's beast
- 7 “They hated knowledge, and did not ____ the fear of the Lord” (Proverbs 1:29)

Last week's solution



Arkansas relief teams busy following multiple disasters

Bee Branch, Ark. (BP)—Arkansas Baptist disaster relief teams have had their hands full lately, with massive flooding that damaged hundreds of homes, then multiple tornadoes in February, April and earlier this month that hit dozens of Arkansas towns and communities.

South Side Baptist Church in Bee Branch, Ark., and Earle Baptist Church near the Tennessee-Arkansas border, were leveled by two EF-3 tornadoes May 2. On May 10, First Baptist Church, Southside Baptist Church and The Lighthouse Church, all in Stuttgart, Ark., each received extensive roof and structural damage when a tornado stayed on the ground for nearly two miles, damaging or destroying about 200 homes and leaving many others without power for several days.

Lighthouse Church's roof was ripped off and the building had damage to much of its interior. The church's sign was found about four blocks away. Pastor Steve Bushey said he expects the building will be a total loss.

"It's pretty rough," he noted. "We're trying to see if it's fixable or if we should put a bulldozer to it and start again."

Arkansas Baptist disaster relief units from churches, associations and the Arkansas Baptist State Convention responded quickly following the storms. Recovery and chain-saw teams have completed hundreds of jobs while feeding units have provided thousands of meals to victims who lost homes or were left temporarily without electricity. Disaster

relief chaplains also have provided counsel to victims.

In May alone, Arkansas Baptist teams have prepared more than 10,000 meals, completed more than 250 recovery jobs and had more than 230 contacts through crisis chaplains. A total of 13 Arkansas Baptist disaster relief teams have assisted Stuttgart residents.

"I don't know what our town would have done without the Baptists," Earle resident Clara Ballard said May 5. "They are a godsend, literally. I can't praise them enough."

When the May 2 tornadoes hit, Steve Stephens, pastor of South Side Baptist Church in Bee Branch, Ark., and several workers were in a new sanctuary that was under construction. They escaped injury by taking shelter in a classroom.

Stephens recalled that metal beams snapped like plastic in the new worship center and the roof was partially blown off the older section of the church.

"We lost every building," he added. "We've lost it all. ... It's going to be tough. We're bruised but we're not beaten."

At the 106-year-old Earle Baptist Church, the baptistery and balcony are all that were left standing. Its steeple has yet to be found.

The church gym, which housed a full-court basketball court, weight room and locker room, now is a pile of rubble. The education building lost its roof and most of its stained-glass windows, while the fellowship hall sustained roof and structural damage.

Both sides gear up for costly fight over Calif. gay marriage

Los Angeles (RNS)—The election-year fallout from the May 15 ruling by the California Supreme Court to allow same-sex marriage has both sides of the religious and political landscape building their barricades.

Gay marriage advocates are jubilant but cautious as they hold onto their landmark court victory, while opponents hope to make it a major issue in the November elections.

"A lot of people are very angry about the court's decision, calling up, e-mailing, asking what they can do to help," said Andrew Pugno, the attorney for backers of a proposed constitutional amendment that would ban same-sex marriage and, if approved by voters, trump the court's decision.

With funding from Focus on the Family and other groups, the

"Protect Marriage" measure has gathered more than 1.1 million signatures to qualify for the November ballot.

"An anchor of the coalition has been the churches that gathered these signatures. They provided the bulk of the manpower to make this happen," Pugno noted. "In some ways, the arrogance of the court has really ignited the anger of the voters and given a boost to the marriage amendment."

Pugno explained that his group will petition the state supreme court to stay its decision "until the voters have a chance to have a final say on this issue." Without a stay, same-sex marriages would begin June 15.

California is the second U.S. state to legalize same-sex marriages. Massachusetts became the first to do so in May of 2004.

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At Oneida, students' academic journeys are secondary to their spiritual journeys

Our school's motto is, "Education for time and eternity." During the past several years we have had the opportunity to work with hundreds of young people. The class of 2008 is on their way, hopefully, to becoming useful and productive citizens. We believe the education they have received while attending Oneida has helped to prepare them for the challenges they will encounter in life.

But an education for time was just part of their instruction. We also diligently tried to prepare them for eternity. Here are some of the things our seniors said about their spiritual journeys.

Melat from Ethiopia wrote: "Before I came to Oneida, I was a Christian but Oneida has helped me a lot in my Christian faith. I've learned so many things about my beliefs. I like daily chapel because it helped me to know more about God's Word."

Anthony wrote: "My life before Oneida was not going in a good direction. Not only was I failing academically, but I also was failing spiritually. I did not go to church very much because I didn't think it had anything to offer me. When I came to Oneida, I was required to attend seven worship services a week. That awakened something that hadn't been a part of my life. I still struggle with some spiritual issues, but Oneida's unique ministry has helped me learn that I may need some help on the road of life."

Marcia from China said: "Religion plays an important role at Oneida. I know more about Christianity and recently I became a Christian. I believe this is one of the most important decisions I've

made in my life. I learned a lot from the messages that were told in chapel. They helped my faith to become stronger."

