

October 21, 2008  
Vol. 182, No. 42**FOR THE RECORD****Baptists**Boston-area Arabic Baptists 'reaching out' to their community. *Page 2.***Baptists**Randal Everett's sermon at Southwestern Seminary may signal thaw in relations with moderate Texas convention. *Page 3.***Kentucky**Kentucky Baptist churches working hard to feed state's hungry. *Page 3.***Financial Forum**Remember to lean on the Lord in these troubled financial times. *Page 4.***Guest Editorial**Western Recorder is a voice for Kentucky Baptists. *Page 5.***Issues**Report calls church giving in the United States 'lukewarm.' *Page 6.***Nation**Connecticut joins Massachusetts and California in legalizing same-sex marriage. *Page 8.***American Protestants lacking in spiritual maturity***New book, 'The Shape of Faith to Come,' takes spiritual inventory of churchgoers*By David Roach  
*LifeWay Christian Resources*

Nashville—Although only 17 percent of Protestant churchgoers in America demonstrate a "decent" level of spiritual maturity, a widespread recommitment to biblical standards has the potential to ignite revival, according to a new book by Brad Waggoner, vice president of B&H Publishing Group.

The 17 percent represents those who scored the equivalent of 80 percent or higher on a spiritual formation survey designed to measure key areas of Christian discipleship.

"Let's not make things look worse or better than they are," Waggoner writes in "The Shape of Faith to Come: Spiritual Formation and the Future of Discipleship," released

by B&H Publishing Group, the publishing arm of LifeWay Christian Resources. "We must set aside whatever self-centered or self-serving, biased filter we look through. No one is helped by our dodging or spinning the truth. Let's own up to the facts and work on the solutions."

For the book, Waggoner surveyed—in May 2007 and again in May 2008—2,500 Protestants who attend church on a regular basis. Using an evaluation tool called the Spiritual Formation Inventory, he evaluated seven domains of spiritual formation among respondents.

The seven domains measured include learning truth; obeying God and denying self; serving God and others; sharing Christ; exercising

faith; seeking God; and building relationships.

Waggoner said in an interview that a 30-year passion for spiritual formation drove him to write the book.

"I love to watch people be transformed by the power of the gospel and the renewing impact of God's Word," he noted. "However, in observing many of our churches I have become very concerned about the lack of focus upon qualitative discipleship. Too many leaders and churches measure success by numbers rather than by the transformation of hearts, minds and character.

"The research that led to this book is a wake-up call for anyone who is serious about the biblical mandate to make disciples," he

added.

Waggoner emphasized that the book prescribes a biblical standard for discipleship rather than simply reporting statistics. Each chapter presents a biblical norm and subsequently shows how Protestant churchgoers measure up.

"God's redemptive plan ultimately leads toward heaven, but the journey between now and then is to be one of radical transformation," Waggoner said. "Way too many professed Christians seem to demonstrate little evidence of biblical spiritual formation. This book will explain what it is that God desires for His followers and how to move forward on the journey of transformation."

Among the book's findings:  
□ See Book: American ... *Page 6*

**New dormitory expands options for E. Kentucky prison ministry**By Ken Walker  
*State Correspondent*

Inez—Although she lives in the suburbs of Chicago—the nation's third-largest city—Amy Ruffin was unnerved by her first trip to the hills of Southeastern Kentucky last December.

Not only did her drive through the mountains take 11 hours, she did not know what to expect on her visit to the Big Sandy federal prison.

Under such circumstances, Kentucky's only ministry to families of inmates lived up to its name. During Ruffin's half-dozen visits since last year, the Haven of Rest has become like a second home.

"It's more than housing," Ruffin said of Haven of Rest, which offers free lodging to families of prison inmates. "Eileen (Mullins) and Ann (Kidder) remember our last visit and ask us about it.

"I got married in July and they put on a nice reception. They do a service on Saturday after the (prison) visit; they might read Scripture and have a discussion. They make it engaging for the kids, too."

Not only has the Kentucky Baptist ministry served more than 600 families over the past four years, its capacity of six guest rooms is about to triple.

