

September 23, 2008
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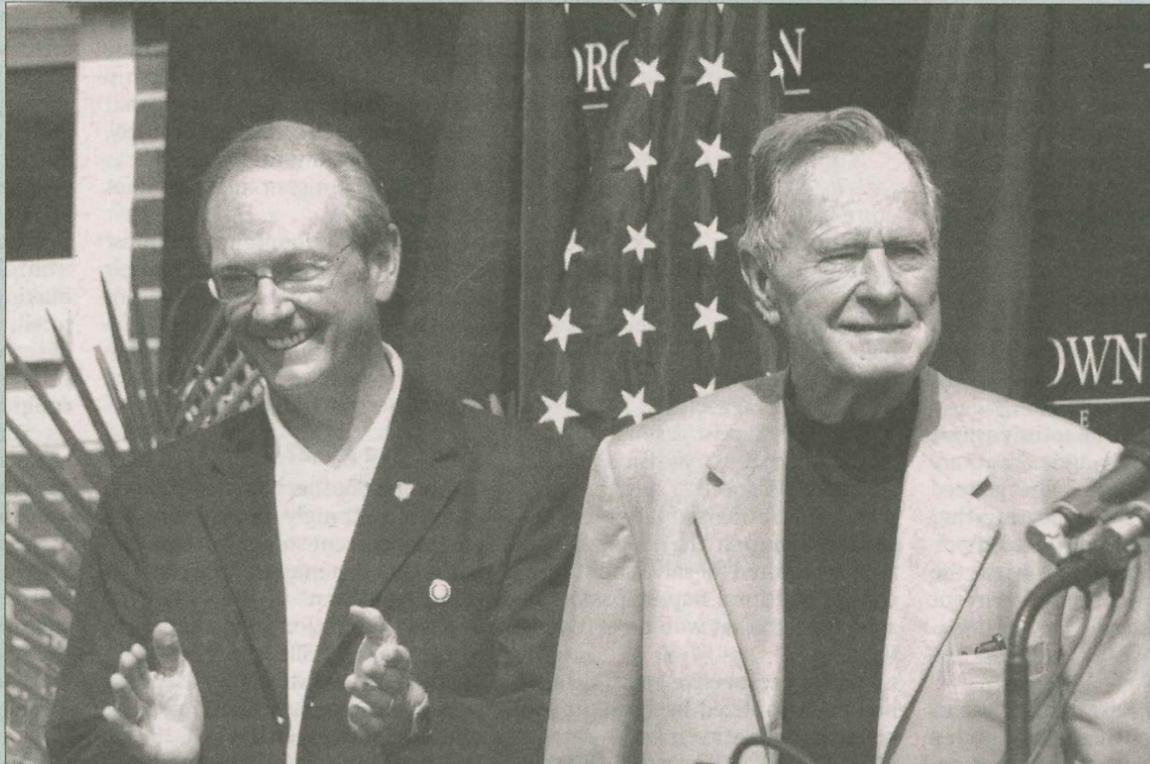
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Georgetown welcomes former President Bush



Georgetown College President William Crouch applauds former U.S. President George H.W. Bush shortly after unveiling the new name of the school's fitness center—the George H.W. Bush Center for Fitness—last week at the Central Kentucky campus. Georgetown College honored the nation's 41st president in recognition for his support of The First Tee Scholars program, which offers students who participated in The First Tee program—a partnership of the PGA of America and the World Golf Foundation—to obtain scholarships for college. Both President Bush and Crouch serve on the board of directors for The First Tee and have played golf together on several occasions. The former president stopped in Georgetown on his way to last weekend's Ryder Cup tournament in Louisville. Bush was joined at the naming ceremony by PGA of America President Brian Whitcomb, PGA Tour Commissioner Tim Finchem and Georgetown College's seven First Tee Scholars. *Story and more photos on page 6.* (Photo by Drew Nichter)

Americans believe divine intervention more powerful than medicine, poll says

Storrs, Conn. (RNS)—A majority of Americans believe that divine intervention can trump doctors' advice in end-of-life cases, according to a recent report published in Archives of Surgery.

The study, conducted by researchers at the University of Connecticut, found that 57 percent of adults believe in the possibility of a miracle even after doctors have told them a family member's life cannot be saved. Just 20 percent of trauma professionals felt divine intervention could save a patient.

"Regarding medical futility, the results indicate that physicians can be reasonably sure they are trusted to make those decisions. However, they need to be prepared to deal with families who are waiting for a miracle," the report concluded.

The study was conducted in 2005, just months after the public debate over whether to remove the feeding tube of Terri Schiavo, a Florida woman whom doctors concluded was in a persistent vegetative state.

Although 61 percent of respondents said that "a person in a persistent vegetative state could be saved by a miracle," only 11 percent said that they would prefer to be kept alive if given the choice.

Nearly 400 accept Christ during four-day crusade in Campbellsville

Campbellsville Univ. students respond in droves to God's call

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

Campbellsville—The town of Campbellsville is abuzz after seeing nearly 400 conversions last week during a crusade and other appearances by evangelists Rick Gage and Rick Stanley.

Many new Christians are teens or college students, including nearly 165 at Campbellsville University who responded to altar calls during Gage's talks there.

In addition, 132 accepted an invitation to follow Christ last Wednesday. The finale of the four-day crusade was billed as "Youth Emphasis Night."

"We had to put counselors with groups of people," recalled Skip Alexander, pastor of Campbellsville Baptist Church, one of about 25 area congregations sponsoring the crusade. "I was counseling five at a time."

In addition to the community and campus activity, Stanley spoke to inmates at the Marion Adjustment Center in Saint Mary, where 43 inmates accepted Jesus as their

Savior.

While follow up will take weeks, it began Sunday, when a large group of students and other recent converts were baptized at Green River State Park. Taylor County Baptist Association churches sponsored the outdoor ceremony.

The most fervent reaction to Gage's university appearances involved 134 freshmen at a First Class assembly Sept. 15. First Class is a required course for incoming students that teaches character, leadership and stewardship. All but about 10 decisions were first-time commitments to Christ, according to Campbellsville theology professor Ted Taylor.

Outpouring of faith

"This was not a hyper-emotional event," Taylor indicated. "Gage spoke for 20 minutes, extended an invitation and before we knew it, we had 134 students at the altar."

"He spent the next 10 minutes trying to talk them out of it, to make sure they were serious. We took them outside for counseling and talked to them again, and tried to talk them out of it again."

About 40 more students answered an invitation for salvation two days later, when Gage addressed a campus-wide assembly.

"We use the mantra: 'Find your calling,'" said John Chowning, the university's vice president for church and external relations. "Certainly for those who made first-time professions of faith, that's the first step in finding your calling."

Although the university is affiliated with the Kentucky Baptist Convention, Alexander (also a university trustee) explained that embracing Christian beliefs is not necessary for admission. And that makes the Sept. 15 outpouring that much more exciting, he noted, adding that the converts represented nearly 30 percent of the freshman class of 448.

"In my ministry I don't know that I've ever seen a third of anyone committing their life to Christ," Alexander recalled. "Especially this generation, which (demographer George) Barna describes as suspicious of Christianity."

The activity on campus spread over the town as well. During assemblies at area schools the first half of the week, Stanley spoke about making wise choices while relating some of his experiences as Elvis Presley's stepbrother.

Gage followed up by inviting students to the "world's largest pizza party" on Wednesday evening. Some 350 pizzas were served at the foot-

□ See Georgetown names ... Page 3



CRUSADER Evangelist Rick Gage speaks to students from Campbellsville University's First Class program last week. School officials reported that 134 of the freshman in attendance accepted Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior at the Sept. 15 event, representing nearly 30 percent of Campbellsville's entire incoming freshman class. Gage led a community-wide crusade in Taylor County last week, which saw nearly 400 people come to Christ. (Photo by André Tomaz)

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, September 24.

LifeWay survey examines Calvinism, church leadership

By Mark Kelly
Baptist Press

Nashville—New research into several questions that often dominate Southern Baptist debates—from the rise of Calvinism and prevalence of elders in congregations to speaking in tongues and baptism practices—offers some hard numbers to inform those discussions.

LifeWay Research conducted the study last spring of 778 Southern Baptist pastors. The issues in question—and the results uncovered by the survey, show that Southern Baptists have strong opinions in several areas.

LifeWay Research previously had reported a sharp rise in the number of self-identified five-point Calvinists among recent seminary graduates. In a related question, LifeWay Research asked Southern Baptist pastors if they were “concerned” about this increase.

Among Southern Baptist pastors, 27 percent strongly agreed and another 36 percent somewhat agreed with the statement indicating that they were “concerned.” Sixteen percent strongly disagreed with the statement and another 17 percent somewhat disagreed.

Prayer language

In a LifeWay Research release in 2007, half of Southern Baptist pastors answered “yes” to the question, “Do you believe that the Holy Spirit gives some people the gift of a special language to pray to God privately? Some people refer to this as a private prayer language or the ‘private use of tongues.’” In a follow up to that question, LifeWay found that practice is much less common than

the belief in its existence. Among Southern Baptist pastors, only 4 percent said they “personally speak in tongues or have a private prayer language,” while 95 percent said they did not.

Pastors also were asked about their church’s practice of receiving members who were baptized in other churches. The question was, “Our church admits people into membership of our church who have been sprinkled or baptized in the following ways (without requiring baptism in our local church).”

A full 92 percent of Southern Baptist pastors said they would not require baptism of new members who were immersed after conversion in another church that has the same beliefs as a Southern Baptist church. If the prospective new member had been immersed after conversion in another church that does not believe in eternal security, 26 percent of Southern Baptist pastors said they would not require baptism.

If the prospective new member had been immersed after conversion in a church that believes baptism is required for salvation, 13 percent of Southern Baptist pastors responded that they would not require baptism.

If the prospective new member had been baptized by sprinkling or pouring after conversion, 3 percent of Southern Baptist pastors said they would not require baptism prior to admittance into membership.

If the prospective new member had been baptized as an infant by sprinkling, pouring or immersion, only 1 percent of Southern Baptist pastors said they would not require baptism.

“Baptism is always an important question for a denomination that values baptism so much that the word ‘Baptist’ is included in their name,” according to Ed Stetzer, director of LifeWay Research. “The results here are interesting. First, there is a small percentage of SBC churches that do not accept the baptism from other SBC (or like-belief) churches. Second, more than one-fourth of SBC pastors indicate they would receive into membership someone baptized in a church that does not believe in eternal security, possibly including such churches as a Free Will Baptist or an Assemblies of God church.

“Finally, and I am guessing most surprising, one-eighth indicate their church would accept a baptism from churches that believe baptism is required for salvation, possibly including such churches as a Church of Christ,” Stetzer added.

What’s in a name?

Among Southern Baptist pastors, 7 percent strongly agreed—and another 20 percent somewhat agreed—with the statement, “Having the name ‘Southern’ in the ‘Southern Baptist Convention’ is a hindrance to the work of SBC churches.” Forty-one percent strongly disagreed with the statement while 27 percent somewhat disagreed.

To further clarify opinions on the denomination’s name, Southern Baptist pastors also were asked their level of agreement with the statement, “Having the name ‘Southern’ in the ‘Southern Baptist Convention’ is a hindrance to the work of SBC churches outside of the South.” As the focus shifted to Southern Bap-

tist congregations outside the convention’s historic strongholds, 16 percent of Southern Baptist pastors strongly agreed and 26 percent somewhat agreed, while 29 percent strongly disagreed and 21 percent somewhat disagreed.

In a related study conducted in 2007 among Southern Baptist pastors, LifeWay Research asked, “Which of the following best describes the primary decision-making process at your church?” Among those polled, 42 percent said their church was congregation-led, while 30 percent said their church was pastor-led.

“I think some will be surprised that so few SBC churches actually utilize elders to lead the decision-making process,” said Scott McConnell, associate director of LifeWay Research. “Southern Baptist pastors primarily see their church as either congregational- or pastor-led.

“For the purpose of this study, pastors indicated who led their church’s ‘primary decision-making process,’ which is not the same as ‘final authority,’” McConnell noted. “So some may be pastor-led while still requiring the approval of the congregation or other groups of leaders.”

When the survey results were sorted by average primary worship attendance, a significant difference was evident in the primary decision-making process. The larger the church, the less likely it was to be congregation-led. While the congregation may still be a part of the decision-making process in those churches, the leadership of this process shifted toward smaller leadership groups.

Alabama Baptists celebrate CP milestone

By Keith Hinson
Alabama Baptist Convention

Montgomery, Ala. (BP)—Churches affiliated with the Alabama Baptist Convention set a milestone Sept. 8, recording \$1 billion in gifts through the Cooperative Program since the Southern Baptist Convention’s unified budget was founded in 1925.

Rick Lance, executive director of the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, announced the record on his blog.

“Sept. 8 was in so many ways a normal and routine occasion,” Lance recalled. “I was in the office on the phone, answering e-mails and doing consultations, when our associate executive director, Bobby DuBois, came into my office with a big, broad smile. He said, ‘We made it. We have reached the \$1-billion dollar mark.’”

DuBois, who is the state board’s chief financial officer, had been tracking progress toward the billion-dollar goal in cumulative CP receipts for several years.

“We are blessed with some great churches in Alabama,” DuBois noted. “Some are pacesetters in the number of dollars given to missions, while others lead the way in per capita giving or giving as a percentage of undesignated receipts. The bottom line is clear: The reaching of this milestone is the result of Alabama Baptist churches of all sizes and geographic locations cooperating together to reach the world for Christ. No single church in Alabama could have achieved this goal alone, but together we have.”

The Alabama convention’s approach to Cooperative Program is a “pure” approach, Lance

observed, treating “an undesignated dollar as a Cooperative Program dollar.”

“The entire dollar is allocated and distributed according to CP percentages adopted by messengers to our annual meeting, with no preferred funding or other expenses taken ‘off the top,’” he said. Alabama, he pointed out, does not have a state missions offering.

“Our professional staff, known as state missionaries, has only one funding source we promote from which the State Board of Missions benefits: Cooperative Program,” he said. “The good news is, of course, that a variety of Alabama Baptist and Southern Baptist ministries likewise benefit when we as state missionaries promote giving through the Cooperative Program.”

Lance, who has led Alabama Baptists since 1998, often says, “We have one mission, the Great Commission; one program, the Cooperative Program; many ministries, Great Commission ministries.”

“We’ve kept the emphasis simple,” he explained. “We focus on the Great Commission supported by the Cooperative Program.”