Owen, who is also from China, wrote: "The most frustrating and yet enlightening experience by far was my exposure to Christianity. After I studied the Bible passages in more detail, the chapel services became much more meaningful to me. Even though I am still not convinced of the Christian beliefs, religion has become much more significant in my life."

Amy, another Chinese student and valedictorian of her class, wrote: "Being exposed to Christianity has been the most significant experience I've had at Oneida. I grew up in a non-Christian family and the term 'Christianity' was something I had only read about in history books or saw in movies. Fortunately, my dear roommates were willing to help explain the Bible to me. They also prayed for me. Gradually, with the

help of teachers and friends, I began to have a better understanding of the Bible verses that were preached about in chapel. I had some confusing questions about the Christian life. But Mr. Scull's and Mr. Barnes' Bible study group helped me find the answers. I began to realize that atheists could have the same moral values as Christians, but that a life without Jesus Christ was empty. Once I understood the price Jesus paid for my sins, I chose to become a Christian. ... The worship opportunities at Oneida have changed my spiritual life."

Thanks to all our friends who helped make it possible for us to share the Good News with boys and girls from around the world.

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



W.F. Underwood

'I let life get in the way'

Smith experiences peace of complete surrender to God

Many of us have experienced it: That "still small voice" of God that calls us to completely surrender to a specific direction He is leading in our lives. First-year student David Smith, from Kingsport, Tenn., knows the importance of listening to that voice.

"I came to know Christ as my Savior when I was eight years old," Smith recalled. "When I was 18, I knew without a doubt that God called me into the ministry."

Then something happened to David that I think is common with a lot of students who come to Clear Creek.

"Although I knew God had called me to full-time ministry, I let life get in the way," he said. "I got a job ... then you turn around and you are married, you have a child, a house, a family and you just let life take over."

"All this time, though, God was speaking to me with that still small voice telling me that He had called me to full-time ministry and I was not doing what He wanted me to do," Smith noted. "I kept hearing God say to me, 'Just think how much fun you could be having if you were doing what I wanted you

to be doing.'

"When I was 32 years old, I finally surrendered to the call that I know God placed on my life at 18," he continued. "While looking for a school to attend, my wife, Ann, and I found Clear Creek on the Internet. We talked to several people before we visited the campus and they confirmed to us that it was a great school."

"We finally made our way to campus for a visit," Smith recalled. "We didn't make it to any of the other schools we had planned to visit. We really felt the Spirit of God drawing us to come to Clear Creek. ... All the people we met were a great encouragement to us that this is where God finally

wanted us to be to prepare for His calling on our lives. Driving home, it was a no-brainer to Ann and me. We knew without a doubt that we would come to Clear Creek."

"Now I am having that fun God kept reminding me of all those years," Smith said. "I enjoy studying the Bible and gaining insight to a lot of things in Scripture that I have not seen before."

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.ccbcc.edu; e-mail: dfox@ccbcc.edu



Donnie Fox

Blogging Baptists

Motivations for blogging are as varied as bloggers at the 'online dinner table'

By John Hall
Associated Baptist Press

Palo Alto, Calif. (ABP)—For some people, blogs are like a family reunion where people barely know each other. There's a lot of talking going on, but there's little agreement on much of anything.

But for many of the increasing number of Baptist bloggers, that's the beauty of it.

A blog—short for “Web log”—is a Web site or online journal where authors regularly publish commentaries on personal and public issues. Typically, blogs allow readers to comment on posts, creating the opportunity for readers to engage in dialogue with each other and the blogger.

The blogosphere is the world's online dinner table, where people from all perspectives can share their thoughts and opinions on what is going on in their lives and the world around them.

Diane Schiano, researcher at the Palo Alto Research Center in Palo Alto, Calif., said people sit at the cyber-table for as many reasons as there are blogs. Some are meant to update friends and family about what's going on in someone's life. Some authors blog as a kind of self-validation, seeing other people reading their blog as an indication that what they are doing or saying is important. And younger people are clamoring to have their own place in cyberspace, she added.

“There are a lot of people who want to feel in constant contact,” Schiano noted. “I call it hyper-connectivity. Wherever they go, whatever they're doing, they want to be able to reach out to someone.”

Why blog?

Amanda Sturgill, a journalism professor at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, blogs on media and religious issues at aejrmig.blogspot.com. She believes Baptists, in particular, blog for two reasons: They are family-oriented, creating a desire to share their family lives with others; and as evangelicals, they believe they have something important to add to the global conversation.

Baptists may be supplying information and perspectives that Internet surfers are wanting, she noted. Research indicates 25 percent of ‘net surfers’ have looked for religious information.

“People from evangelical faiths have classically seen new media technologies as being a great witnessing tool, allowing believers to reach all the world in an expeditious manner,” Sturgill said. “This has been true for everything from print to the World Wide Web. It's no accident that Gutenberg's first product was a Bible.”

However, she added, “But usually it doesn't live up to hopes. There is Christian broadcasting, but mostly existing Christians watch and listen, for example.