A 19-bedroom dormitory that was dedicated in late August is expected to open by late October, or as soon as volunteers from First Baptist Church of Richmond (which donated \$2,500 toward the cost) hook up a sewer line. Three of the rooms will be set aside, one as an apartment for Kidder, the caretaker; and two for volunteers who agree to clean the facilities.

Soon after the original rooms opened in the fall of 2004, the advisory board suggested building a

house for Mullins and her husband, Carl, a retired Kentucky Baptist pastor, so they could live on the property.

However, Eileen resisted that idea, saying God told her if they built a house the ministry would not be able to add additional guest rooms. That message prompted Mullins to enlist the help of Appalachian Regional Ministry, which publicized the dormitory on its list of mission projects.

**Little money, lots of faith**

Ray Grubbs of Lincolnton Baptist Church in Georgia read about it at his state convention and felt drawn to the project. The first time he called Mullins to discuss what she hoped to do, she told him, "I don't have any money, but I have a lot of faith."

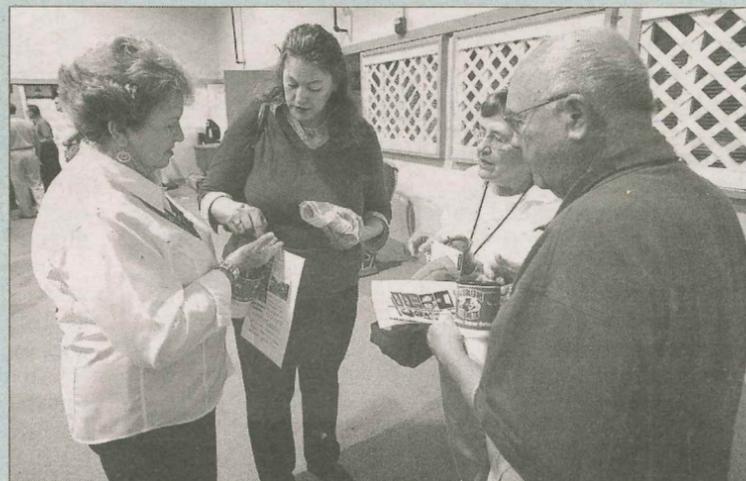
One of eight Baptist Builders coordinators in Georgia, Grubbs went to work.

He found a lumber company willing to donate the wood, a Baptist Builders crew from suburban Memphis, Tenn., and a volunteer from New York to pour the slab.

Over the past three years, Grubbs has made half a dozen trips to Inez, along with various volunteers from his church. Lincolnton Baptist also donated \$2,500 towards a pump station needed for the sewer project.

"I get the satisfaction of knowing I've served the Lord," Grubbs said of what he gets from helping Haven of Rest. "It has increased the number of (Lincolnton Baptist members) who have volunteered and made a deeper commitment from them."

Impressively, the building has been appraised at \$450,000, but the only bill remaining is \$43,000 for building supplies. Haven of Rest has  
□ See *New dormitory ... Page 3*



**SHOW AND TELL** North American Mission Board trustee Peggy Ballou (second from right), a member of Central Baptist Church in Corbin, and her husband, Sam, along with fellow NAMB trustee Barbara McCormick (left) visit with New Orleans Friendship House missionary Deshannan Paddock. (NAMB photo by John Swain)

**NAMB trustees get first-hand look at New Orleans missions**By Mike Ebert  
*SBC North American Mission Board*

New Orleans (BP)—The bright and colorful walls inside the Baptist Friendship House just a few blocks from the French Quarter in New Orleans reflect an atmosphere of hope—hope in Christ, who is proclaimed daily here, as well the hope that exudes from Kay Bennett, the director of the ministry.

That hope is in stark contrast with the misery Bennett's clients have endured before showing up at the ministry. Most are mothers who have been so abused by spouses or boyfriends that they must seek refuge and protection. They arrive with their young children and only a few belongings.

Bennett and her staff welcome them, give them lodging if there is room and then start the process of helping them back on their feet

so they can provide for their families. It is a task that has become more difficult and time-consuming since Hurricane Katrina.

"We provide literacy training, GED preparation, computer skills, life skills, job readiness training," Bennett said. "Before Katrina, we had a five-to-six month transition time for most women. Now it is closer to a year."