Roger Willmore, president of the Alabama Baptist State Convention and pastor of Deerfoot Baptist Church in Trussville, Ala., acknowledged the role of missions-minded Baptists in past decades.

“We owe a significant part of this accomplishment to the faithfulness of Alabama Baptists who have gone before us,” Willmore said. “I pray that our current generation and future generations of Alabama Baptists will continue our heritage as Cooperative Program-supporting Southern Baptists.”

Bilingual resources engage Korean preschoolers, children in missions

Birmingham, Ala.—Leaders of Texas and national WMU formalized their commitment to provide bilingual missions education materials to Korean Southern Baptist Churches by signing a three-year agreement Aug. 28.

The project began in 2007 as a pilot between the state and national WMU organization to meet a specific need in Korean churches for missions education materials printed in both Korean and English for preschoolers and children, according to Carol Causey, missions resource center director for national WMU.

Angela Kim, Korean consultant for both WMU organizations and editorial coordinator for the Korean curriculum project, along with former Texas WMU Executive Director Carolyn Porterfield, presented a proposal and strategic plan to national WMU that outlined the need. After just one year of making these materials available, Mission Friends and Children in Action organizations in Korean churches have grown exponentially.

“Most adults in cultural churches in North America speak their own languages; however, they are limited in English-speaking teachers and usually the first-generation adults with limited English comprehension have to prepare the lessons using English curriculum,” Kim ex-

plained. “WMU has been sensitive to this need and responded with materials for the first-generation teachers (who are) teaching the second generation using both their own language and English.”

The formal agreement calls for Texas WMU to handle logistics, including layout and design, printing and distribution, while national WMU will lend its expertise in curriculum development and help fund the project with a \$10,000 grant.

“We are grateful for our partnership with Texas WMU and for the visionary leadership of Angela Kim,” said national WMU Executive Director Wanda Lee. “The opportunity to couple our expertise in developing missions education materials with her expertise related to needs in Korean churches enables us to provide materials that are culturally relevant and eagerly used.”

Causey said that in addition to preschool and children’s materials, bilingual resources for Korean adults also are being developed.

“National WMU remains committed to expanding missions involvement with emerging audiences and this project provides us with a good model for other bilingual resources,” Causey said. “Our hope is that other states will join us with similar projects to engage a larger multicultural audience in missions.”

KBC churches set CP giving record for third straight year

By Drew Nichter
News Director

Louisville—For the third consecutive year, Cooperative Program receipts from Kentucky Baptist churches reached record levels in 2007-08 as the convention's fiscal year ended Aug. 31.

Congregations across the state gave a total of \$23,867,431 through the Cooperative Program, an increase of \$337,127 (1.4 percent) over the previous year's record total of \$23,530,304.

The final total fell \$132,569 (0.55 percent) behind the KBC's budget goal of \$24 million, which may have been attributed to the unusual circumstances of the final weekend.

With Aug. 31 falling on a Sunday, followed by Labor Day, KBC churches were required to have their final receipts delivered to the convention by Sept. 2. KBC's business services team leader Lowell Ashby said that some churches opted to estimate their final Sunday tallies, while others delivered their checks on the deadline day.

While it is not exactly clear how the final Sunday may have affected final CP totals, a little help from the calendar may have led to a different outcome, according to Billy Compton, KBC's executive associate for Cooperative Program and resources.

"If it hadn't fallen out that the last Sunday was the 31st, we may have exceeded the budget," he said.

Kentucky Baptists also set two other giving records, contributing

more than \$4.4 million to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions and surpassing the \$1-million mark for the Eliza Broadus Offering for State Missions.

Compton applauded the generosity of Kentucky Baptists during a fiscal year which included a great deal of financial turmoil and uncertainty.

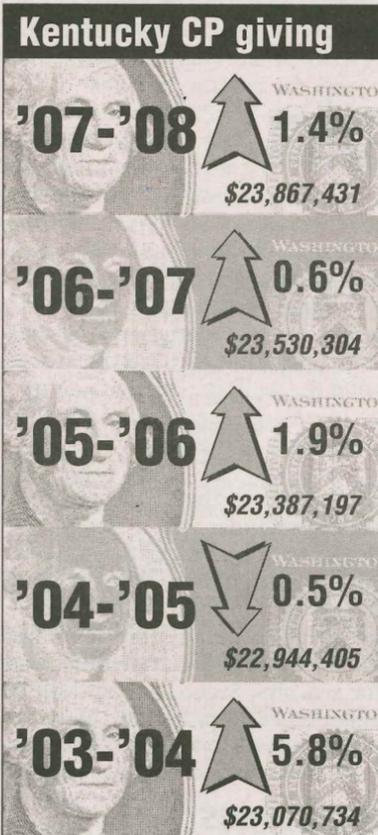
"I think in light of the economic challenges that we're in, I would just have to celebrate the generosity of our churches," he said. "Because as a former pastor, I understand the challenges that churches face in meeting the needs of their ministries (and) churches have been faithful to help us have such a generous year."

Promoting CP

Compton, who took on the role of promoting the Cooperative Program for the KBC in January, noted that although the budget goal for 2007-08 was not reached, his objective remains to keep the impact of CP front and center to meet and exceed future budget goals.

"Obviously, you can't celebrate the same impact as you could if you reached the budget goal," he explained. "The concern would be only that we help churches understand where these dollars are ministering and that we put the challenge out there in the coming years to reach that budget."

Among other offerings during the fiscal year:



■ The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering total of \$4,435,031 was an increase of \$172,623 (4 percent) over the previous year's record of \$4,262,408.

■ The Eliza Broadus Offering total of \$1,105,723 was \$113,027 (11.4 percent) above the previous year's total of \$992,696. It was the first time in the offering's history that it has exceeded \$1 million.

■ The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions totaled \$1,970,431, an increase of \$132,241 (7.2 percent) over the previous year's tally of \$1,838,190

■ Restricted Kentucky Only gifts designated specifically for Kentucky Baptist-related ministries declined for the fifth straight year. The designated gifts totaled \$369,020, a dip of \$50,215 (12 percent) from the previous year's total of \$419,235.

Ashby noted that while RKO gifts have declined significantly in recent years, it likely is an indication that churches are giving more through the Cooperative Program. "If they're going to give outside their walls, they'll do it through CP," he said.

Ashby also pointed out that Mission Board staff members held expenses under total revenues, despite being on a "spendable budget" throughout much of the year. The belt tightening came after a sluggish start to the fiscal year last September when CP receipts fell 37.1 percent behind budget.

The budget goal for 2008-09 is unchanged from last year's goal of \$24 million. Ashby said he is confident that Kentucky Baptists will set yet another CP giving record.

"We should see our first year over \$24 million, if we don't see a downturn in giving," he noted. "Our folks have been extremely faithful to absorb what they have this year and still have a record CP. ... Hopefully, we'll be looking at \$25 million before too long."

Town of Campbellsville still buzzing after community-wide crusade

Continued from page 1

ball stadium that night to a crowd of more than 3,500, marking the largest religious gathering in the history of Taylor County.

Alexander said he was excited about the entire week, especially the university, which saw the largest wave of salvations in its history.

"I was there and I saw life change in this generation that will affect the rest of their years," he noted. "I saw future missionaries that were saved, future pastors, editors and industrial leaders who will be Christians and go on to do great things."

The pastor said First Class, which includes small-group mentoring sessions during the week, provides the perfect avenue for follow up and discipleship.

Taylor, who co-wrote the curriculum, explained that the event was the culmination of six years of preparation that originated with him, Campbellsville University President Michael Carter and several others discussing and designing the course.

In addition, he credited the program's 20 mentors, who began praying for the freshmen last spring.

"There's never a move of God like this without a lot of prayer and preparation," Taylor emphasized. "Not to take away from what Rick did—he shared the gospel and drew the net."

Two first-year mentors were encouraged by the students' reaction to Gage. Senior David Lee of Monroeville, Ala., saw seven of the 22 students in his group accept Christ.

For follow up, Lee said he hopes to take some of them hunting or fishing, encourage group members to stay in touch with each other, and closely monitor his e-mail.

He added that while students often daydream during an assembly, that was not the case last week. He said Gage's background as a former football coach and his commanding presence kept their attention.

"It took me off guard," Lee said of the reaction. "I didn't expect that. God's favor was really on (the assembly) and that's what I've been thanking Him for. God is doing something here. I'm thankful to be a part of this."

Students "weren't ashamed"

Senior Shajuana Ditto said four of 25 members of her group accepted Christ, something she attributed to an urgency to get to know the Savior.

"Freshmen weren't ashamed of going up and having someone pray with them to accept Christ," said Ditto, a native of Brandenburg. "If I could describe it in one word, it was amazing. I'm glad I got to experience it. On Sept. 15, my heart was changed."

A "Tiger Hostess"—a group that gives campus tours to recruits and supports the football team in other ways—Ditto also talked with a number of players and encouraged them to get involved in a church.

Thirty-two football players answered Gage's call, with 30 of them first-time conversions.

As for the long-term impact, Alex-



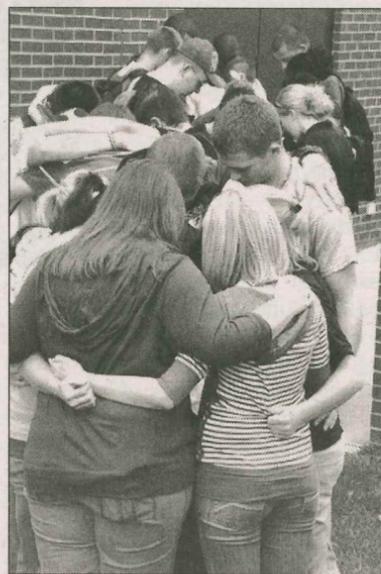
ander would love to see a repeat of the 1970 revival at Asbury College in Wilmore, which ultimately touched people across the nation.

"The tenor of the campus probably changed" Sept. 15, Alexander noted. "Not that it was bad, but you don't have to go to church on Sunday in college. We think it will be a phenomenal difference."

Taylor agreed conditions are ripe for another revival, although after 37 years in ministry he tends to downplay such expectations. Still, he acknowledged what happened last week is impressive.

"This has never happened in the life of the institution and I've been here 15 years," he said. "Can you imagine the impact on the freshman class?"

"The proof's going to be in the pudding. We'll be able to see if this was real by the fruit in people's lives. It could be immeasurable."



GATHERED Freshmen from Campbellsville's First Class program pray together after hearing Rick Gage's message and making decisions for Christ.

ALTAR CALL More than 130 freshman participants of Campbellsville University's First Class program respond to evangelist Rick Gage's call to accept Christ last week at the school's Ransdell Chapel. (Photos by André Tomaz)

WESTERN RECORDER

Box 43969
Louisville, KY 40253
(USPS 679-380)

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

Western Recorder is published weekly by Western Recorder Inc., an agency of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253, except for one week in July and December. For general information, call (502) 489-3535; toll-free (866) 489-3535. Periodicals postage paid at Louisville, Ky.

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POSTMASTER: Send address corrections to: Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253.

To register change of address: Send the mailing label from page 1, along with your new address, to the subscription department at the Western Recorder address.

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Who's in your wallet?

By Ken Weathersby

Alpharetta, Ga. (BP)—In North America, we have the opportunity to impact the world by sharing Christ with our friends and neighbors. Jesus commanded His followers, "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19). The nations have become our neighbors. It is my prayer that every Southern Baptist church, regardless of size, would make a commitment to join with other Southern Baptist churches to embrace the National Evangelism Initiative.

The name of the National Evangelism Initiative is "GPS—God's Plan for Sharing." We need this evangelism initiative to rally Southern Baptists back to our first love of seeing people saved, baptized and disciplined in a New Testament church.

Just imagine if every Southern Baptist church really embraced the vision of preparing God's people to pray, to engage the culture as trained

witnesses, to sow the Good News of Christ, and to baptize (harvest) those who are gathered. We would certainly see revival occurring and perhaps even a spiritual awakening.

FIRST PERSON

Prayer is one of the four "mileposts" along the GPS roadmap and you can start praying right now as part this year's Soul-Winning Commitment Day on Oct. 5. The question being asked this year is "Who's in your wallet?" Southern Baptists across North America will be making commitments to reach out beyond the walls of their local churches to engage the culture with the Good News of the gospel.

Believers will select three people for whom they will pray. Each church member will receive a 3-1-6 prayer card on which three names can be written down. They will carry this card in their wallet or purse as a reminder to pray for these three people at least one time a day for six days. Secondly, they will be encouraged to pray that their relationships will open the door for a

Money-saving tips for tough times

By Judy Woodward Bates

Dora, Ala. (BP)—With fuel prices soaring and real estate foreclosures on the rise, we're living in some pretty scary economic times. As believers, how are we to conduct ourselves? Is there a way to sensibly tighten our money belts and still continue to show generosity? Yes.

Cut back where you can and use the savings to bless others. For starters, here are some simple suggestions:

- When eating out, order ordinary tap water instead of other beverages. For a family of four, this can make an easy difference of around \$400 a year in savings, even if you only dine out once a week.

- Unless you absolutely have to use your cell phone for business purposes, switch to a prepaid minutes plan that has no monthly fee. For \$100, I buy 1,000 minutes and use about 100 a month, which comes

out to \$10.

- Use your GPS or a Web site to find the shortest distance between your home and the places you go. If you discover a route that cuts only two miles each way from your work-week drive, over the course of the year, you'll use two to three less tanks of fuel in the average vehicle. Check your route to school, church and other places, and you may literally find more ways to save.

- Switch to fluorescent lighting throughout your home. Not only will the bulbs themselves use less electricity, they'll also help keep your home cooler, which means less air conditioning expense, because they produce so much less heat than an ordinary light bulb.

- Change your home's heat pump or furnace filter at least every three months. A clean filter means your heating and cooling system doesn't have to work as hard, which trans-

A generous church

In 2 Corinthians 8, the Apostle Paul commended the churches of Macedonia for their generous giving, in part because he considered their generosity a great inspiration for other churches. First Baptist Church of Kuttawa is an inspirational church for the same reason.

I was privileged to speak recently at the church's 125th anniversary celebration that also featured a historical display, a meal for everyone and guest musicians. It was a wonderful time of celebrating the ways that God is working through this vital body of believers.

The church gives 18 percent of its undesignated receipts (a total of \$55,091 this past year) to support missions through the Cooperative Program. Since the Cooperative Program began in 1925, the church has given more than \$666,000, with 44 percent of that having been given in the last seven years.