“Blogs have the potential to be different because they can, at the same time, be both a megaphone and an intimate conversation,” she

continued. “But to do this requires the blogger to actually interact with readers through comments.”

Many Baptist bloggers point to participating in the online conversation as the primary reason they write. They talk about “iron sharpening iron,” noting that thinking through blog posts and responding to comments helps them improve their ministries.

“Blogging is like a conversation; it's people sharing what's on their hearts and mind,” noted Ferrell Foster, communications director for the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

“The BGCT staff wants to be part of that conversation because we serve our churches and need to be in constant contact with them. Blogging is simply a great way to talk and to listen via the burgeoning electronic media.”

Marty Duren, a former contributor at www.sbcoutpost.com—a prominent blog pushing for change within the Southern Baptist Convention—now blogs on missional living at www.iemissional.com. He referred to his blog as a way of increasing his spiritual influence, which is what he said Christ called each Christian to do. He claimed he has learned some lessons in ministry and hopes to help others.

Melissa Rogers, director of Wake Forest University's Center for Religion and Public Affairs, also blogs about faith and public life at melissarogers.typepad.com. She said her blog was a natural outgrowth of her regular media tracking and discussions.

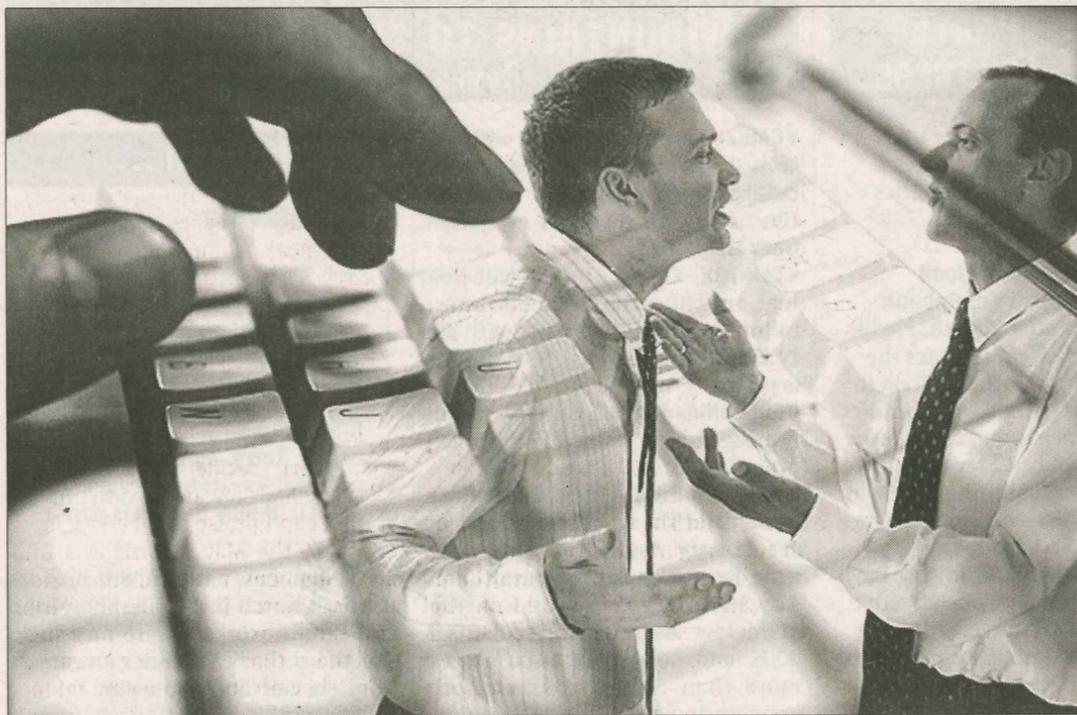
“I thought, since I'm tracking these things anyway, they may be of use to others as well,” she noted.

Aaron Weaver, a Baylor graduate student who blogs at www.thebigdaddyweave.com, uses his blog to keep readers informed about Baptist issues related to politics, but he also advocates what he calls Baptist distinctives. He said he believes blogging is a way to connect with younger generations.

“For the most part, the young Baptists that I know don't read Baptist publications. They don't read denominational newspapers. But they do read blogs; they like blogs. Many even have blogs of their own. They are exchanging ideas with each other and they are willing to read blogs from other Baptists of all ages,” he noted.

“Their blogging is definitely not limited to Baptist or even religious subjects, but some young Baptists are thinking and writing about topics of interest to other Baptists,” he added. “It is my hope that more younger Baptists will discover the Baptist blogosphere and become more interested in our distinctives, history and the future of Baptists.”

“In our increasingly pluralistic, post-modern, post-denominational world, what is the future of Baptists? That is a question Baptists—young and old—should be dialoguing about. The Baptist blogosphere is the perfect place in which to have that much-needed conversation.”



Ethical blogging begins with New Testament

By Ken Camp
Texas Baptist Standard

Abilene, Texas (ABP)—The New Testament book of James compares the tongue to raging fire and a wild beast that cannot be tamed. And the author of that book never was “flamed” on a blog, in a chat room or on a discussion board.