Housing is much more expensive since the hurricane—on average \$1,200-\$1,500 a month for a two-bedroom apartment. And childcare—a necessity for a woman who must work to provide for her family—runs \$1,000 a month even with government assistance.

Bennett, a Southern Baptist North American Mission Board missionary, and her team gave NAMB trustees and staff members a tour of the Baptist Friendship fa-  
□ See *NAMB trustees ... Page 2*

## Boston-area Arabic Baptists 'reaching out' to community

By Robert Preer  
Boston Globe

**West Roxbury, Mass. (BP)**—When Shady Bishay, a sales executive for a Boston high-tech firm and a native of Egypt, tells American friends he belongs to an Arabic Baptist church in West Roxbury, Mass., the information often does not compute.

"The first thing is that they are shocked that I'm a Christian," said Bishay, who lives in Foxborough, Mass., with his wife, a native of Palestine. "They have trouble understanding. It's definitely not the norm."

Much has been written and said in this country in recent years about Arabs and evangelical Christians, but rarely in the same sentence.

Yet in one of the most prominent locations in West Roxbury is the Arabic Evangelical Baptist Church, a large modern building with a faux lighthouse, an attached gymnasium, meeting rooms, television studio and underground parking area.

The Arabic Evangelical Baptist Church of West Roxbury, with a congregation of around 200, is the largest church of its kind in the North-

east, according to its leaders. It belongs to the Southern Baptist Convention and shares the beliefs and practices of the megachurches that are so influential in other parts of the United States. "We are evangelical Baptists," said its pastor, Khaled Ghobrial. "We understand we are a minority of a minority, but we are reaching out."

Services in the church are conducted in Arabic, and most members are first-generation immigrants from primarily Islamic countries of the Middle East and North Africa. They travel to the church from across greater Boston, although the bulk of the congregation is drawn from the significant Arabic population in West Roxbury and nearby communities.

The church's reach extends far beyond Massachusetts, however. The weekly services are recorded and turned into video programs distributed to cable stations across North America and beamed by satellite to the Middle East.

Ghobrial, a native of Egypt who came to Boston to head the church

six years ago, said he finds it remarkable he is able to deliver his message to such a far-flung audience. In his home country and in many of the predominantly Muslim countries, Christians are afraid to express their faith openly, he noted.

"Actually God is opening the windows. Especially in the Middle East and North Africa, we never thought we could get our message into people's homes," Ghobrial said.

The West Roxbury church opened in 2006 on the site of an old lumberyard and warehouse. Founded in the early 1970s, the congregation met for many years in rented space at the Emmanuel Episcopal Church in West Roxbury. Since opening the new building, the church has stepped up its outreach programs, offering day care and language classes in Arabic and English that are open to the public. The church also has opened its space to community groups.

"We have two symbols that summarize our vision: a lighthouse and a bridge," Ghobrial pointed out. The lighthouse on top of the building

shines brightly at night, although its light does not rotate like those on the coast. A painting of a bridge hangs in the church's lobby. The main sanctuary has seating for about 400.

Like evangelicals elsewhere, the members of the Arabic Evangelical Baptist Church take their message beyond the walls of their church. In the summer, about 15 or 20 church members go out about once a month to spread the gospel.

"We go out in the streets," Ghobrial said. "Downtown Crossing, Harvard Square, Revere Beach. We go to worship, to sing, to have free literature, to present the gospel to all the Arabs, Christians and Muslims. We invite them to have a dialogue with us."

The church is growing, according to its pastor, but he has no illusions of its joining the ranks of the evangelical churches of the American South.

"Is the church growing? Yes. Is it growing like a megachurch? No. We're not within the Bible Belt. We're in New England."

## Everett sermon at Southwestern may be sign of thaw in relations

By Bob Allen  
Associated Baptist Press

**Fort Worth, Texas (ABP)**—In a sign that once-frosty relations between the Baptist General Convention of Texas and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary may be thawing, the BGCT's new executive director, Randel Everett, spoke there Oct. 15.

"I have, as you would guess, gotten a little criticism about having Dr. Everett here, and he's gotten some criticism about coming," Southwestern President Paige Patterson said in introducing Everett during a chapel service. Everett became executive director of the 2.3-million-member, moderate-dominated BGCT in March.