Undesignated receipts have

grown by 93 percent during the same seven-year period. This has enabled the church to construct a multipurpose building for worship and activities. The members helped to finish the interior of the gym, kitchen and classrooms and had the facility completely paid for within a few weeks of its completion.

The church now is looking to future growth. The members currently are conducting research and praying about the Lord's will concerning the construction of a new sanctuary.

The church also has been generous of its own members. During my visit, I learned that two pastors from First Baptist, Kuttawa, received God's call to international missions. Six couples in the church also are active Kentucky Baptist disaster relief volunteers.

First Baptist, Kuttawa, is having a tremendous impact on its local community. Under the leadership

of Pastor Carl Nelson, the church has grown in Sunday school attendance (an average of 126) and worship attendance (an average of 175). Nelson and his wife, Pam, have served at the church for seven years and God has blessed them in so many ways.

More than 50 youth attend the Wednesday night and Sunday youth activities. The youth minister, Randy Wright, is part time but has an active ministry. His home is very near the high school so his wife prepares breakfast for students on Thursday mornings before school so they can meet for prayer and Bible study.

The Bible study came about at the students' request. It was gratifying to see the church's youth seated down front on the Sunday I attended.

Music Director Bill Allen works with children and preschoolers and has served for about eight years.

I pray that the example of First Baptist Church of Kuttawa will encourage and inspire other church members to support their churches and missions joyfully and generously.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

lates to energy and dollar savings. Keep this on schedule by writing the date on the filter and on your calendar. Depending upon the condition of the filter, you may want to switch to monthly maintenance.

All around us, unbelievers are watching to see how we and our wallets respond to this toughening economic period. Those of us who know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior need to be setting good examples with every aspect of our lives, including our financial management.

James 1:22 reminds us to "be doers of the word and not hearers only." This means that we continue to give our tithes and offerings. It means that we keep shining and sharing the light and love of Jesus and exemplifying confidence in His immeasurable ability to provide for us, regardless of any economic downturn.

Judy Woodward Bates is creator of *Bargainomics*, a Bible-based time and money management philosophy

STEWARDSHIP

Teaching financial stewardship must begin in churches

By Doug Strader

Financial stewardship relates to every person who trusts



Jesus Christ as his or her Savior and Lord. Financial stewardship relates to almost every facet of one's church and home life,

and our daily walk with our Savior. As I noted in a recent article, it is now estimated that less than 3 percent of Christians actually give a tithe through their church. If all Christians tithed, our churches would have four times the amount of money that is now given through the church. What can your church do to encourage more of your members to be better stewards of the resources they have?

- Churches could do a better job of helping people know how to handle their financial resources in a more responsible manner. Consumer debt is one of the biggest problems facing the average American family today; credit cards are a major reason for that problem. Many people are not fiscally responsible enough to manage credit card debt without help.

- If Christians have more than one credit card, it could be best to destroy all but one to keep for emergency use.

- Churches also can set up discipleship groups to discuss financial stewardship ideas. Participants can share how they handle their finances, and how they control their credit card spending.

- Churches also can train some of their people to be financial counselors for fellow church members who are having a difficult time with their debts.

- If the need is great enough, the church can ask a professional money manager or someone from the state convention's stewardship office to lead a money management workshop. Sometimes it is encouraging when people discover they are not alone in their financial stewardship struggles.

- Pastors and other staff members can be a great help to members by being transparent about their own struggles and/or successes.

- Churches can possibly save marriages by helping people cope with financial difficulties which lead to many breakdowns in the home.

- If church members become good money managers they will then be able to give more money through the church for the Lord's work.

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

Healthy marriages thrive on couples' positive interactions

Q: What is some of the latest research in marital happiness or unhappiness? Does anybody really scientifically study these things?

The answer is yes. John and Julie Gottman of the Gottman Institute have what they call a "love lab," where they monitor a couple's blood pressure and vital signs during interactions. They have come up with a 90 percent predictability rate for a couple's likelihood of divorce. They have turned their research into tools for helping couples repair their relationships.

Marriages ending in divorce have less than one positive interaction for every negative interaction. Marriages that thrive have at least five positive interactions for each negative one.

The most harmful negative interactions are called "the four horsemen of the apocalypse." They are: **Criticism.** Rather than approaching the spouse with a specific request for change in a behavior, verbal attacks are used.

Defensiveness. Includes cross-complaining, whining and conversations that do not take requests to heart, but turn them back on the other person.

Contempt. Includes criticism infected with hostility, disgust or belligerence.

Stonewalling. This sometimes is the last sign of a dying relationship. No verbal or physical cues are given that communicate anything.

Approaches that help repair a negative relationship include:

Softened start-up. The first few seconds of an interaction are the most important. It helps to start the conversation with kindness and respect.

Turning towards. Includes openness either in the approach or the response.

Repairing the conversation. By using such things as an apology, a smile or humor.

Accepting influence from the other person. This is especially helpful when the husband accepts influence from his wife. It opens up space in the relationship, removes defensiveness and criticism, and clears a path for progress.—James Stillwell

Q: What do you tell your kids during lean economic times?

"It's the economy, stupid." Bill Clinton made that phrase famous during his presidential campaign. Fast forward a few years and even our children are aware that times are tough and money is tight for many families. So, how should parents respond?

First and foremost, shield your child from financial stress as much as possible. Children can be aware that the family budget is being stretched in new ways, but they do not need to face the same pressures as parents.

Financial realities may make it necessary to cut back on extra-curricular activities. Keep these discussions positive and use them to teach your children that life involves making choices and that we cannot always do everything we would like to do or have everything we would like to have.

Writing in USA Weekend, Sharon Epperson suggests starting a family savings jar for special wants and events, and also challenging children to come up with money-saving ideas. Looking for deals and coupons and taking advantage of free resources, such as libraries and parks, can become family fun.

Continue to be faithful in giving. Lean times provide a wonderful opportunity to practice and teach the importance of depending on God instead of on the dollar bill. Express your confidence in God's ability to know and meet your family's needs, and give thanks when He does so in specific ways, whether large or small.—David Garrard

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Political participation is key for Christians

In less than 50 days, Americans will go to the polls to elect the next President of the United States. It is time Christians faced some realities and do the best we can with what we have.

First, we must remember that our Kingdom is not of this world. That is a heavier thought than most believe. We live "in this world" but we are not "of this world." It is easy to forget that when we consider that some of our old-age income is managed by the government of this world. Of course, all of us have our own wellbeing in mind all the time. So, the government of this world weighs heavily on our minds. Nonetheless, the Scriptures remind us that our Kingdom is eternal; governments are temporary.

Second, we have to remind ourselves that we live in this world and God uses the governments here to give us order to our living. Therefore, we need to pay attention to what is happening and participate in the ways that we can. This means to vote, contribute and be a good citizen. Because our government is secular, we are not always pleased by what happens, but we need to offer our input when we have the opportunity. This means we ought to vote.

Third, we must realize that the political world is not the world of the church (which is the body of Christ). Politicians want to be elected. They often will say anything they believe will help them get elected. So much of the political conversation is half truth, disguised truth or no truth at all. Christians must look through a fog of sorted dialogue to discern the best response to politicians. Determining how to vote and participating in the governmental process is diffi-

cult for every Christian in the United States.

Fourth, prayer is needful. Christians must pray for themselves as they live in this world of politics. Christians must pray for the political leaders who do indeed impact our lives. We must pray for our country. Though political leaders, for the most part, do not have our Kingdom in mind when they make decisions, those decisions do affect how Christians do ministry and offer witness to this world. Thus, our prayers are needful.

Finally, we must learn to see secular leaders as people with "feet of clay." Throughout my life, I have heard individuals comment about the bad behavior of people, saying, "I do not know how they could do that."

People who do not know and serve Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior do not have the same bearings as those who are in the church. They are not driven by the same goals and principles as the people of God. That is what makes the witness of Christians so very important.

Secular leaders who have not determined to make Jesus Christ the First and Foremost in every decision they make are not on the same page with Christian believers. We have seen bad decisions and moral failures in the ministry. Does it not stand that we also will see much of the same among secular leaders? This is yet another reason the prayer and participation of Christians in the political process is so valuable.

Pray. Go vote. Encourage the right and moral—the godly—every time you have the opportunity to do so.

Floyd Price is chairman of the Western Recorder Board of Directors. He also serves as associate pastor at First Baptist Church of London and is a former Kentucky Baptist Convention president.

GUEST EDITORIAL



Floyd Price

Developing 'conservative radicals'

By David Gushee

Atlanta (ABP)—In his recent book, "The Great Awakening," Jim Wallis suggests that it is time to move beyond the conservative vs. liberal paradigm to a framework he calls conservative radicalism. This is true in American culture, in evangelicalism and certainly in Baptist life. With a new school year upon us, I find myself increasingly clear that this is the vision I want to try to impart to seminary students and undergraduates here at Mercer University.

Wallis defines this new term in this way: "To be conservative means to be rooted—in a tradition, in faith, in core values. To be radical also means to be rooted (radical comes from the Latin radix, meaning "root"), which gives one a consistent perspective on the world. So these two—radical and conservative—may not be contradictory but in fact deeply complementary."

In other words, conservative radicals are tethered so tightly to Christ that they are consistently capable of a radical obedience to Him.

Let's unpack that a bit further. Students need to be conservative in the sense that they should conserve a central focus on Jesus Christ. They should conserve a lived-out belief in the centrality, truthfulness and authority of the Bible. They should, if possible, learn to read the Bible in its original languages with the highest degree of skill and hermeneutical ability that they can muster and become adept in its practical application.

Students need to be committed to conserving the church and its sacred mission. Many of our churches are floundering in Baptist life, and in many colleges and seminaries a calling to serve the church is seen as second class. We need to graduate from

our schools generations of students who will instead love the church and consider local church service a very high calling.

Students must be taught to be committed to conserving Christian tradition. This does not mean a slavish (or knavish) worship of Luther or Calvin, Augustine or Aquinas. But it does mean that they cherish the gathered cloud of witnesses who have gone before us in Christian history, and that they learn to think with the saints rather than against them or without them.

Students need to conserve the personal piety and high moral code that so many imbibed in their families and local churches. May the freedom students enjoy in most of our colleges and seminaries prove to be an occasion for the personal choice to continue to live in a way that pleases God and bears witness to a life of high moral purpose.

I also want my students to be radicals. As Jim Wallis puts it, "What we need most are people rooted in 'conservative' values and commitments but willing to be 'radical' enough to apply those very values in the real world."

Students should be radicals when it comes to loyalty to Christ as Lord. This requires the subjugation of all other loyalties, such as loyalty to a job, a lifestyle, a denomination, or a nation. Only a radical is willing to lose their job at a church because they are, for example, unwilling to permit class snobbery or xenophobia to prevail in local church life.

Students need to be radicals when it comes to loving every person whom God loves. Only a radical is willing to welcome the AIDS patient, the ex-con, the illegal immigrant, the doubter—or whoever else God brings our way in the lo-

cal church.

Students should be radicals when it comes to defending the human rights of strangers. Only a radical speaks up for blacks victimized in the criminal justice system, or for those evicted from their homes because of predatory lending practices.

Students need to be radicals when it comes to innovating how to do church in a postmodern age. Driven by a "conservative" evangelistic commitment and love for the church, they must be "radical" in finding ways to advance these commitments in an age in which traditional ways of doing church often are ineffective.

Students should be radicals when it comes to personally living out the teachings of Jesus. May all of us nurture students who will care for God's creation, who will forgive their enemies and those who hurt them, who will resist violence, who will pray daily for the reign of God, who will tell the truth even when it might cost them, and who will keep their lifetime marriage commitments if they make them.

Students need to be radicals in racial reconciliation and justice efforts. May they create interracial community now and interracial churches in years to come. May they read, think, and dialogue across racial lines.

On my office wall at McAfee there is a display of photographs of people like Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Martin Luther King, William Wilberforce, Dorothy Day, Mahatma Gandhi, and Mother Teresa. All of those women and men were conservative radicals in the sense outlined. May our Baptist colleges and schools nurture the kind of young people who will follow their path.

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



COLLEGE BOOM Kevin Hash (right), pastor of Burton Memorial Baptist Church in Bowling Green, chats with Western Kentucky University students Cole Bodkin and Lindsay Allen. The church has experienced unexpected growth in recent years thanks to an influx of college students. (Photo by Loren Gifford)

College students at center of church's unexpected growth

By Karen Owen-Phelps
State Correspondent

Bowling Green—Burton Memorial Baptist Church does not have a big budget for college ministry. It does not have a contemporary worship style or a rock band. It doesn't even have a van to transport students to church.

Even so, the small Bowling Green congregation is experiencing a college-age boom.

During the summer, the 157-year-old congregation holds one service on Sunday mornings. During the school year, it adds a second. The last Sunday before finals at Western Kentucky University in May, attendance in worship was about 181. The church's pastor, Kevin Hash, said attendance has once again swelled since classes resumed.

Many of the students have officially joined Burton Memorial and become very involved in the life of the church, even though many were not Baptist before. It was all unplanned and unexpected, Hash acknowledged.

Before, the congregation consisted mostly of retirees and a few families. "The first couple of years I was here, we did a couple of things you do as a small church to attract college students," said Hash, 34, who has been pastor at Burton for six years. "They didn't work."

"I think the church was just a little on the downward slope," recalled Patrick Schreiner, one of the first college students to get involved at Burton.

It all started when a professor from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville spoke at Burton Memorial. Schreiner attended with some friends.

A week later, Hash said, Campus Crusade for Christ invited him to speak on campus. Some leaders in the student organization soon visited Burton Memorial and before long, started bringing their friends.

"I wasn't Baptist and didn't intend to be Baptist," said Dan Curran, who attended Burton Memorial while he was at Western.

The changes for his congregation have been so dramatic, Hash noted, "A lot of churches would not have survived, to be frank with you. We have outstanding older folks who are Kingdom people. They saw these college folks as someone's grandchild."

Schreiner and Curran said they were drawn by Hash's personality, his expositional preaching style, the chance to be part of a small congregation and the realization they were needed there.

Curran said his youth group at Southeast Christian Church in Louisville was larger than Burton Memorial's entire congregation. "Christianity is not about being catered to," he added. "They had a lot of places for me to serve and help out."

Hash said the young people really wanted to be held accountable instead of just "bouncing around" or making a campus ministry their church. They found "their faith was somewhat incomplete because it was not tied to a local body."

Hash has given the students opportunities to teach and preach in the church, but their role in the congregation was cemented when members saw they were willing to do manual labor around the facility, Hash said.