Words have power, whether spoken or written in cyberspace. And Christians do not get a free pass to ignore the Golden Rule when they log on to their computers, according to ethicist Bill Tillman.

“Basic civility and communication etiquette should always be in place for a Christian, no matter the medium,” said Tillman, the T.B. Maston professor of Christian ethics at Hardin-Simmons University's Logsdon Seminary in Abilene, Texas.

“The same guidelines, such as those from James regarding discipline with our tongue, should be translated over to any form of getting words to others or for others,” he emphasized. “Unfortunately, too many in the Christian circles who blog have operated with the guidelines you can find anywhere else in society. Usually, when cultural guidelines are used on format, style and word choice, things move to a lower level of style.”

While self-expression has its place, some bloggers cross the line by focusing more on themselves than on the ideas they are trying to express, Tillman observed.

“I recognize a dynamic at work in some of them that the blogger is so intent on establishing herself or himself as a person of significance and all his or her ideas are so important that the communication comes off as nearly yelling,” he said.

Like any tool, blogging can be used for good or bad purposes, according to David Gushee, distinguished professor of Christian ethics at Mercer University's McAfee School of Theology in Atlanta.

“Blogging at its best represents the democratization of the media,” he acknowledged. “It reflects an entrepreneurial culture in which skill and interest can

override official status, title or position. An effective blogger can have more influence than the evening news.

“Blogging at its worst represents public speech unbound by public standards. It can damage both the blogger and especially the blogged-about. It can also waste enormous amounts of time and can become habitual or even addictive.”

Tillman echoed that theme of time-wasting, but he also acknowledged the potential of blogs as ministry tools.

“There are actually ministry facets that can be addressed through blogging,” he said. But he urged caution—particularly for ministers who blog during office hours.

“Pastors and other ministers often have a great deal of time that is essentially handed to them by a church for the minister's discretionary use,” he noted. “So much is left to the individual's conscience to handle the time and how it's used. With that said, I have to say that from some of the blogging I have read, probably some infringement is done on churches' good will.”

Blogs as a communications medium are neither good nor bad—but they have the capacity for both, Tillman added.

“There is a certain neutrality about the technology and the medium. But, just like fire, it's how it's used that qualifies its ethicality,” he said.

Some characteristics of blogs set them apart as distinctive, such as their potential reach and capacity to allow anonymous expression in a public place. But those traits really just demonstrate the human capacity for good or evil, Gushee observed.

“Like all things human, blogging illustrates the exalted and debased nature of the human person and human community,” he noted. “Moral responsibility involves curbing the damaging dimensions of blogging while elevating those dimensions that contribute to human well-being and the common good.”

PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following Kentucky Baptist missionaries and ministries:

Woodstock food ministry of Eubank Baptist Church. Phyllis Mick coordinates the distribution of food to as many as 150 families each month in Pulaski County. Pray that God will continue to provide the resources necessary to continue this essential ministry. Pray that it will be effective as volunteers minister to the spiritual needs of the people who receive food.

NAMB missionaries Charles and Margie Wilson of Wheelwright. The Wilsons direct the Wheelwright Baptist Center and have developed many ministries designed to meet the physical and spiritual needs of the small Appalachian community. Ministries include food and clothing distribution, sewing classes, home repair, sports camps, senior adults, kids clubs and a deaf ministry. Pray that God will open the eyes of the many volunteers this summer to see how they can partner long term in this ministry. Pray, too, that God will lead the Wilsons to discover additional ways to reach the lost and hurting people of Floyd County with the gospel.

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

■ **CADIZ**—New Hope Church will hold revival services May 30-June 1 with **Delton Beall**, pastor of Southside Church in Princeton, as evangelist. **Gary Snyder** is pastor.

■ **CLINTON**—Obion Church will hold tent revival services in downtown Columbus June 2-6, 7 p.m., with **Larry Fraser** as evangelist. **Jerry Rollins** is pastor.

■ **FREDONIA**—**Jason Landreth** recently resigned as pastor of White Sulphur Church.

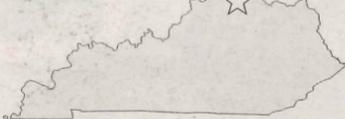
■ **HARRODSBURG**—**Jack Geurin**, retired director of missions of Mercer County Association and long-time Kentucky Baptist pastor, died May 14. He was 72. Geurin was DOM of Mercer Association from 2002-2006 and served as a pastor for more than 50 years. Among others, Geurin was pastor at New Hope Church, Cornishville Church and Bethel Church, all in Harrodsburg, as well as churches in Indiana, Missouri and Tennessee. He was a graduate of Campbellsville University and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. Geurin is survived by his wife, Mary, three children and seven grandchildren. Funeral services were held May 17 at Harrodsburg Church and Elm Grove Church in Murray.