"That always amazes me, because the theory is we disagree, and I shouldn't have anybody in who disagrees," Patterson said.

"That's kind of interesting, isn't it?" he continued. "Because we haven't even talked enough to find out if we do disagree about anything."

Relations between the state convention and seminary grew chilly when trustees fired the seminary's popular president, Russell Dilday, in 1994. The distance grew even wider when Patterson, one of the acknowledged architects of the SBC's conservative shift, became Southwestern's president in 2003.

In 2004, the BGCT banned Southwestern Seminary and other SBC entities from having displays at the state convention's annual meeting, saying they were not supportive of BGCT's mission. Texas Baptist leaders lifted that prohibition in June, approving both Southwestern Seminary and LifeWay Christian Resources as exhibitors at next month's convention meeting in Fort Worth.

Everett opened his chapel remarks by describing the seminary as "an important part of our heritage as Texas Baptists."

"I'm sorry Dr. Patterson received some flak about this invitation," Everett noted. "It was a gracious act for him."

"One of the things I hope we can understand is that we all 'see through glass dimly' and one of these days we'll be able to see Jesus as fully and clearly, because we'll be seeing him face to face," Everett said. "As we struggle with what God's word is saying with us, in deep conversations with each other, and often times in disagreements, we need to love each other as Christ loves us."

Everett preached a sermon on forgiveness based on Matthew 18, closing with, "Wouldn't it be something today if God brought healing to our Baptist family?"

"You really only have two choices," Patterson said in response. "You can either be bitter and when you get to be my age ... then you are just a bitter old man. You can either do that, or you can practice the fine Christological art of forgiveness. You only have two choices."

## NAMB trustees visit ministries, handle business

Continued from page 1

cilities Oct. 6 and shared the highlights of what goes on there. Trustees also visited the Carver Baptist Center, another Southern Baptist ministry where missionaries bring hope to inner-city New Orleans.

"We want to train them in a way so they will share their faith when they go home," noted Larry Miguez, director of the Carver Center.

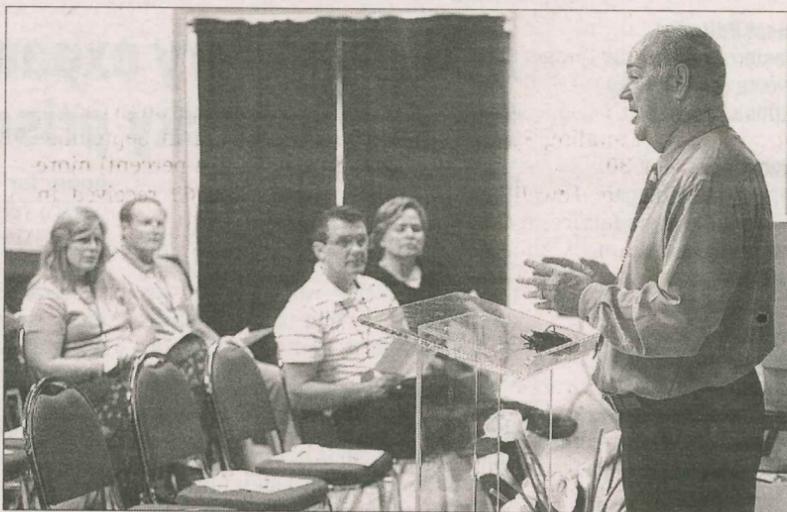
"It was thrilling to see God at work through faithful Southern Baptists in the New Orleans ministries we visited," said Reva Daniel, a NAMB trustee and member of Morrison Heights Baptist Church in Clinton, Miss. "As a trustee who spends much time dealing with administrative issues and looking at the big picture, it's encouraging to zoom in on the specific mission points and see the picture up close where lives are changed by God's grace."

After visiting the ministry centers, trustees visited homes restored through the ministry of Operation NOAH Rebuild. To date, more than 23,000 Southern Baptists have helped gut and rebuild homes damaged by Hurricane Katrina. They have helped 1,800 homeowners and witnessed 403 professions of faith in the process. That does not include the thousands who were helped in the immediate weeks and months following the storm.