"People have embraced the fact churches," not just seminaries, "raise up ministers," Hash said. Whether the students settle down in Bowling Green or graduate and move on, "we may have a small part in God doing something great in the world, just by training them in our church."

Georgetown names fitness center for Bush

By Drew Nichter
News Director

Georgetown—The fitness and recreation center at Georgetown College has been open since 2003, but until last Friday, it had gone unnamed. Evidently, the school was simply waiting for a big enough name to put on the side of the building.

How does a former U.S. President sound?

George H.W. Bush, the nation's 41st president, visited the Georgetown College campus Sept. 19, the guest of honor for a naming ceremony of the school's fitness center—now known as the George H.W. Bush Center for Fitness.

The public dedication ceremony attracted hundreds of students, trustees and Georgetown College neighbors to the campus to see, hear and possibly shake hands with President Bush.

"Thank you for that warm, Kentucky welcome," Bush said as he greeted the crowd. "I'm very, very honored to be here for the honor of this building being named for me."

The event was primarily intended as a fundraiser for Georgetown's First Tee Scholars program, a nationwide scholarship initiative that began at Georgetown College in 2001. The program offers college funding to former participants of The First Tee program, which gives economically disadvantaged children the opportunity to learn the game of golf. President Bush serves as honorary chairman of the project.

In his remarks, Georgetown President William Crouch announced that \$1 million in endowment gifts already had been raised for the scholarship program. The goal is \$1.5 million.

"President Bush, you honor us today by allowing us to associate your name with this institution," said Crouch, who also serves on The First Tee board of directors. "We share with you a passion and a commit-



MAN OF THE PEOPLE Former President George H.W. Bush shakes hands with a young girl and her mother as he arrives at Georgetown College Sept. 19. The school honored President Bush by naming its fitness center for him. The ceremony also helped raise \$1 million in endowment gifts for Georgetown's First Tee Scholars program. (Photo by Drew Nichter)

ment for educating individuals in the wholeness of life, including life skills and fitness."

Crouch has previously noted that President Bush is a strong advocate for physical fitness among young people. In exchange for lending his name to the fitness and recreation center, Bush asked that Georgetown emphasize health and wellness programs among its students and faculty.

"We join (President Bush) in the recognition of the obesity crisis in our country, and we stand as a place committed to fighting the epidemic," Crouch said.

In addition to President Bush, Georgetown also welcomed PGA of America President Brian Whitcomb and PGA Tour Commissioner Tim Finchem. The two traveled from Louisville where the PGA's Ryder Cup tournament was held last weekend. Whitcomb presented President Crouch with a \$15,000 gift to Georgetown's First Tee Scholars endowment.

The school currently has seven First Tee Scholars enrolled, four of whom participated in last Friday's ceremony. In commending the students and Georgetown College for its commitment to the scholarship program, President Bush reflected on his time as Commander in Chief.

"It's a real inspiration to me that Georgetown has accomplished so much in partnership with The First Tee," he noted. "What you've done is prove that the Points of Light spirit, as I called it when I was president, is alive and well in America today."

As he concluded his remarks, President Bush offered to play a round of golf with the seven First Tee Scholars—but only on one condition.

"If I can beat Sarah Palin, I'll take you on," he said.

Following the ceremony, a private reception was held with President Bush, First Tee donors and Georgetown College administrators. The president then made his way to Louisville to attend the Ryder Cup.

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Baptists continue clean-up efforts following Hurricane Ike

By Mickey Noah
SBC North American Mission Board

Houston (BP)—Houston. Baytown. Texas City. League City. Pasadena. Livingston. Port Arthur. Huntsville. Lufkin. Tyler. Since Sept. 16, Southern Baptist volunteers in these Texas cities have provided more than 321,000 hot meals for thousands of victims of Hurricane Ike. But they have only just begun.

In the largest SBC response to a natural disaster since Hurricane Katrina, Baptist disaster leaders said they foresee their feeding operations continuing at least two more weeks. Chainsaw and mud-out operations will go longer.

Hurricane Ike not only pounded the Texas coast, but its remnants also swept across the midwestern United States, causing significant wind damage in several states.

In Kentucky, one person died and dozens more were injured in the Sept. 14 windstorm. Power was knocked out in hundreds of thousands of homes throughout the state; an estimated 30,000 people were still without power as this week started.

The power outage forced Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and Boyce College in Louisville to cancel classes all last week. No injuries or major structural damages were reported at the campus. Classes resumed at the two institutions this week.

Meanwhile, Kentucky Baptist Convention disaster relief teams are helping to clear debris in Fulton this week, according to Coy Webb, KBC's disaster relief associate. The volunteer crew is the third team dispatched by the KBC to help in the aftermath of Hurricane Ike.

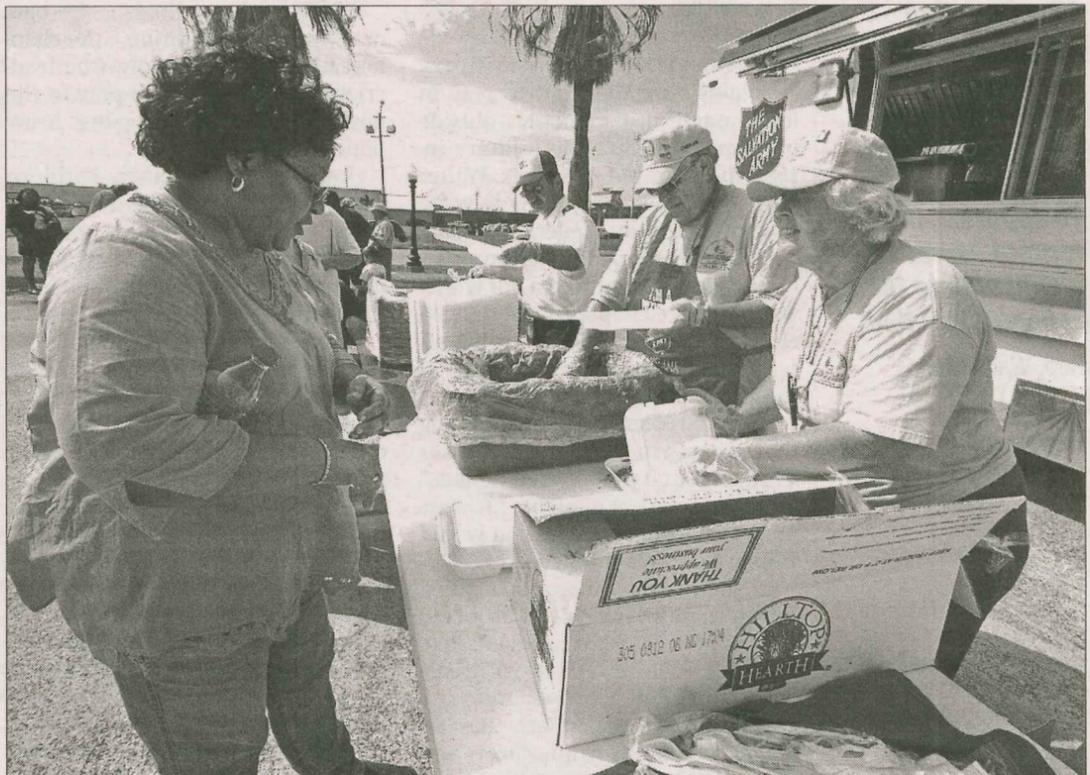
Last week, KBC disaster relief volunteers working in Thibodaux, La., following Hurricane Gustav were sent to help staff a feeding unit in Beaumont, Texas. The 20-member crew was later relocated to Angleton, Texas, where they continue to serve. A team of 12 Kentucky Baptist volunteers also is at work in The Woodlands, Texas.

Coordinated efforts

"This is Southern Baptists at our best when we're cooperating with local churches and state conventions during times of disaster," said Geoff Hammond, president of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, during a tour of feeding operations in southeast Texas.

While speaking to disaster relief volunteers at First Baptist Church of Houston, Hammond remarked, "Efforts like this would be impossible without great churches like this one."

Gregg Matte, the young pastor of First Baptist, Houston, said 100,000 cars go past the church each day via Interstate 10. "They all see these big tractor-trailers with the South-



ern Baptist Convention logo parked in our parking lot. That gives us tremendous exposure. We want to be salt and light in the city of Houston."

To handle the feeding at the church, some 100 volunteers have driven 1,500 miles from points in California to lend a hand. They work 12-hour shifts cooking, packaging, handling and distributing meals which the Red Cross and Salvation Army deliver to Houston's hungry.

Houston's First Baptist Church is one of four "mega" feeding locations—along with sites in Baytown, League City and Texas City—that Southern Baptists have established to feed hungry Texans impacted by Ike. Each mega center is geared up to provide up to 80,000 meals a day.

In Baytown, 175 Southern Baptist disaster relief volunteers produced 50,000 meals one day last week alone from the parking lot of a former K-Mart store, prepared from three kitchen units deployed by North Carolina Baptist Men. The distribution included an on-site drive-through for victims to get their hot meals.

"The drive-through count was 14,000 on Tuesday and 17,000 on Wednesday," according to Lin Honeycutt of Raleigh, N.C., the "white cap" leader for the operation. "We've got the drive-through down to a science."

The North Carolina units include 22 convection ovens, 15 tilt-skillets and four generators. In addition to the drive-through, the North Carolina units packed as many as 30 Red Cross ERV's (emergency response vehicles) at a time. Each ERV holds 500 meals, which the Red Cross delivers deeper into affected areas.

Honeycutt said his team was a little nervous about generating a potential 80,000 meals a day as a mega feeding center, simply because "we'd never done that many before."

The Alabama and Florida feeding units had been slated to go directly into Galveston, the area devastated by Ike. But because of the severe damage, those units were redeployed to Texas City.

Florida Baptists' disaster relief

director Fritz Wilson noted that his Florida team had never joined with another state team before. The two teams combined into a mega unit of 170 volunteers.

Of course, local victims did not care who provided the food and bottled water or where they came from. Most of the victims who came through the Alabama/Florida drive-through line had not had power or tap water in their homes for nearly a week.

When asked what she thought about the Southern Baptists' operation as she drove through to pick up meals, Cheryl Kasper of Lamarque, Texas, said, "I think it's the most wonderful thing anyone in the world could do for us."

Help appreciated

For another Lamarque resident, Gregory Garza, it was his fifth visit through the drive-through since Ike hit. "We appreciate it very much. We need all the help we can get right now," he said.

Away from the Texas Gulf Coast back up in Pasadena, Texas, due east of Houston, Jimmy Harris was leading a Georgia feeding unit of 32 volunteers, four communications specialists and four chaplains.

Harris, a 14-year disaster relief veteran and owner of a trucking firm in Covington, Ga., said he hopes Southern Baptists and others would donate to disaster relief because of the growing expense, especially with \$4-plus per gallon gasoline and diesel fuel costs.

"Our first gas stop cost \$1,200. Another one cost \$700. Just insurance on our trucks runs \$7,500 a year. We're happy to give our time to do this. But we need help," he insisted.

As of last week, Southern Baptists had prepared more than 1.4 million hot meals, served nearly 12,000 volunteer days, provided 19,333 showers, made nearly 12,000 ministry contacts and seen 111 people come to Christ as a result of serving in the aftermath of Hurricanes Ike and Gustav.

With additional reporting by News Director Drew Nichter and KBC media relations associate Kristie Randolph

FEEDING UNITS Charlotte Jeffreys, a member of Faith Baptist Church in Athens, Ala., and Robert Fullerton, director of missions for Limestone Baptist Association in Athens, Ala., distribute meals at a Salvation Army canteen set up at the high school in Texas City, Texas. (BP photo by Jim Whitmer)

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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Chaplains' freedom to pray is concern of congressman

"For Christian chaplains, closing their prayers in the name of Jesus is a fundamental part of their beliefs. To suppress this form of expression would violate their religious freedom."

Rep. Walter Jones (R-N.C.)

By Ken Walker
Baptist Press

Washington (BP)—Do military chaplains have the right to pray in Jesus' name in ceremonies outside of chapel services? The military insists they do, but U.S. Rep. Walter Jones, R-N.C., is attempting to write that guarantee into federal law.

Shortly before Congress' summer recess, Jones introduced a bill which would ensure chaplains the right to close a prayer outside of a religious service according to the dictates of the chaplain's conscience.

"For Christian chaplains, closing their prayers in the name of Jesus is a fundamental part of their beliefs," Jones said in a statement. "To suppress this form of expression would violate their religious freedom."

No hearings have been scheduled yet on the bill, which has attracted former presidential candidate, Rep. Ron Paul, R-Texas, and Rep. Christopher Smith, R-N.J., as co-sponsors.

Jones said he regularly has received complaints from officers and chaplains about such restraints.

Among them is a Marine officer who recalled a chaplain's statement that he and others had been asked not to mention Christ. Jones' office quoted the Marine officer as saying, "This startles and frightens me that our faith is being infringed upon, even within our own military."

An army chaplain told Jones' office that he experienced opposition during his basic chaplain course when a Christian group leader ridiculed him for praying in Jesus' name and suggesting he would have an altar call during his services.

"Both of these things ... are part of my religious tradition," the chaplain noted. "Additionally, (the leader) said it is offensive to pray in the name of Jesus and is against Army policy to do so."

Jones' press secretary, Kathleen Joyce, said the representative prepared the legislation after attempts in 2006 failed to persuade President Bush to issue an executive order on the matter.

"Congressman Jones introduced H.R. 6514 as a next step," Joyce explained. "The language of the bill is intentionally very narrow—focusing on how chaplains may close their prayer."

A matter of beliefs

However, Eileen Lainez, a spokesperson for the U.S. Department of Defense, told Baptist Press its policy regarding religious accommodation for personnel states that a basic principle of the nation is free exercise of religion.

"The Department of Defense does not endorse any one religion or religious organization, and provides free access of religion for all members of the military services," Lainez noted. "The department respects (and supports by its policy) the rights of others to their own religious beliefs, including the right to hold no beliefs."

While chaplains perform religious ceremonies in the context of their faith group and in accordance with those traditions, Lainez said they are expected to participate in command-sponsored events. In such cases, there is an expectation that they will understand how to balance that privilege with the beliefs of those attending so that "the event is as inclusive as possible."

The Air Force was the only military branch that responded to a request for comment. Although Capt. Michael Andrews termed it "inappropriate" to discuss complaints

from other service chaplains, he said his branch never tells a chaplain how to pray, since that is the responsibility of the denomination.

"If the government were to tell a chaplain or any other clergy person how to pray, that would be an establishment of religion, forbidden by the Constitution," Andrews said.