■ **LEITCHFIELD**—First Church recently called **David Martin** as pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Cloverleaf Church will host **Brian Free and Assurance** in concert May 30, 7 p.m. For more information, call (502) 367-0218. **Geoffrey Lacefield** is pastor.

Spotlight on ...

DeMossville



Unity Church will host an Answers in Genesis conference June 1, 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., featuring **Terry Mortenson**, international creation speaker and scholar. **Bobby Barnes** is pastor.

Valley View Church will host its second annual Car & Bike Show June 7, 8 a.m. The cost to register a vehicle for the show is \$10. For more information, call (502) 933-0408.

■ **OWENSBORO**—First Church recently called **Wesley Dunn** as recreation minister. **Paul Strahan** is pastor.

■ **SOMERSET**—High Street Church will install **Ed Amundson** as pastor June 1, 3:30 p.m. **Paul Chitwood**, pastor of First Church of Mount Washington, will preach the installation service.

■ **WILLIAMSBURG**—Pleasant View Church recently called **Michael Floyd** as pastor.

What's going on?

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



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May

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.

15-17 Express Mission Adventure Camp for Girls & Boys, Cedar Crest.

18-20 Acteens Camp, Cedar Crest.

20-21 Acteens Splash, Girls in Action Overnight, Mother/Daughter Overnight, Jonathan Creek.

20-21 Mother/Daughter Overnight, Cedar Crest.

21-28 Kentucky Changers, Maysville.

22-29 All-State Youth Choir/Orchestra Tour, Murray.

23-26 Girls in Action Camp, Cedar Crest.

27-28 Mother/Daughter Overnight, Cedar Crest.

28 Baptist Nursing Fellowship Summer Luncheon, Baptist Building, Louisville.

30-7/3 Girls in Action Camp, Cedar Crest.

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

Ky. Baptist disaster relief teams respond to flooding in Northeast

Frenchville, Maine—The Kentucky Baptist Convention has mobilized disaster relief volunteers in response to recent flooding that caused damage in Frenchville, Maine, near the Canadian border.

According to Coy Webb, KBC's disaster relief associate, teams of volunteers arrived on site May 22 and 26 and will continue working through the end of the month.

Both teams will be working in

the area to assist with the mud-out effort. Webb noted that volunteer workers are still needed in the affected area.

Trained volunteers interested in helping can contact the KBC's Baptist Men on Mission department at (502) 489-3527, or toll free in Kentucky at (866) 489-3527 for more information.

To learn more about Kentucky Baptist disaster relief efforts, visit www.kybaptist.org/dr.

CLASSIFIED ADS

AVAILABLE: Recently retired minister for interim pastor, supply speaker, Louisville area. D.Min. Southern Seminary, 1977. Dennis Plank, (502) 326-9050.

FREE: 22 solid wood padded pews, 12 feet long. Available late July. Phone (270) 497-4522.

SEEKING: A passionate, conservative bivocational minister who is committed to serving youth. Individual should have the skills and drive for planning, coordinating, conducting and evaluating all youth-based activities and department personnel. The candidate must have a true love for ministering to youth while standing on God's Word, and the capacity to work with parents to reach the full potential of each youth. If God has challenged you in this capacity, this may be where God is calling you to serve. If interested in the 20 hours/week paid position, please send cover letter, resumé and CD of recent teaching to: Youth Minister Committee, Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, PO Box 40, Smith Mills, KY 42457.

SEEKING: Full-time senior pastor, Owingsville Baptist Church. Conservative congregation (120 average attendance) with recent building project. Looking for a pastor with a heart for reaching the lost, for teaching the truth, and for loving and caring for God's people. Currently enjoying blended worship and growing opportunities for outreach. Send resumé to Sandy Davis, 169 Mariella Drive, Owingsville, KY 40360.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor. Excellent opportunity for conservative, Bible-based, energetic, enthusiastic man of God to serve a loving, talented, mission-minded congregation. Blended worship; active participation in children's, youth and senior programs; tremendous opportunity for visitation, outreach and growth. With a small-town setting (located in central Kentucky, one hour south of Louisville), parsonage is provided. If you feel God's lead, please send resumé, DVD/CD or tape, and e-mail before June 30 to: Pastor Search, Upton Baptist Church, PO Box 130, Upton, KY 42784. E-mail: SJCottrell@windstream.net.

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: Full-time pastor for Providence First Baptist Church, 214 South Broadway, Providence, Ky. Send resumé to Mr. Ray Gobin, 214 Benjamin Terrace, Providence, KY 42450.

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 pastor for Gap Creek Baptist Church, a conservative member of the Cumberland Gap Baptist Association in Claiborne County, Tenn. Experience preferred. Gap Creek has an active membership of over 300 and is growing. If possible, send a CD or DVD of your sermon, along with a resumé, to Gap Creek Baptist Church, PO Box 177, Arthur, TN 37707, Attn: Troy Poore. You may e-mail your resumé to trpoore@hotmail.com; or fax to (423) 869-8777.