Trustees concluded their tour of New Orleans with a prayer ride through a nearly vacant section of the Lower Ninth Ward. This area—where hundreds were killed when a nearby levy failed—saw near complete destruction after the flood. Three years later, a handful of original homes remain, but in most cases the only reminder of what once stood are foundations being overtaken by weeds on now-vacant lots.

### Business session

After visiting such ministries, trustees approved a \$133 million NAMB operating budget for 2009 during their Oct. 8 business ses-



**TESTIMONY** Missionary Larry Miguez shares with North American Mission Board trustees about the work of the Carver Center, a Southern Baptist ministry center in inner-city New Orleans where Miguez is director. (NAMB photo by John Swain)

sion in New Orleans, and confirmed Van Kicklighter as the new senior strategist for NAMB's church planting group. Kicklighter has served at NAMB nine years and also with the Illinois Baptist State Association and the Missouri Baptist Convention.

In addition, trustees were told that the board has spent well below budgeted levels for 2008 and that numbers for missionaries, chaplains and missions volunteers all are on the upswing. A record 2,837 NAMB-endorsed SBC chaplains now serve in North America and throughout the world. Additionally, 5,643 NAMB missionaries were serving on the field at the end of September. World Changers, the volunteer home renovation ministry that deploys middle school, high school and college students as summer missions volunteers, is experiencing a 30-percent increase in early registrations, compared to registrations seen at the same time last year.

NAMB President Geoff Hammond closed the meeting by thanking Southern Baptists for the financial support they have given the mission board.

"In the midst of a difficult

year, Southern Baptists have come through on Cooperative Program giving and I want to say thanks to them and thank you Lord," Hammond told trustees. "I want to thank Southern Baptists for contributing to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering as well."

Hammond noted the work of Southern Baptist disaster relief volunteers whom NAMB helps to organize when a national response is needed. He told trustees Southern Baptists have prepared more than 4.8 million hot meals in response to Hurricanes Gustav and Ike and completed more than 3,000 chainsaw jobs. In addition, Hammond shared that more than 220 churches in Louisiana and Texas had been damaged or destroyed in the storms.

"I'm making an appeal to trustees and to Southern Baptists to consider adopting one of these churches as they try to rebuild," Hammond urged.

Hammond also announced a national convocation for associational directors of mission to take place Sept. 9-11, 2009, at the LifeWay Ridgecrest Conference Center near Asheville, N.C.

# Kentucky Baptist churches work to feed state's hungry

By Drew Nichter  
News Director

**Owensboro**—Eaton Memorial Baptist Church has sat at the corner of Third and Orchard Streets in downtown Owensboro for 100 years now—"God's Corner," the church has lovingly nicknamed it.

The church began as a mission in 1908 to serve its community. On the outside, the church has changed cosmetically over the years, but seemingly little has changed the congregation's purpose. Eaton Memorial's mission: To serve its community right where it is—a community that has changed in a century, not necessarily for the better.

"There's just a lot of need, a lot of drugs, a lot of alcohol," Pastor Dennis McFadden explained. "There are just a lot of things right here and we're sitting here in the midst of it."

Like many of Kentucky's inner-city and rural communities, hunger is a huge problem. According to a 2007 report from the Food Re-

search and Action Center, a national nonprofit hunger organization, 16.8 percent of the commonwealth's population lived below the poverty line in 2005, ninth worst in the United States.

Not far off was the percentage of Kentucky households that were "food insecure," a term used to describe a family's lack of available food to properly provide nourishment for themselves. Between 2003 and 2005, FRAC reported that 12.8 percent of Kentucky families were deemed food insecure. Factor in current economic conditions and a dramatic rise in food prices since the report was issued and food insecurity likely has worsened.

## Thanksgiving outreach

Nearly four years ago, while exploring the possibility of a community-wide Thanksgiving meal, McFadden said he was startled to learn that nearly 90 percent of local elementary school students were on a reduced- or free-lunch program.

More than 56 percent of students statewide participated in such programs during the 2005-06 school year, according to the FRAC report.

"It put up a red flag that there is a need here with food," McFadden recalled.

Buoyed by a tremendous response with the Thanksgiving meal, Eaton Memorial soon began its weekly Neighborhood Supper ministry. Each Monday night, more than 70 people from the community sit down for a hot, home-cooked meal at the church. Joann Clary and a dozen volunteers prepare the meal while McFadden presents the gospel to those who need to hear it.