"We do, however, ask chaplains to be sensitive to the occasion and sensitive to the presence of people from other faith groups. If a chaplain should feel uncomfortable praying in an interfaith setting, he or she can decline to do so with no penalty whatsoever."

Despite the military's claims, leaders of two evangelical endorsing organizations said they regularly encounter problems with infringements on their chaplains' religious rights.

Billy Baugham, executive director of Associated Gospel Chaplains, said he conferred with Jones prior to the introduction of the legislation.

"I think it is needed," noted Baugham, who said he has seen tears in the eyes of some field chaplains complaining about their treatment. "You won't get an admission from the powers that be, but there are pockets of frustration."

Chaplains "given a hard time"

Jim Ammerman, president of the Chaplaincy of Full Gospel Churches, explained that one Army chaplain in Iraq had coins made that resembled military coins that carry a crest, only with the question, "If you died today where would you go?"

A lieutenant colonel ordered the chaplain to stop distributing the coins until the CFGC intervened and got a higher-ranking officer to declare the chaplain could evangelize anywhere, Ammerman recalled.

"We almost always have one or more that's being given a hard time because they believe the Bible and preach it," he added. "Command-

ers are scared somebody will pray in the name of Jesus and hurt their careers."

A former Army chaplain who encountered difficulties in Iraq for praying in Jesus' name called Jones' legislation a matter of First Amendment protection.

Jonathan Sterzbach, pastor of Clear Springs Baptist Church in Alpharetta, Ga., said he hopes Jones' bill will guarantee every chaplain free exercise of religion, whether a Christian, Muslim, Hindu or Jew.

"This was a widespread problem in the division I served in," said Sterzbach, whose temporary removal from his chapel in 2006 prompted calls from Jones for an investigation that led to his reinstatement.

During the investigation, Sterzbach said he pointed out "numerous chaplains that were told, and forced, to pray generic prayers to unspecified deity and had to have pre-approved prayers."

As proof of the longstanding nature of the situation, Sterzbach supplied Baptist Press with a copy of a December 2005 letter from a former Army chief of chaplains, which discussed chaplains' training for working in a pluralistic environment.

"The very definition of pluralism suggests that we fetter our own needs to enhance the needs of others," the letter read. "In public ceremonies the needs of the audience may need to be considered over the needs of the chaplain who stands as a representative of the command."

While there are problems, any chaplain who complains about them is declared to not have "good discipline," Sterzbach said.

"How do you progress in a rank-and-file system and you're labeled a 'troublemaker?'" he asked. "I was disappointed in the Chaplain Corps. My problem was not with the commanders. My problem was always with the supervising chaplains. They know better."

NATIONAL NOTES

National faith-based office names new director. With the departure of its third director, the White House Office of Faith-based and Community Initiatives will be led by its former deputy director through the end of President Bush's term in office. Jedd Medefind, 34, became acting director of the office earlier this month, succeeding Jay Hein, who resigned Aug. 29 to care for his ailing father in Indianapolis. Medefind "is well-prepared to lead the federal effort to support America's armies of compassion," according to Hein.

Bishop rejects challenge to Bush library. President Bush's proposed library at Southern Methodist University in Dallas has cleared another hurdle after an Oklahoma bishop refused to reject the plan, according to the United Methodist Church. Oklahoma Bishop Robert Hayes said it was a matter of secular, not church, law at this point, the United Methodist News Service reported. Progressive Methodists, including faculty members at SMU's Perkins School of Theology, have fought plans for the library at every step. They argue that some Bush administration policies, such as the war in Iraq, contradict Methodist beliefs. The \$500-million George W. Bush Presidential Center will house a presidential library, museum and policy institute. Bush and first lady Laura Bush are both United Methodists; Laura Bush graduated from SMU in 1968.

Muslims criticize movie ad in newspapers. A movie being distributed as an advertising insert in more than 70 newspapers nationwide is drawing protests from Muslim groups who call it an attempt to stir up hate. The movie, "Obsession: Radical Islam's War on the West," argues that radical Islam is the greatest threat to American society and that 10 to 15 percent of the world's more than 1 billion Muslims are "radical." The film was made by the New York non-profit organization Clarion Fund, which was formed in 2006 to address threats to America's security, according to Director of Communications Gregory Ross. The advertisement was disseminated in several competitive states in the upcoming presidential election, including Michigan, Ohio and Florida, according to the list of newspapers included in the ad.

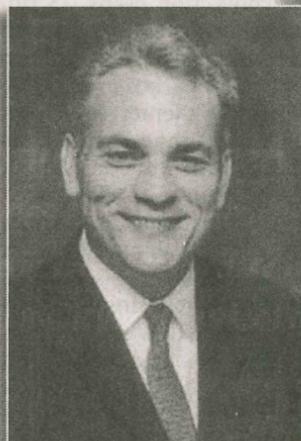
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Ala. congregation marks anniversary of deadly bombing

Birmingham, Ala. (RNS)—Carolyn McKinstry, a lifelong member of Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, remembers 1963 as a dark time, when a bomb planted under a stairway took the lives of four little girls on Sept. 15 in the church basement.

On Sept. 14, McKinstry joined other church members and the community to commemorate the 45th anniversary of the bombing, and to celebrate what she said has been a movement "from the darkness into the light."

Rep. Artur Davis, D-Ala., spoke to the roughly 200 people gathered, saying the perpetrators of the 1963 attack were terrorists, seeking to instill fear and provoke further violence. Today, he said, "we are a nobler and better place."

The church also celebrated the completion of a \$3.8 million renovation to repair a cracked foundation and damage that remained from the bombing.

McKinstry said about 200,000 people from around the world visit the church each year, and they regularly ask where the bomb was placed. The church soon will place a marker at that spot.

Faith leaders urge attention for Gulf Coast

By Vicki Brown
Associated Baptist Press

Washington (ABP)—A coalition of religious leaders is asking politicians in this election year to address what they say is a moral scandal: Three years after Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast, much of the region is still far from recovery.

Several religious leaders—representing a coalition of more than 100—held a teleconference Sept. 15 to urge passage of the Gulf Coast Civic Works Act. The Gulf Coast Civic Works Campaign is a non-partisan group of community, faith, student, labor and human-rights organizations.

At the same time, faith leaders sent a letter to the major-party presidential nominees—Democrat Barack Obama and Republican John McCain—and to members of Congress to urge their support of the recovery plan.

Co-sponsored by Rep. Zoe Lofgren (D-Calif.), Rep. Charlie Melancon (D-La.) and Rep. Gene Taylor (D-Miss.), the bill seeks to establish the Gulf Coast Recovery Authority to implement and oversee a massive job training and reconstruction project. Twenty additional representatives have since signed on as co-sponsors, including one Republican (Louisiana Rep. Rodney Alexander).

Proponents tout the measure as a means to provide job training opportunities and increase employment while speeding recovery in

parts of Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas and Alabama devastated by hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005. Damage caused by hurricanes Gustav and Ike this season has compounded the problem, they noted.

The recovery program would train displaced workers to rebuild destroyed infrastructure and restore the environment, they added.

"We are hoping this becomes nationwide to help repair infrastructure and public buildings in a way that is equitable to everyone," noted Stephen Bradbury, national campaign coordinator for the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now.

Patty Whitney, representing Bayou Interfaith Shared Community Organizing in Thibodaux, La., emphasized that hurricanes destroyed more than oil production. The region's agricultural base—especially the cotton, sugar and fishing industries—suffered significant devastation as well.

More than 200,000 people in Louisiana's hard-hit parishes of Lafourche and Terrebonne have been left out of most of the recovery decision-making process, she stressed. While faith groups have been "efficient" in pulling together to assist those who are hurting, the federal government "miscalculated the need," Whitney said. "We need help finding ways to help those in need."

None of the presidential campaigns or major political parties is

addressing the recovery problem, Gulf Coast Civic Works Campaign participants said.

Frederick Haynes, pastor of Friendship-West Baptist Church in Dallas, said religious leaders "must lend our voices" to influence both presidential campaigns. The church has served as a disaster relief center for hurricane evacuees from the Gulf Coast as a result of Katrina and subsequent storms.

New Orleans and other Louisiana residents have been criticized for failure to leave their homes before hurricanes hit, Haynes said. Many rode out Katrina because they did not have the resources to leave, while others stayed put during hurricanes Gustav and Ike because they had no place to go. Communication must be improved before a hurricane hits, and those who need help must be assisted, he emphasized.

Besides Haynes, Baptist leaders who have publicly thrown their support behind the campaign include sociologist and author Tony Campolo; Paul Corts, president of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities; Welton Gaddy, president of the Interfaith Alliance and worship pastor of Northminster Baptist Church in Monroe, La.; Central Baptist Theological Seminary President Molly Marshall; LeDayne McLeese Polaski, program coordinator for the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America; and Fuller Theological Seminary ethicist Glen Stassen.

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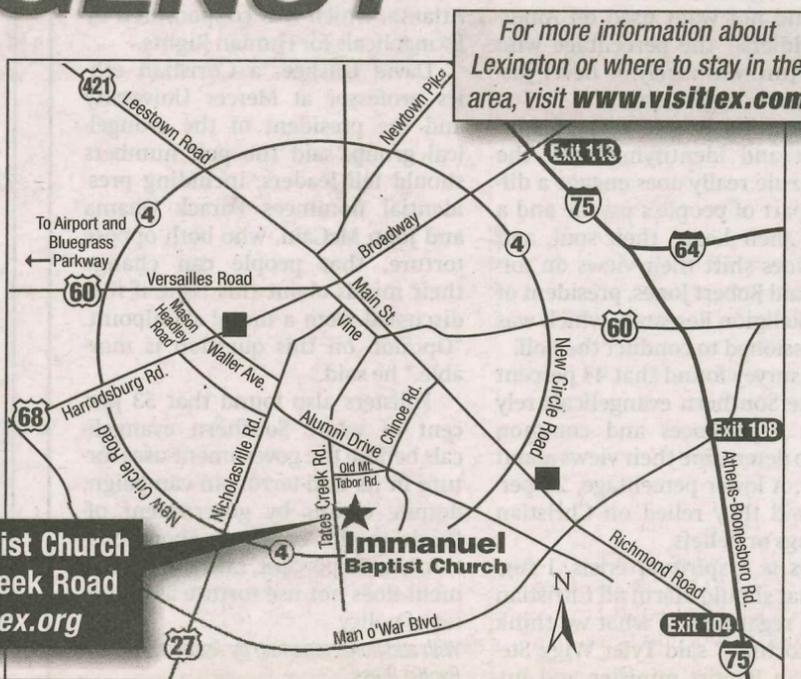
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British cleric urges teaching of creationism

London (RNS)—A top British biologist who doubles as an Anglican minister has triggered controversy among his fellow scientists by calling for creationism to be included in school science lessons.

Professor Michael Reiss, a leading member of the Royal Society of Scientists, suggested Sept. 11 that teachers should not describe creationism as a "misconception" but should discuss it in classrooms as a "world view."

Reiss's remarks to the British Association Festival of Science in Liverpool, England, drew sharp criticism from some of his colleagues. Lewis Wolpert, a biologist at University College Medical School in London, told reporters that "creationism is based on faith and has nothing to do with science."

The Royal Society itself, which once included the father of evolution theory, Charles Darwin, as a member, issued a terse statement, reiterating that it "is opposed to creationism being taught as science."

But Reiss, himself ordained as a Church of England minister who once trained for the priesthood, said that "just because something lacks scientific support doesn't seem to me a sufficient reason to omit it from a science lesson."

Palin as VP choice sparks debate over women as pastors

Evangelical leaders divided on place of women in pulpits

By Adelle Banks
Religion News Service

Washington (RNS)—There may never be a female pastor leading Tony Perkins' Southern Baptist congregation in Louisiana, but there could be a woman taking over the vice president's mansion in Washington.

And as Perkins sees it, there is no contradiction there whatsoever.

"It's not a spiritual role," stressed Perkins, president of the Family Research Council and a church elder, who calls Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin a "brilliant pick" for the Republican ticket.

"An elected official is not a spiritual leader—and that's what the Scripture speaks to."

That view—that female politicians are fine, but female pastors are not—has sparked debate about the role of women inside and outside of the home and the church.

"Even though the Bible reserves final authority in the church for men, this does not apply in the kingdom of this world," said David Kotter, executive director of the Louisville-based Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, which believes men and women have separate and distinct roles in the home

and the church, in a column on his organization's "Gender Blog."

But some evangelical leaders, including women at the helm of prominent conservative Christian organizations, chafe at such viewpoints, arguing that women should be considered for leadership both in and out of the pulpit.

Jane Hansen Hoyt leads Aglow International, a mostly evangelical organization that will bring some 2,000 women to Washington for its national meeting this week. Hoyt, an ordained minister in a Pentecostal denomination, is "disappointed" by fellow religious conservatives who affirm women in politics but not in the pulpit.

"I personally believe that from the beginning—and I'm going back to the third chapter of Genesis ... the role of the woman was very strong because that's when God said he would send a help to the man," Hoyt said. "Well, it wasn't just a help to cook his meals. It was a help to walk alongside him, even as we see John McCain and Sarah Palin walking side by side."

These views appear to be a change for some evangelicals. As recently as March 2007, the Pew Research Center found that 56 percent of white evangelicals viewed the idea of mothers with young children working outside the home as a "bad thing" rather than a good one.

But Wendy Wright, president

of Concerned Women for America, said such polling numbers may be a "rather stark" look at situations that vary from family to family, including Palin's.

"What people have seen as they've watched Gov. Palin is that she has integrated her family and her work," Wright pointed out. "There are situations where people are able to bring their children to work."

Palin herself has religious roots in the Assemblies of God, a Pentecostal denomination that ordains women but where female clergy still have difficulty getting prominent pastoral roles, according to Margaret Poloma, research professor at the University of Akron.

She calls the views of evangelicals—many of them non-Pentecostals—who support women politicians but not women pastors a matter of "selective interpretation" of the Bible.

"The whole thing is contorted, but they really believe that," she said. "That's their interpretation."

The Southern Baptist Convention, the nation's largest evangelical denomination, declares in its faith statement that "the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture" and a wife should "submit herself graciously" to her husband's leadership.

But those beliefs, based on New Testament teachings, do not apply to women in secular leadership, ex-

plained Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission.

"Where the New Testament is silent, we're silent," he said. "Where the New Testament speaks, we're under its authority."

Land's wife works as a psychotherapist, but he admitted he could not see himself as "first dude" (a term used by Palin's husband). Still, Land thinks decisions about roles are up to each husband and wife—including Sarah and Todd Palin.