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 resumé 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: Full-time, Spirit-filled, God-called youth director for vibrant, growing body of believers with 60 to 70 youth, dedicated parents and congregation with exceptional support. Full job description available upon request. Mail resumé to Youth Director Search Committee, Buck Creek Baptist Church, 3788 US Highway 431 North, Calhoun, KY 42327; or bcyouth@bellsouth.net. Deadline is June 30.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Friendship Baptist Church in Irvine, Ky. Please send resumé to Pulpit Committee, Friendship Baptist Church, 124 South Hudson Ave., Irvine, KY 40336.

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: Fern Creek Child Development Center is now accepting resúmes 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. Resúmes must be received by May 30.

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.

One year later, Falwell's sons continue father's legacy

By Adelle Banks
Religion News Service

Lynchburg, Va. (RNS)—More than a year after his father's death, Jonathan Falwell walks up and down the stage of Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Va., with a series of briefcases behind him like the set for NBC's "Deal or No Deal." There is no pulpit in sight; Falwell prefers visuals to reach his growing flock.

The night before, his older brother, Jerry Falwell Jr., president of nearby Liberty University, hosted a picnic and fireworks for graduating seniors at his farm 30 miles from campus.

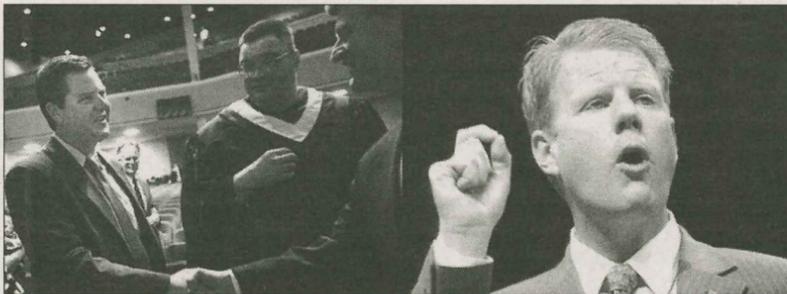
More than a year after their larger-than-life father died at age 73, the brothers Falwell have each inherited one of his dual roles of pastor and educator—and each is doing it from the perspective of the next generation.

"Literally, it's like God split him right down the middle and gave certain parts of his skills and abilities to Jerry and others to me," said Jonathan, 41, who assumed his father's pulpit at Thomas Road a month after his father's death May 15, 2007.

Both sons lead ministries that have grown in the last year. Attendance at Thomas Road has increased and enrollment is higher at the evangelical school. They give credit to God and their late father for the positive growth, but they also acknowledged the challenges of following his five decades of ministry.

The toughest part, both agreed, was simply stepping into their dad's roles in the midst of their grief. Preaching that first Sunday after his father's death was difficult, Jonathan recalled.

"I served with Dad for 14 years on staff but there's just this huge, exponential jump from an associate pastor to the senior pastor of a church this size," said the energetic, red-



IN CAPABLE HANDS Left: Jerry Falwell Jr. (left), chancellor of Liberty University, greets Robert Iger, president and CEO of the Walt Disney Co., after services at Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Va. Right: Jonathan Falwell preaches at the megachurch founded by his father, the late Jerry Falwell. (RNS photos by Kim Raff)

haired younger son.

"And Dad, honestly with what he did, he made it look easy and unfortunately, he never told us that it wasn't."

Jerry Jr., the dark-haired, 45-year-old son, expressed similar sentiments after working behind the scenes for two decades at the school his father founded in 1971.

"To suddenly lose Dad and then become the CEO of the largest private university in Virginia was traumatic to say the least," he noted. "I was immediately thrust into a position where the rabbit had to climb the tree."

The numbers bear out the sons' successes.

About 12,000 worshippers attend Sunday services at Thomas Road's main sanctuary each week, an increase of about 2,000 from a year ago. If satellite locations are included, the numbers total 17,000.

At Liberty, on-campus enrollment increased from 9,600 in the 2006-2007 school year, to 10,400 this academic year. Fall enrollment, which has been capped for the first time, is projected at 11,300. Liberty's online distance learning program has reached 27,000 students, exceeding the elder Falwell's goal of 25,000.

Revenues grew from \$147 million in 2006 to \$232 million in 2007.

Jonathan said he initially felt guilty about the church's growth. "Why is God pouring out all these blessings now?" he wondered. But he said the congregation realized they no longer could rely on his father to carry out its evangelistic mission.

"I told them this: You better not leave it up to me because I don't have the gifts my dad had," Jonathan recalled. "I think our people have risen to the occasion and decided, you know what? Yeah, we want to reach the world but it's going to take all of us to do it."

Jerry Jr., the businessman in the family who speaks with a gentle Virginia drawl, attributed the growth to the ability of each son to have full-time leadership of one of the two ministries.

"I don't see how Dad did it all," said the older son, who had to quickly trade in "khakis and Crocs" for business suits for his new public appearances.

Scott Thumma, a megachurch scholar and sociologist of religion at Hartford Seminary in Connecticut, said both men—after apprenticing under their father—are maintaining some traditions while infus-

ing both ministries with a sense of "youthfulness."