"We're trying to ... let them know that church is not just for people who dress up; church is for God's children, whoever they are," said Clary, who has coordinated Neighborhood Supper with her husband, Donald, since it began three years ago.

Individual churches are able to operate such ministries through donations, fundraising efforts and monetary resources like the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund. Churches can request these funds through the Kentucky Baptist Convention, which receives quarterly money from the North American Mission Board, according to Eric Allen, KBC's mission service and ministries director.

The Southern Baptist Convention designated Oct. 12 as a day to raise awareness for its World Hunger Fund, but as Allen pointed out, "There is a critical need to replenish our world hunger funds" year round.

## Important funding

This year alone, the convention has distributed more than \$58,000 to hunger relief ministries in the state, he said. However, NAMB denied one KBC request for funds last year because of a lack of available money.

Allen explained that a church's food ministry is so important "because it meets a physical need, opening the door for the building

of relationships and the sharing of the gospel."

"Faith-based food ministries offer the message of hope that only Christ can provide because they share the bread of life when giving physical nourishment," he added.

Food distribution ministries are another way Kentucky Baptist churches are serving the state's neediest families. A survey of Pulaski County schools a few years ago—similar to that of Eaton Memorial's research—revealed to Eubank Baptist Church leaders that nearly three-quarters of nearby elementary school students participated in reduced- or free-lunch programs.

The church had originally operated a small food closet, but the reality of local need prompted a few church members to ramp up their efforts.

Members Bill and Penny Jones, and Phyllis Mick teamed up to expand the ministry, partnering with several area government food distribution centers and local merchants to collect food.

Dozens of food items are boxed up and distributed once a month at the church. Penny Jones estimated that she and dozens of volunteers serve more than 200 families one Saturday each month.

"It's good to see these people come in and (receive) just the little amount sometimes that we can give them," Jones noted. "Some of the people say that's the only way they can make it through to the end of the month."

While the pastors at both Eubank and Eaton Memorial acknowledge that their churches have experienced little membership growth through their food ministries, hunger relief remains a top priority.

"It is a most meaningful ministry because it puts God's people truly in ministry mode," Eubank Baptist Pastor Shelby Reynolds explained.

"The true purpose is to share the bread of life," he added. "People will receive the bread of life better when you give them food for the stomach."

## Cooperative Program giving begins 2008-09 fiscal year behind budget

**Louisville**—Ahead of last year's pace but behind budget by 14.21 percent, the 2008-09 fiscal year has opened with Cooperative Program receipts totaling \$1,715,798 through Sept. 30.

According to Lowell Ashby, KBC's business services team leader, that amount is more than \$284,000 behind the \$2 million needed to reach budgeted projections for the month.

The annual budget for CP this fiscal year is \$24 million. No increase in the budget goal was made for the current budget year over the budget for the 2007-08 fiscal year.

"Coming off a record 2007-2008 fiscal year, we believe the \$24 million budget is very attainable for the current year," said Billy Compton, executive associate

for Cooperative Program and resources.

Ashby noted that the \$1,715,798 given by churches through the Cooperative Program in September was \$457,435 (36.4 percent) more than the \$1,258,363 received in the same month last year.

"With \$2 million needed each month to maintain this year's CP budget, this is a much better start to the fiscal year than last year," Ashby acknowledged.

"The Cooperative Program is still the most effective and efficient way for any size church to make the Acts 1:8 missions model a reality," Compton said. "We are continually grateful for the Kentucky Baptist churches that are investing in these missions and ministry causes through the program."

## New dormitory allows Haven of Rest to house even more families

Continued from page 1

been paying down the obligation at the rate of \$1,000 a month.

"Whenever God decides to pay it off," Mullins said of her timeline for retiring the debt. "But if money comes in like it has been, we'll be able to double that payment."

The opening of the dormitory is the culmination of a vision that Mullins had 10 years ago, two years after her son went to prison.

Troubled by the desperate families she observed during her visits to him, when Mullins learned of the prison coming to Inez, she saw how her prayer—that good come from her family's tragedy—could be answered.