"The only thing that would disqualify Gov. Palin from being governor or vice president, in my opinion, would be if her husband didn't want her to do it," he said.

Janice Shaw Crouse, senior fellow at Concerned Women of America's Beverly LaHaye Institute, said she has appeared on Christian radio talk shows since Palin's nomination, and is shocked by callers who complain that the Alaska governor "has no business being in politics."

Crouse, whose mother is an 85-year-old United Methodist minister, said she thinks those comments reflect a fear of women not only having a greater role in politics but a greater place in the nation's pulpits.

"Quite frankly, it is threatening because the more you see Christian women out in the professions and doing things publicly, the more people get adjusted to that idea and the more acceptable it is," she noted.

Poll shows support for torture among Southern evangelicals

Atlanta (RNS)—A new poll released Sept. 11 finds that nearly six in 10 white Southern evangelicals believe torture is justified, but their views can shift when they consider the Christian principle of the golden rule.

The poll, commissioned by Faith in Public Life and Mercer University, found that 57 percent of respondents said torture can be often or sometimes justified to gain important information from suspected terrorists. Thirty-eight percent said it was never or rarely justified.

But when asked if they agree that "the U.S. government should not use methods against our enemies that we would not want used on American soldiers," the percentage who said torture was rarely or never justified rose to 52 percent.

"Presenting people with this argument and identifying with the golden rule really does engage a different part of people's psyche and a part of their heart, their soul, and really does shift their views on torture," said Robert Jones, president of Public Religion Research, which was commissioned to conduct the poll.

The survey found that 44 percent of white Southern evangelicals rely on life experiences and common sense to determine their views about torture. A lower percentage, 28 percent, said they relied on Christian teachings or beliefs.

"This is a spiritual crisis, I suggest, that should alarm all Christian leaders regardless of what we think about torture," said Tyler Wigg Stevenson, a Baptist minister and hu-

man-rights activist from Nashville. "This bad news for the church is a plus for any special interest who wants to take advantage of us."

However, he added, "The good news this poll reminds us of is that, as with any issue, when Christians remember that our calling is to follow Jesus, He changes everything."

The poll was released on the seventh anniversary of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, and came after several religious groups joined a public campaign to oppose the use of torture in interrogating suspected terrorists.

Results were unveiled during the National Summit on Torture held in Atlanta, which was co-sponsored by Evangelicals for Human Rights.

David Gushee, a Christian ethics professor at Mercer University and the president of the evangelical group, said the poll numbers should tell leaders, including presidential nominees Barack Obama and John McCain, who both oppose torture, that people can change their minds about this issue if it is discussed from a moral standpoint. "Opinion on this question is movable," he said.

Pollsters also found that 53 percent of white Southern evangelicals believe the government uses torture in its anti-terrorism campaign, despite claims by government officials to the contrary. About one-third, or 32 percent, said the government does not use torture as a matter of policy.

With additional reporting by Associated Baptist Press

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Reaching out to the 'least of these'

Zambia partnership shares love of Christ with orphans

Earlier this month I had the privilege to visit our partners in Kitwe, Zambia. For the past year, Crossings has been in partnership with Lifesong for Orphans to help establish a care system for some of the world's neediest children.

Currently, we have approximately 130 children ranging from 4 to 12 years old who are receiving care. The project we sponsor is the Lifesong School outside of Kitwe. While at school, these children are provided with Christian discipleship, traditional education in reading and writing, medical treatment as needed, food each day and a great deal of love that many have never been given.

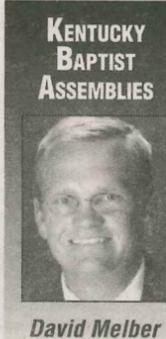
It is such a different world. The village in which most of the children live is known as the Zambia compound and consists of mud huts without running water or electricity. Beyond the hardships of poor living facilities, these kids witness death on a regular basis. Malaria and HIV/AIDS run rampant in this part of Africa. The day we arrived, a mother of two kids in school died from HIV/AIDS. Most of the students in our care have

been orphaned by one, if not both of their parents. Generally, the children are taken in by extended family or others in the village who care enough to "adopt" these children. Women, who have nothing, care for these children who have no one.

Each day we would spend time at school playing and working with the students. During the afternoon, our group would visit homes of the caretakers of these kids. In each case, when I asked why they wanted their kids at Lifesong School, the answer always was because they are taught about Jesus and their lives are changed. I must admit that I was quite surprised as I thought they would say because of the food, clothing, medication and other physical benefits.

I am amazed that God allows Crossings to minister in this way and to play a role in His work on the other side of the world. If you would like to know more about our partnership, please contact our office and I would be glad to share what God is doing through Crossings to impact the "least of these" in Zambia.

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



David Melber

For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



Church of the Covered Dish

Thom Tapp



Bible Crosswords

By Janet Adkins

Across

- 1 Exclamation of sorrow
- 5 Catalog promise (abbr.)
- 8 "But ___ found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Genesis 6:8)
- 12 Greek form of feminine name that means "princess"
- 13 ___ wife
- 14 ___-Lebanon (mountain range in W. Syria, which includes Mt. Hermon)
- 15 Not ready to turn pro (abbr.)
- 16 Bone
- 17 Cave dwellers
- 18 New Testament epistle
- 22 The green, green grass of home?
- 23 ___ of the above
- 24 Like a sprinter
- 27 1/1000th of an inch
- 28 Exodus character
- 31 "For ___ be called, but few chosen" (Matthew 20:16)
- 32 Prevent
- 33 "Diana ... should be destroyed, whom all ___ worshippeth" (Acts 19:27)
- 34 Employ
- 35 Biblical verb
- 36 "Let us ___ before the Lord our maker" (Psalm 95:6)
- 37 Greek letter
- 38 "And the ___ gave up the dead which were in it" (Revelation 20:13)
- 39 "The Lord hath given you the land, ... all the ___ faint because of you" (Joshua 2:9)
- 44 Concept (comb. form)
- 45 Historical period

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
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48				49			50			
51				52			53			

- 46 Tiny amount (colloq.)
- 48 Bereft; desolate (arch.)
- 49 Beam of light
- 50 Masculine name
- 51 Healing plant
- 52 Affirmative
- 53 "Simon ___"

- 21 Under the weather
- 24 Texas institute of higher learning (abbr.)
- 25 Had been
- 26 Suffix used to form feminine nouns
- 27 Welcome ___
- 28 Enzyme of vegetable origin (suffix)
- 29 Grain mentioned in the Old Testament (Isaiah 28)
- 30 Suitable for (suffix)
- 32 "And fire shall consume the tabernacles of ___" (Job 15:34)
- 33 Husband of Sapphira
- 35 "And there was war between ___ and Baasha king of Israel" (1 Kings 15:16)

Down

- 1 Old Testament king whose name means "physician"
- 2 "For thou art my ___ ... the Lord will lighten my darkness" (2 Samuel 22:29)
- 3 Son of Ulla (1 Chronicles 7:39)
- 4 "O ___ us early with thy mercy" (Psalm 90:14)
- 5 Progenitor (colloq.)
- 6 With "down," way to meet the bed
- 7 "We are perplexed, but not in ___" (2 Corinthians 4:8)
- 8 Husband of Abigail (1 Samuel 25)
- 9 Second son of Judah (1 Chronicles 2:3)
- 10 Members of the bar (abbr.)
- 11 Possessive pronoun
- 19 His wife turned into a pillar of salt
- 20 Part of the psyche

Last week's solution

1	A	R	I	A	5	D	E	B	8	A	C	R	E
12	S	E	L	F	13	U	R	E	14	T	R	U	E
15	A	G	E	E	16	R	A	H	17	T	Y	N	E
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22	T	A	R	S	U	S	25	V	A	N	I	T	Y
28	A	R	E	T	A	S	30	E	N	D	U	R	E
31	M	I	S										
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57	E	A	R	S	58	G	A	L	59	S	E	E	M

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Southern Baptists urge U.S. to take action on Indian violence

Washington (BP)—The Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission has called on President Bush and congressional leaders to intervene to bring an end to anti-Christian violence in the Indian state of Orissa.

The request for action came in a Sept. 11 letter from ERLC President Richard Land. He also wrote to Ronen Sen, India's ambassador to the United States, asking for his country's government to become more involved by quickly aiding members of the minority Christian community.

Land called for intervention by the American and Indian governments as violence against Christians continued in Orissa, a state on India's east coast, following the Aug. 23 assassination of a Hindu swami. Though Maoist insurgents took credit for the killing, Hindu extremists blamed Christians. They mounted mob attacks on churches, as well as homes and villages populated by Christians.

More than 100 people reportedly have been beaten, hacked or burned to death since the mob violence began. It is estimated tens of thousands of Christians have fled their homes, many remaining in seclusion in forests and others in relief camps with police guards.

Saying the Indian national government had not done enough, Land asked Bush "to bring the 'bully pulpit' of the White House and the considerable influence of the U.S. government to bear to pressure the government of India and the world community to stop this escalating and unacceptable violence and persecution against innocent Christians in Orissa and to bring about a just and equitable end to it once and for all."

Land said the ERLC agreed with the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom's call for the Indian government "to make more vigorous and effective efforts to stem violence against religious minority communities."

Land is a member of the USCIRF, a nine-member bipartisan panel that advises the executive and legislative branches of the federal government on religious freedom conditions overseas.

Manmohan Singh, India's prime minister, has threatened to send in the military to quell the violence. He has said the government would provide financial aid to Christian families whose homes were destroyed by mobs.

Volunteers feed 14,000 refugees in Georgia

By Mark Kelly
Baptist Press

Gori, Georgia (BP)—As Russian tanks pulled back from a ridge just three miles away, a team of Texas Baptist volunteers moved into Gori, a key city in the Black Sea country of Georgia, to set up a feeding operation for thousands of families displaced from their homes.

Those volunteers later turned the operation over to teams from Kentucky and Oklahoma after serving almost 14,000 hot meals to people who had nothing else to eat.

"Texas Baptist Men did a tremendous job as the first volunteer responders on the scene in Georgia," said Abraham Shepherd, who directs work in Europe and the Middle East for Baptist Global Response. "They needed to make something out of nothing and they set up a wonderful feeding kitchen that the Oklahoma and Kentucky teams continued to utilize, along with national partners."

The seven-member team of disaster relief specialists from Texas arrived in Georgia in late August and immediately started looking for everything needed to gear up a cooking operation that could serve several thousand meals a day, according to team leader Larry Blanchard.

In spite of the challenges common to international relief work, the volunteers demonstrated ingenuity and found local partners especially helpful, Blanchard noted. Over the course of eight days, the Texans and their partners were able to serve almost 14,000 meals.

"Our ministry partner from Tblisi did a wonderful job, and we had ter-



SERVED Southern Baptist volunteers from Texas and Kentucky joined forces with local Baptists to serve almost 14,000 hot meals to families driven from their homes by fighting in the Black Sea country of Georgia. (BGR photo)

rific support from the church members there in Gori," he said. "The pastor's sister-in-law became our head cook because she could season the food to taste like the people would want it, not like we'd normally do it in Texas. By the last day, 16 women were in the kitchen, peeling potatoes and chopping carrots."

Having so much local support meant the volunteers could focus some of their resources on much-needed repairs and remodeling on the church building, Blanchard added. The volunteers from Kentucky and Oklahoma arrived as the Texans were preparing to leave and returned home last week.

The Texans found the people of

Gori deeply grateful that Southern Baptists care about people in need, Blanchard said.

"One boy about 12 years old or so came by. His house had been bombed and he was crying. Our ministry partner from Tblisi was able to console him," Blanchard recalled. "People would come to us, put their hands over their hearts, and bow as their way of thanking us. We couldn't understand what each other said, but our hearts were in tune with theirs."

"Without a shadow of doubt, we were blessed," he added. "God wanted to do a mighty work in Gori and we were blessed that He let us go help Him do it."

I couldn't find our bus

OBI's new buses no longer stand out among those from the other schools

Silly things happen to us all. They are not planned, they just happen. We normally get a chuckle out of them and then forget them. One such event happened recently. Oneida and several other schools were invited to a cross country meet in a neighboring county. I don't always attend these events. The fact that I had a grandson running had nothing to do with me going.

After parking, I walked toward the area where the race would begin. That walk took me right through the bus parking lot. Trust me, there never is a problem finding our bus. In fact, I normally do not want to even see our bus because it usually stands out among all the others. You simply can't not notice our bus since it is the oldest and ugliest one there.

As I was walking through the parking area, however, I did not see our bus. I looked for it three times. I just wanted to make sure our team had arrived. But, where was our bus?

As I came to the end of the lot I saw two of our students. How could they be there if our bus was not there? I scanned the line of buses two or three times. Then I saw it—bright and shiny. I smiled as I remembered that we no longer had the ugly duckling bus in the parking lot; we had a beautiful new bus just like most of the other schools. I was very proud and thankful for the many friends who helped us purchase our three new buses a few months ago.

Since my grandson was running that morning, I knew his mother—my daughter—also would be there. We finally saw each other near the bus

parking area. The first thing she said to me was, "Well, the Oneida bus looks just like all the other buses; ours does not stand out." I had to tell her that less than 15 minutes earlier I had the same thought.

I am thankful for these seemingly little things that God sprinkles on our days. Noticing a simple thing here or there is always welcomed. One cannot help but see God's hand in these wonderful bits of joy. I got into the habit many years ago of saying a silent prayer when these events play out in my daily activities. I try to never take for granted the value of these blessings and I never forget Who provided them.

It has been a wonderful learning experience for me. I have learned that while God promises to always meet our needs and bless us, sometimes we become a little impatient. We want Him to be more timely in fulfilling His promises. However, time and time again when He provides those blessings it amazes me how often He far exceeds my expectations.

For two years I had been trying to find good used buses, but at nearly every turn the door was closed. Finally, as a last resort, I thought about the possibility of purchasing new buses. But, to my knowledge, the school had never purchased new full-size buses before. When I asked the friends of this ministry to consider our need, with God's help, the need was met. Not with more used buses, but with three new shiny ones just like the other schools have. God is so good to provide for us and to give us such wonderful friends. Thanks again for our new buses.

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

Expanding our delivery methods

Ministry bachelor's degree now being offered online

The mission of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College always has focused on delivering quality theological education in the best ways possible. In 2004, we began to offer some of our classes online to help students who were in need of a more flexible schedule. What we began to hear from inquiries was the need for a fully accredited bachelor's degree in ministry offered totally online.