"They had a solid reputation, both the church and the school, for a long time," Thumma noted, "but Jerry was getting older and had appealed to a different time and different people."

Church members and ministry insiders alike expressed some surprise at how well the congregation is thriving.

"Friends of the Falwells and of the ministry would have predicted that the university will do just fine, the church may struggle some, because the church's identity ... was so wrapped up in the identity of Jerry Falwell," explained Mark DeMoss, a trustee of the university and long-time Falwell family friend.

"I don't know a single person that is not surprised by the developments at that church."

Neither son seems worried about the future. Both have sketched out big plans for the years ahead, with Jonathan hoping to start 500 churches nationally and send 500 missionaries in the next five years. Jerry Jr. has plans for a new campus bookstore, a student activity center and athletic fields.

Even as they move ahead, the memories of their father are not far away. His presence is still felt in the empire he built in Lynchburg. During the morning service at Thomas Road, Jonathan announced that a 12-minute sermon recorded in the months before his father's death would be broadcast at an upcoming service.

The sermon title? "Three Truths for the Next Generation."

"Friends, we are the next generation," Jonathan told his congregation. "Dad will be preaching to us next Sunday night so we want you to be here for that."

"Literally, it's like God split (the late Jerry Falwell) right down the middle and gave certain parts of his skills and abilities to Jerry (Falwell Jr.) and others to me."

Jonathan Falwell, son of the late Jerry Falwell

Warren discusses drive to bring '40 Days of Purpose' to NYC

Lake Forest, Calif. (RNS)—Pastor Rick Warren, leader of Saddleback Community Church in Lake Forest, Calif., and author of "The Purpose Driven Life," continues to extend his brand, planting his concept for how people can live out "God's purpose" across the globe.

Warren recently returned from Africa, where members of his megachurch have been involved in grassroots efforts related to his "P.E.A.C.E." plan that promotes reconciliation, equips leaders, assists the poor, cares for the sick and educates the next generation.

Following previous events in Chattanooga, Tenn., and Orlando, Warren, 54, says he will lead a citywide "40 Days of Purpose" campaign in New York City, where he said this fall, Christian New Yorkers will fan out in small groups to paint schools and clean up parks.

Your staff just completed training for your citywide "40 Days of Purpose" in New York City. Where did this come from?

I spoke at a retreat with about 300 pastors in January from New York City and they invited me to do it.

Given that you've done this as a national strategy in Uganda and Rwanda, what is the difference between a "purpose-driven" nation,

a "purpose-driven" city and a "purpose-driven" life?

It's just in the scope of how many people are exposed to the concepts.

The idea behind "40 Days of Purpose" is that the pastor teaches on it so you hear it, then you read about it every day, then you discuss it in a small group and then you memorize a Bible verse about it and then you do a project with a group of other people.

By (using those) five ways, we find that people's spiritual maturity was growing a whole lot faster than if I just taught a series of messages on it. That was the idea of multiple reinforcement.

(Since 2002,) 31,000 churches in America—31,000—have done "40 Days of Purpose." That's one out of every 10 churches in America. Two thousand churches in the Philippines, 1,000 in Australia, about 800 in the United Kingdom. A group of churches said, "Why don't we do this together as a city?"

It seems like New York City would almost need a superhero to achieve any kind of biblically based plan. Is Gotham more challenging for you than other places?

I think it's more challenging. I

think it's more exciting. I think it's more strategic. New York is not one city. It's a nation in itself.

In the past, some churches have questioned some of the "Purpose-Driven" strategies—including growth and marketing tools and contemporary worship. Are there still some congregations that embrace the "Purpose-Driven" concept while others dispute it?

Absolutely. First place, a lot of the complaints about "40 Days of Purpose" aren't really about "40 Days of Purpose." They confuse it with contemporary worship.

They confuse it with how to structure your church. Those things actually have nothing to do with "40 Days of Purpose." "40 Days of Purpose" and Purpose-Driven is about how do I live the five reasons God put me on this planet.

When you were at the White House in December, you vowed that the church is "here to stay" on the issue of HIV/AIDS. But do you think that many church groups are more interested in short-term commitment to Africa rather than something long term?

The entire nation, the entire culture has ADD (attention deficit disor-

der). Most people don't commit to anything long term.

The P.E.A.C.E. plan is 100 times more complex than the traditional ways to do mission. I'm willing to go slow at it in order to get the long-term benefits. If you're going to do long term, you have to start at the lowest level. You start at the village level, not at the top level.

You've gotten invitations from Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda. Do you have other nations in mind for the same program?

We've had invitations from Guatemala, from the Philippines and ... other countries saying, "Could we be next?" In the last four years, I've sent out 7,766 of our members to 68 countries.

And what about the United States? You are at the city level rather than a national one for this current "40 Days of Purpose" campaign. Is it harder to get people involved in your efforts in this country than abroad?

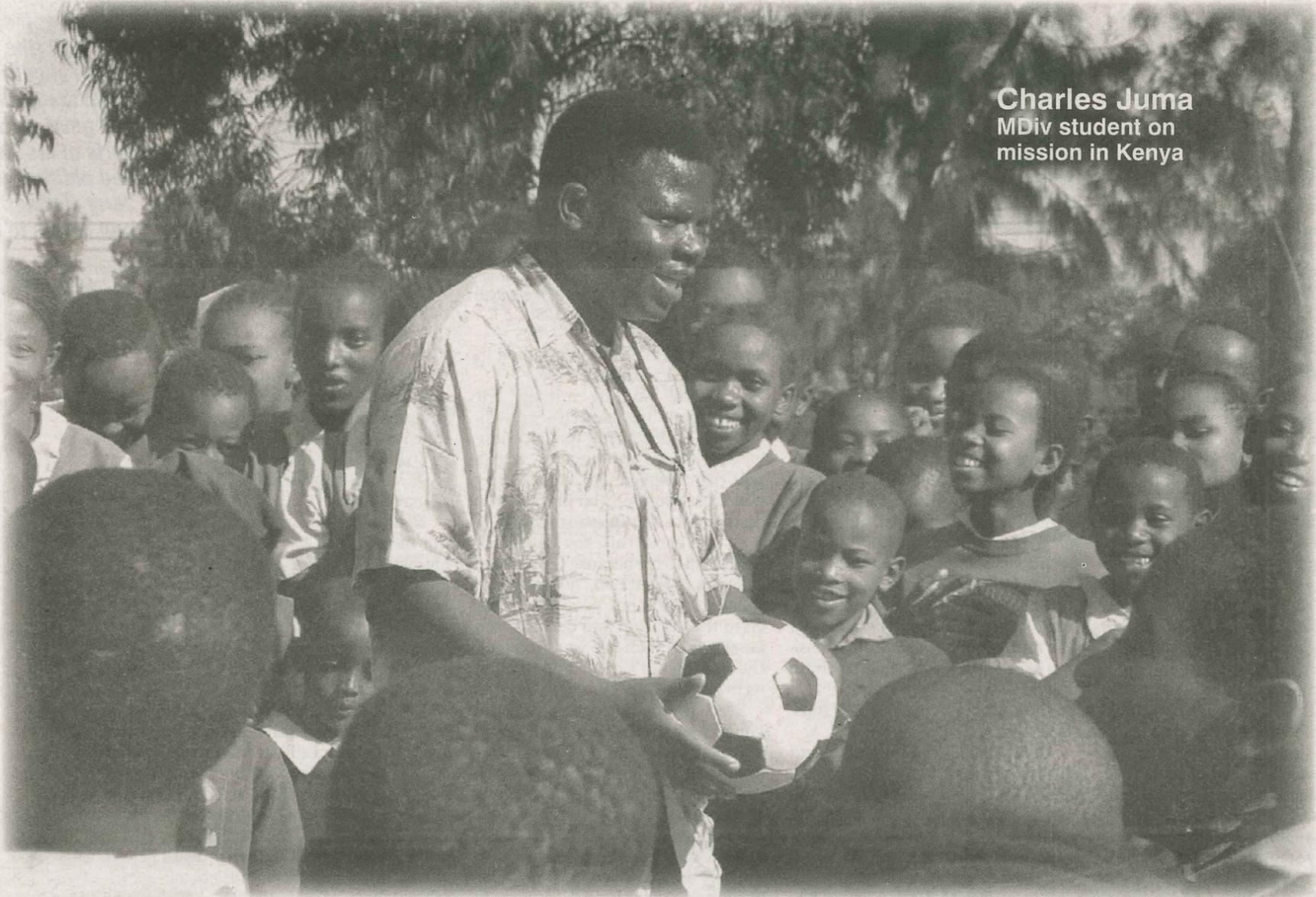
Well, no. Rwanda only has 10 million people, so doing a national level in Rwanda is like doing a city level in New York City. We've already had 31,000 churches in America. You could say it's been pretty national. They mention it on "The Office." They mention it on Colbert."



Rick Warren

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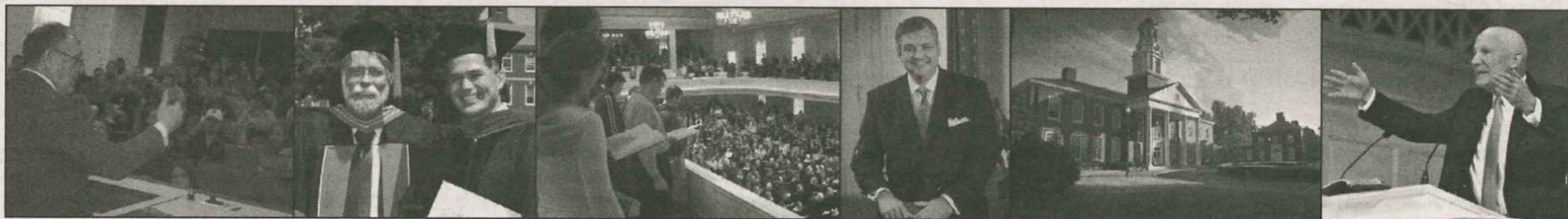
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