In the fall of 2007 we began the process of seeking approval from our accrediting agencies to offer a fully accredited Bachelor of Arts in Ministry degree online. We recently received approval from both our accrediting agencies to begin.

As Clear Creek continues to move forward with our online program, we are excited about students like Dave who we will be able to minister to. Dave and his wife, Shelly, recently moved to Hawaii. They had not been there long when Shelly found a Baptist church close to where they lived. They began to attend the church and Dave came to know Jesus Christ as his personal Lord and Savior.

After he came to know Christ, Dave recognized that God was call-

ing him to further ministry. After finding information on the Internet about Clear Creek's online program, Dave talked with his pastor and made the decision to enroll. He continues to work at Puna Baptist Church as the leader of the youth program and director of the food bank. Dave has been licensed to the gospel ministry by his home

church and has had the opportunity to preach and teach utilizing the training he received through Clear Creek's online program. "The best thing about doing my education online is that I can work around my secular work schedule, so when I come in from work at night I can do my school work," Dave said.

We are excited about this new format to deliver a fully accredited Bachelor of Arts in Ministry degree online. We believe it will help us meet the needs of people like Dave. You can find information about the online degree at www.ccbbc.edu, or contact Director of Distance Education Jay Barnett at j Barnett@ccbbc.edu.

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Donnie Fox

'Fireproof' makes debut in theaters nationwide Sept. 26

By Michael Foust
Baptist Press

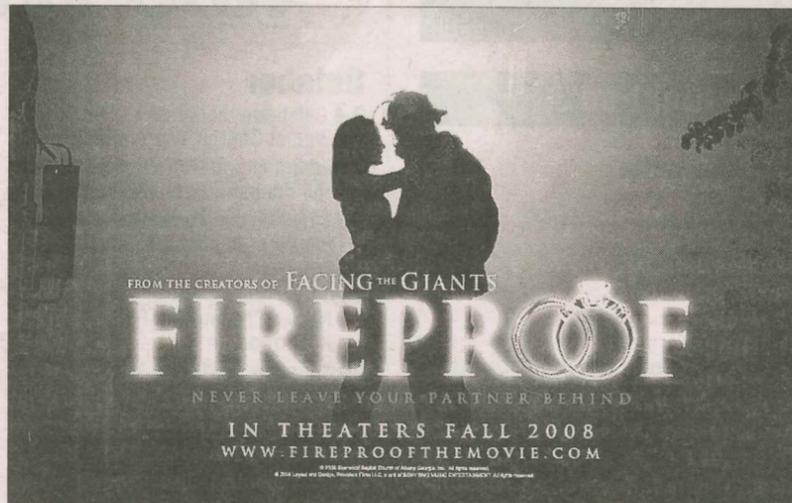
Albany, Ga. (BP)—If standing ovations are any indication, the makers of "Facing the Giants" probably have another hit on their hands.

Sherwood Pictures' latest film, "Fireproof," hits theaters Sept. 26 and has been screened for pastors and Christian leaders all summer, often to enthusiastic crowds. At the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Indianapolis, nearly 4,000 people saw the film, with many standing during the closing credits, applauding the movie's focus on a biblical view of marriage.

The plot focuses on the struggling marriage of a firefighter named Caleb (played by Kirk Cameron) and his wife, Catherine (Erin Bethea), both of whom are seeking a divorce after having fallen "out of love." Their lack of communication and their disagreements over finances—as well as his addiction to Internet pornography and her budding romance at work—are tearing them apart. Caleb's father, though, refuses to see the young couple split up and gives his son a "Love Dare" journal—a 40-day experiment in which Caleb must complete a loving action toward his wife each day. Having rescued numerous people from fires, Caleb sets out to rescue his own marriage and his wife's heart.

The movie had a \$500,000 budget, tiny by Hollywood standards but five times the \$100,000 budget of "Facing the Giants," and 25 times the budget of Sherwood's first movie, "Flywheel." The larger budget is evident on screen, particularly during firefighting scenes where special effects were required.

Sherwood Pictures is a not-for-profit ministry of Sherwood Baptist Church in Albany, Ga., and the brainchild of brothers Stephen and Alex Kendrick, two associate pastors who have written, produced and directed all three films. Just like the previous two films, "Fireproof" features a vol-



unteer cast and crew, with church members holding the majority of the roles. Approximately 1,200 people were involved, doing everything from cooking for the cast and crew to acting. Cameron, known for his role in several Christian films as well as his star role in the sitcom, "Growing Pains," turned down a payment for the film and asked instead that a donation be made to a ministry he and his wife run: Camp Firefly.

Addressing divorce

With one out of every two marriages in the U.S. ending in divorce, officials with Sherwood Pictures said they hope churches will get behind the film and help couples learn how to "fireproof" and strengthen their own marriages. Sherwood has launched two Web sites: FireproofTheMovie.com, which is the official movie site, and FireproofMyMarriage.com, which has resources for singles, couples and churches. Additionally, B&H Publishing Group has released a paperback version of "The Love Dare" book to coincide with the movie's release.

Groups such as the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, Focus on the Family and FamilyLife have backed the film and

are urging people to go see it.

"Obviously, we think that marriage is a crucial issue to address in our culture—inside and outside the church," said Michael Catt, executive producer of the film and senior pastor of Sherwood Baptist. Marriage has "become simply a contract, a piece of paper. We hope that the movie is going to impact homes, not only inside the church but outside the church, because every one of us knows a couple that struggles; either we are or we know somebody who is."

Cameron is not the movie's only professional actor or actress. Bethea is a member of the Actor's Equity Association, a stage actor's union, and is employed at Disney World in Orlando. "Fireproof" is her first major film role. She believed in the film's message so much that she quit her previous job at Disney—losing her paycheck and benefits—in order to have time for the volunteer lead role. Yet when the movie finished filming in fall 2007, Disney called again, offering her a position with better benefits and better hours. It was confirmation from God to her that she had made the right decision.

"I think the things that this movie could do for peoples' lives are immeasurable," noted Bethea, a long-

time Sherwood member. "I think the message is timeless. (Love is) not based on an emotion. ... Very often love starts with an action and then follows with an emotion, rather than vice versa as we tend to think that it does."

Some of the movie's most intense scenes come when Caleb and Catherine argue. In one, she ends up crying, asking for a divorce.

"What we keep hearing from those fight scenes from couples is, 'Do you guys have a camera in my house, because my wife and I have had those fights,'" Bethea said. "I think that's why they're so hard to watch, because they're so real."

The film also deals with the subject of Internet pornography in a delicate way that will not embarrass or shock viewers. In fact, the words "porn" or "pornography" are never mentioned. It was important to deal with the subject, according to Catt, because Internet pornography is tearing marriages apart at an alarming rate and, he added, churches too often fail to address it.

Catt said he hopes churches get behind "Fireproof" just like they did with "Facing the Giants." One role churches and associations can play, he explained, is by "buying out" screens—that is, purchasing all the tickets for a particular showing. In doing that, churches often will be given the freedom to talk to the audience after the film.

"The opening weekend is the key and is so critical," Catt explained. "We had a great opening weekend with 'Facing the Giants,' and so it spread to other cities. We started in 400 theaters and ended up in over 1,000, and a lot of that was based on what happened the first weekend, because it let people know this is a legitimate film. The key to that was churches, the key to that was pastors standing up in their pulpits and saying, 'We gripe about Hollywood. Here's something positive. It's a film we can go to and support.'"

ON THE WEB

"Fireproof" is scheduled to open at 20 theaters in 18 cities across Kentucky. For a complete list, visit www.FireproofTheMovie.com/Theaters, and select "Kentucky" from the drop-down menu.

Success of bestselling novel, 'The Shack,' highlights author's struggles

By Steve Rabey
Religion News Service

Gresham, Ore. (RNS)—"The Shack," a novel of horror and healing that was rejected by more than a dozen publishers, has sold more than 2 million copies to become the bestselling religion book of the past year.

Author William Paul Young insisted he was not writing for the masses, but for a small circle of family and friends. But his story was so raw and powerful that it has touched thousands of readers and turned Young into a sudden, if unlikely, celebrity.

"I totally see this as a God thing," Young acknowledged. "This is proof that God still uses the foolish."

"The Shack" tells the story of Mackenzie Philips, who is enjoying a family vacation when his daughter is abducted and murdered in a nearby shack. Four years later, the grieving father receives a letter from God inviting him to spend a weekend at the shack. Mack accepts, and his understanding of God (who appears as a black woman named Papa) and forgiveness are transformed and enlarged.

The book's success has cast a spotlight on Young's own troubled life story—and also raised eyebrows among some high-

profile Christians about its theology.

Born to missionaries in New Guinea, Young said he was sexually and emotionally abused both by members of the local community and children at a missionary boarding school.

After college, Young cycled through a series of jobs before facing his next big crisis. "On Jan. 4, 1994, I got a call from my wife, Kim, who told me she knew about my affair," he recalled. Over the next 11 years, he experienced the healing and forgiveness that planted the seeds for "The Shack," which Young said he sees as a metaphor for people's secret sorrows and sins.

"The shack stands for the house of the human soul," he noted. "It is all busted up and broken by our choices, but we learn to hide all that. We build a false front on the outside of our shack, but inside we hide our addictions, our secrets, our lies ... We want people to believe in our facade, which we paint real nice. But inside everything's a wreck."

His wife forgave his infidelity but challenged him to write something about his

journey. Young embraced the task in early 2006, completing 15 copies of "The Shack," which he gave to family and friends.

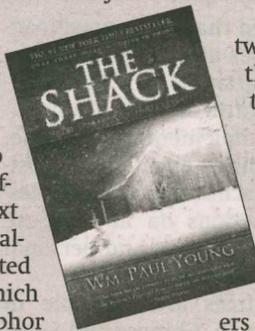
Before long, recipients were asking for additional copies.

Young sent the manuscript to two friends with connections to the movie and publishing industries. Over the next 16 months, the two men helped Young repair some of the novel's literary and theological flaws.

In early 2007, they unsuccessfully pitched the book to two dozen publishing houses. Religious publishers said it was too iconoclastic; mainstream houses said it contained too much Jesus talk.

The two friends raised enough money to create Windblown Media and print 10,000 copies, hoping they could sell them online within two years. By year one, they had sold a quarter million copies.

Hachette Book Group USA, a major New York publisher, signed on to distribute the book in May. It debuted at No. 1 on the New York Times' June 8 trade paperback fiction best-seller list.



Some evangelical leaders (such as Eugene Peterson, author of "The Message" Bible) have praised Young's book, but others (Prison Fellowship founder Charles Colson and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary President Albert Mohler) say it plays fast and loose with Scripture, and confuses key Christian doctrines such as the Trinity, forgiveness and salvation.

Media scholar Lynn Clark said the book blends elements from popular books and films to "reassure readers that even in our culturally plural world full of conflict, an old, unquestioned approach to traditional Christianity is best."

Still, Clark is troubled by its racial stereotypes. "The book pretends that it's being 'diverse,' but all its racially diverse spiritual beings serve the white guy at its center," she said.

Young welcomes criticism but is not letting it slow him down. "People have their fears about the book's theology and stuff, and that's OK," said Young, who is working on a movie version. "All over the country, I meet non-religious people who have read the book, bought copies for their religious friends, and told them, 'I like the God in this a lot more than yours.'"

PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following Kentucky Baptist missionaries and ministries:

Elkhorn Baptist Association's Feed the Hungry ministry. Missionary Sandra Williams directs this ministry that helps feed the homeless and low-income families. A hot meal is served each Monday evening and more than 2,000 sack lunches are distributed from three locations each week. Many of those receiving food also share prayer requests with volunteers who are there to pray with them. Pray that those receiving physical nourishment also will find spiritual food through Christ. Pray for additional volunteers and resources to meet the growing need for hunger relief.

MSC missionaries George and Kathy Goeddey of Oneida. The Goeddeys minister on the campus of Oneida Baptist Institute. George serves as the coordinator of volunteers and Kathy serves as "go-fer chauffeur," transporting students and staff to appointments or the airport. Pray that they will be bold witnesses as they transport, run errands and coordinate the work of hundreds of volunteers each year. Pray also that students will come to know Christ as Savior and Lord.

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

■ **CARLISLE**—Locust Grove Church ordained Pastor **Josh Pollitt** to the gospel ministry Sept. 21.

■ **ELIZABETHTOWN**—Severns Valley Church will hold revival services Sept. 28, 9 & 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Sept. 29-Oct. 1, 7 p.m., with **Rick Howerton**, seminar and consulting director for Serendipity House of LifeWay Christian Resources, as evangelist. **Greg Allen, Joe Leavell** and **Alicia Williamson Garcia** will provide special music.

■ **FARMINGTON**—Coldwater Church will celebrate its 100th anniversary Sept. 28. **Larry Salmon** is pastor.

■ **GILBERTSVILLE**—Bethel Church will hold revival services Sept. 28-Oct. 1 with **Don Mathis** as evangelist. **Gary Cruse** is pastor.

■ **GREENVILLE**—New Cypress Church will hold homecoming services Sept. 28, 10 a.m., with **Ray Gilliland**, director of missions for Muhlenberg County Association, as guest speaker. **Tommy Drury** is pastor.

■ **LaGRANGE**—**Zach Young** recently resigned as minister of music at De-Haven Church.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Bashford Manor Church will host its Bluegrass Gospel Sing and Jam the fourth Saturday of each month, 7 p.m. The event is open to those who sing or play bluegrass music. For more information, call **Zack Pursell** at (754) 281-5190.

Hurstbourne Church dedicated

SBC 'Soul-Winning Commitment Day' scheduled for Sunday, Oct. 5

Alpharetta, Ga. (BP)—"Who's in Your Wallet?" is the theme of this year's Soul-Winning Commitment Day, which will be observed throughout the Southern Baptist Convention Oct. 5. The annual day is sponsored by the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board.

Taking off on the slogan of a well-known credit card's television ad campaign, NAMB has developed a "3-1-6" prayer card on which Southern Baptists can write the names of three friends or relatives who need Christ. Keeping the card in their wallets or purses as a reminder, Baptists are asked to pray for these three people once a day for six days.

The emphasis is part of NAMB's national evangelism initiative—"God's Plan for Sharing"—developed and sponsored by NAMB's evangelism group.

"Sunday, Oct. 5 is the day designated for Soul-Winning Commitment Day but Southern Baptists are expected to emphasize evangelism throughout the year," said Dick Church, church evangelism resource coordinator for NAMB's evangelism team.

"If not on Oct. 5, we hope SBC churches will schedule and hold an evangelism emphasis another Sunday during the year," he added. "Whenever it's held, the day should be a time of inspiration, motivation, communication, celebration, instruction, commitment and prayer."

In addition to the "Who's in Your Wallet?" 3-1-6 prayer cards,

Spotlight on ...

DeMossville



Unity Church will hold homecoming services Sept. 28 with **Jerome Byrd**, pastor of Good News Church in Cincinnati, as guest speaker. A meal will follow the morning service. **Bobby Barnes** is pastor.

its new Welcome Center with a ribbon-cutting ceremony Sept. 14. **Mike O'Neal** is pastor.

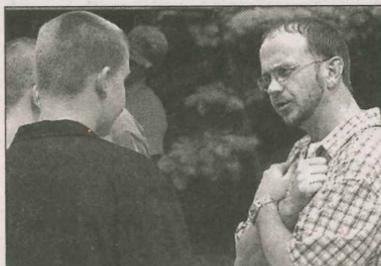
■ **OWINGSVILLE**—Owingsville Church recently called **Brian Dembowczyk** as pastor.

■ **PADUCAH**—**Dwayne Franklin** recently resigned as pastor of Park Avenue Church.

■ **PRINCETON**—**Delton Beall** recently resigned as pastor of Southside Church to become state director of missions for the West Virginia Baptist Convention.

■ **TAYLORSVILLE**—Elk Creek Church recently called **Josh McFarland** as pastor.

■ **WICKLIFFE**—Bethlehem Church recently called **Carl Cooper** as pastor.



WINNING SOULS Block parties can give Christians opportunities to share their faith with their community, such as this one hosted by Eastside Community Church in Indianapolis prior to the Southern Baptist Convention in June. (BP photo by John Swain)

Church noted that other downloadable resources are available online (www.TheBigDay.org) for Soul-Winning Commitment Day. These include an implementation guide, sermon outlines and videos, posters, Sunday school/small group lessons, instructions on how to use the 3-1-6 prayer cards and personal evangelism training methods.

All resources are available in English, Korean, Chinese and Spanish. To order prayer cards, call (866) 407-NAMB. Cards come in packets of 100 for \$9. For more information, call (770) 410-6372.

"Personal evangelism has always defined Southern Baptists," Church said. "This main focus constantly challenges us to build bridges to reach out to people with the good news of Jesus Christ. It is our great privilege and personal responsibility to share the gospel with unbelievers."



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October

- 3-4 Celebrate the Mission, First Baptist Church, Morehead.
- 7 Understanding Other Beliefs, Beacon Hill Baptist Church, Somerset.
- 9-11 Basic Training for Church Planters, Baptist Building, Louisville.
- 10-11 Women on Mission/Baptist Nursing Fellowship Fall Retreat, Cedarmore.
- 18 Christian Women in Ministry State Leaders Forum, Baptist Building, Louisville.
- 23-24 Quarterly Prayer Meeting for Spiritual Awakening, Haven of Rest, Inez.
- 25 101 Workshop, Hillcrest Baptist Church, Hopkinsville.
- 25 Reclaiming Our Communities, First Baptist Church, Madisonville; Ashland Avenue, Lexington.
- 31-11/2 International Student Conference, Cave City Convention Center.

November

- 1 101 Workshop, First Baptist Church, Somerset.
- 8 Girls in Action Missions Event, Rich Pond Baptist Church, Bowling Green.
- 10 J.H. Spencer Historical Society Inaugural Meeting, Heritage Baptist Church, Lexington.
- 10 Kentucky Baptist Youth Ministers Association Fall Meeting, Immanuel Baptist Church, Lexington.
- 10 Kentucky Baptist Music Conference, First Baptist Church, Brandenburg.
- 10 KBC Mission Board, Immanuel Baptist Church, Lexington.
- 11 KBC Annual Meeting, Immanuel Baptist Church, Lexington.
- 14-16 All-State Junior High Choir, Hurstbourne Baptist Church, Louisville.

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

Promise Keepers founder returns

Denver (RNS)—Promise Keepers co-founder Bill McCartney has returned to his position as chairman and CEO of the Christian men's ministry, the organization announced Sept. 10.

Raleigh Washington, a former executive of the Denver-based ministry and current board member, will return as president.

McCartney, 68, resigned in 2003 to care for his ill wife.

Lyndi McCartney is "still ailing but in complete accord" with McCartney's decision to return, general counsel Ed O'Brien told the Rocky Mountain News.

Tom Fortson left as president and

CEO during the first weekend of September. His resignation was voluntary, O'Brien said.

McCartney, a former University of Colorado football coach, helped found the ministry in 1990.

At its height, the men's ministry brought tens of thousands of men to the National Mall in 1997 to commit to God and family. Since that time, it has faced layoffs at its headquarters and declining attendance at regional events.

After he left Promise Keepers, McCartney started a "Road to Jerusalem" ministry that focuses on Jews who believe Jesus is the Messiah.

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE: "How Firm the Foundation: A History of Tates Creek Association of Baptists in Kentucky," compiled by Dr. Dennis L. Brewer, Harry Johnson and Glenn Roberts. Includes more than 225 pages of biographical sketches of associational leaders and early pastors, as well as churches that are now or have been part of the association, plus 30 pages of photos of individuals and churches. Available the first week of October. Pre-publication price: \$22.50. Regular price (after Oct. 17, 2008): \$27.50. Reserve your copy by calling (859) 986-4224.

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

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 Georgetown (Ky.) Baptist Church. For more details about the congregation and the position, visit www.georgetownbaptist.org.

SEEKING: Experienced minister of music to lead (either personally or through staff and volunteer leaders) all music ministries, including adult choir, senior adult choir, youth choir, orchestra and others. Send resumé or letter of interest to: Personnel Committee, Parkland Baptist Church, 7206 Shepherdsville Road, Louisville, KY 40219.

SEEKING: Full-time Southern Baptist pastor for rural Campbell County, Ky., church. Requires at least a college or Bible school degree with 10+ years experience and is at least 50 years of age. Please send resumé to the Pastor Search Committee, Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church, 11212 Lees Road, Alexandria, KY 41001.

SEEKING: Piano player for Baptist church in Shepherdsville, Ky.; Thursday nights and Sunday mornings. Paid position—salary negotiable. Call (502) 802-9535.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for a loving and growing church in Russell Springs, Ky. Please send resumé and DVD, CD or tape of recent sermon to: Pulpit Committee, Liberty Baptist Church, 215 Wilson St., Russell Springs, KY 42642.

'J3s' fuel missions fire at Falls Creek Conf. Center

By Don Graham
SBC International Mission Board

Davis, Okla. (BP)—Plenty of pop culture action heroes have their trademark vehicles. A new elite team's 1974 Volkswagen bus, however, is quite a contrast.

Dubbed the "Mobe-Bile" (short for mobilization), the restored bus is just fine for these young missionaries intent on getting teenagers to care about missions.

In a new effort to recruit missionaries, Southern Baptist International Mission Board President Jerry Rankin dispatched recent college graduates to Falls Creek Baptist Conference Center in Davis, Okla., to talk up missions to middle- and high-school students.

"These campers are the next generation of missionaries," Rankin said. "If they can be confronted with the challenge of missions, this is the time when God is going to touch them."

The six-person team, known as "J3s," have added a third year to their missionary journeyman term primarily to work as missions recruiters.

"I see us as advocates for the lost," said Oklahoma native Joel Houston, a J3 who served in a country so hostile to the gospel his real name cannot be printed. "We've come from places that are 99 percent lost. There's a big pool of Christians here that need to be mobilized."

The J3s impacted many Falls Creek campers such as 17-year-old Carolyn Doyle from Elgin, Okla.

"I didn't realize until today just how much of an impact needs to be made," Doyle noted. "There are so many lost people ... I just feel like it's me that needs to be one of those who step out and tell others."

The Mobe-Bile was all about generating a buzz among campers.

Rolling into Falls Creek's recreation area enveloped in a cloud of dust and diesel fumes, the Volkswagen's appearance channels the spirit of Scooby Doo's "Mystery Machine," complete with groovy decals and an obnoxious horn. Students swarm



MISSIONS MOBILE Josh Walton of Kentucky stops a van dubbed the "Mobe-Bile" by a group of Southern Baptist journeyman missionaries to chat with summer campers at Falls Creek Baptist Conference Center in Davis, Okla. The team of "J3s" devoted eight weeks this summer talking to students about missions. "The van's purpose is to pique their interest and get them to visit the missions center where we can sit down and really have a good conversation," Walton said. (IMB photo)

the bus as its doors swing open. Josh Walton, a J3 from Kentucky, leaps out and rushes to pop the Mobe-Bile's rear hatch.

"Put this on! Do it now—NOW!" Walton shouts at students as he frantically throws articles of clothing from a cardboard box in the bus's back seat. Initially dumbfounded by this apparently random attack, something clicks and the teens suddenly begin to don brightly colored West African tunics.

"Who knows which country drinks more Coca-Cola than any other place in the world?" Walton shouts. One of the students correctly guesses Mexico, where Walton served as a journeyman.

"Did you know that you can buy a Coke anywhere in Mexico, but there are still places there where you can't learn about Jesus because no one

knows who He is?" Walton asks.

"How is it that we've made a can of sugared water available almost anywhere on earth, yet we haven't done the same with the Living Water that is Jesus Christ?"

As this sobering reality sinks in, Walton challenges students to visit Falls Creek's missions center, headquarters for the J3's mobilization efforts.

Housed in a new brick building, the Wynn Center for World Missions manifests Falls Creek's commitment to missions mobilization. Its purpose is to provide students with everything they need to translate a missions call into action.

"For me it's been a missing piece of a lot of conversations. We talk about missions but never tell kids how to get started," said James Lankford, Falls Creek's program director.

To help students make that jump, the center is outfitted with a bank of computers linked to missions Web sites to giant maps highlighting "hot spots" where Christ isn't known. Most of all, it's a place where students can talk one-on-one with somebody who's actually been overseas.

Over the course of the summer, J3s have engaged thousands of students in conversation—answering questions, dispelling myths, encouraging those who've accepted God's call and comforting those afraid to embrace it.

More than 2,600 campers signed up to explore the possibility of going overseas on a short-term mission trip. Thousands more made public commitments to reach their schools, friends and families for Christ.

**Name changed for security reasons.*

Small Texas church sees big results from prayer, revival

By Erin Roach
Baptist Press

Nixon, Texas (BP)—A small church pastor in Texas is encouraging other small churches not to limit God after his congregation committed themselves to prayer and then saw God bring substantial results.

"I believe that there is a mindset now that if I'm not a megachurch pastor, I don't count," Kenny Rawls, pastor of First Baptist Church of Nixon, Texas, told Baptist Press. "The majority of churches that are Southern Baptist are smaller-population churches."

Rawls points to his own small congregation in a community that is 85 percent Hispanic, about 45 miles east of San Antonio. More than two years ago, the church decided to designate a prayer time each Tuesday morning. A few powerful prayer warriors emerged, setting an example for the rest of the congregation.

"Prayer is a spiritual and a physical practice," he said. "I find that the

more that you pray, the hungrier a person gets to pray."

Last December, the church's leadership team began planning a spring revival. They had been praying about hosting a revival for two years.

They settled on 2 Chronicles 7:14 as a theme verse and began to unpack, phrase by phrase, what the verse meant. The verse says, "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

Rawls said the group concluded that if they would do those four things mentioned in the verse, then God had promised to do those three things. To spread the message to the entire congregation, the deacons started hosting Sunday evening Bible studies in their homes.

Stan Coffey, pastor of The Church at Quail Creek in Amarillo, Texas, agreed to preach during the April

revival.

Rawls said he was surprised Coffey, who preaches to a congregation of thousands each Sunday, would travel come to a community of just over 2,000 to preach a revival.

Coffey even offered to pay his own way if the church could not afford the expenses, Rawls noted.

Someone was at the church praying 24 hours a day for a full week before the revival, he recalled.

During the four-day revival, First Baptist, Nixon, saw 84 people make public decisions for Christ. They were seeing God answer their prayers.

"We have had over 40 baptisms this year," Rawls said. "We've seen at present over 300 people come to the Lord in the past two and a half years."

The week of July 28, the church welcomed more than 200 children in vacation Bible school.

"From the pulpit, I do not sacrifice the Word of God. ... We talk

about sin. We talk about heaven and hell. We preach the gospel in love, and we ask people to repent."

Cultural Catholicism has a strong hold on many people in the community, Rawls said, noting that it is difficult for some new converts to follow through with regular church attendance if their families object.

"We have a person here who joined our church from a Catholic background, accepted Jesus and was baptized," Rawls noted. "Their family went and purchased a tombstone and put the person's name on it. ... They were saying, 'You're dead. We don't even know you.'"

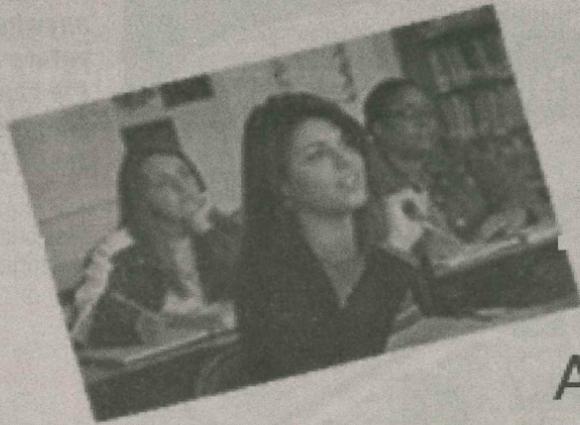
Despite such opposition, Rawls continues to push his congregation toward prayer and visiting people who still need to know Jesus or be encouraged in their new life in Christ.

"We limit God, and it is possible for small churches to blow the doors off because people want to hear about Jesus Christ."

"How is it that we've made a can of sugared water available almost anywhere on earth, yet we haven't done the same with the Living Water that is Jesus Christ?"

IMB journeyman missionary Josh Walton of Kentucky

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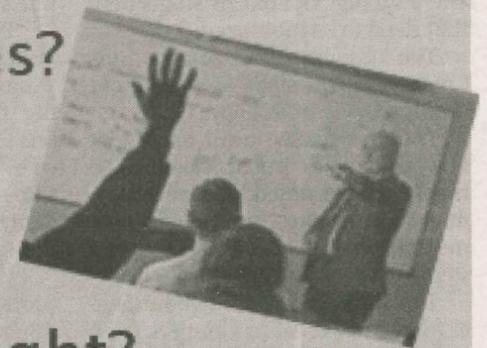


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