In addition to providing free lodging for families of inmates, she would use that opportunity to minister to them as well.

Mullins started Haven of Rest eight years ago with \$2,000 in seed money from the Kentucky Baptist Convention. Over the years, about

40 churches have visited to help with various tasks, most of them KBC churches.

A number of them give money each month to support ongoing operations, such as Ten Mile Baptist Church in Glencoe, where the Mullinses were members in the late 1980s.

Ten Mile Baptist member Frances Bayes has been to Haven of Rest five times, including two visits when other church members came.

"When I think of the benefits ... it's what it does for people who came there to visit their loved ones in prison," Bayes said. "It's a ministry to them. She's giving them a place to live, but she's also giving them the Word. God's work is being fulfilled."

That work includes a Saturday evening service, held at that time because families typically leave for home immediately after Sunday prison visits.

Mullins said three people have

received Jesus as their Savior this year; during a typical year 25 to 30 rededicate their lives to Christ.

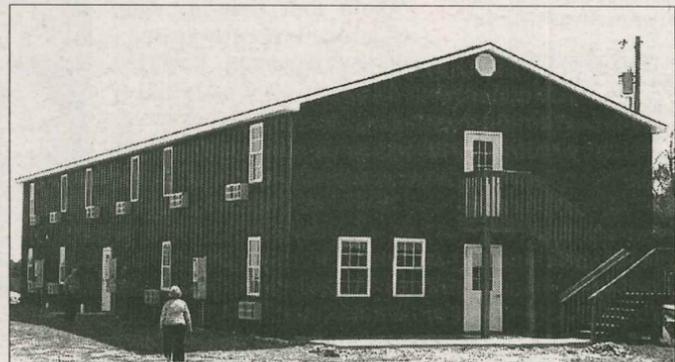
Often, people make life-changing decisions around the breakfast table on Sunday mornings—seven of the last eight conversions came during that time.

Earlier this year, a woman in her 50s told Mullins and Kidder that she was known as her town's tramp, since she had five children fathered by five different men.

"Miss Ann (Kidder) said, 'There's nothing you've done that I haven't and God saved me and gave me a ministry,'" Mullins recalled. "Five minutes later she got saved."

"One of the big things this ministry does is we (help) women to stay in their marriage. They tell us they never would have made it if it hadn't been for Haven of Rest. They find the strength to go on."

Just standing by a loved one in prison is a challenge, acknowledged Ruffin, a college graduate



and training manager. "There's a social stigma attached to it," she noted. "Some people think you're a martyr."

Which is one reason Grubbs decided to get involved with Haven of Rest—it is such a unique ministry.

"She's got an opportunity the church doesn't have," the Georgia Baptist said of Mullins. "She's been able to reach a lot of people. It's been an interesting project and she's built it on a shoestring."

## PROVIDING REST

The soon-to-be-opened Haven of Rest dormitory in Inez has 19 rooms to house families visiting relatives at the nearby Big Sandy federal prison. The ministry has served more than 600 families in just the past four years.

## WESTERN RECORDER

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

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## Remembering how to be Jesus' people

By David Gushee

Atlanta (ABP)—This morning I was reading in 1 Peter 2: "Rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy and slander of every kind. Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk."

Think of every political ad you have watched in the last month. Think of the nature of some of the exchanges between John McCain and Barack Obama in last week's debate. Think of the hateful scenes emerging from the political rallies as the speakers whip up the anger of the true believers in the crowd. Think of the fierce and hateful shouting on talk radio. Consider the malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy and slander you have witnessed. Try to find a trace of Jesus in any of it.

Or consider these words from Romans 12: "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Live in harmony with one another. Do not repay anyone evil for evil. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."

Consider the vengeful, unharmonious, political knife fights that happen each day during this election season. Consider the escalating negativity and viciousness. Try to find a trace of Jesus in any of it.

The Bible places very high value on truthful speech. When Jesus taught us to "let your yes be yes and your no be no" (Matthew 5:37), he meant it. He was calling for his followers to speak the truth without manipulation, distortion or deceit. Political campaigns, especially this one in its late stages, attempt to gain some slight advantage by constant resort to manipulation, distortion and deceit, whether in the form of guilt-by-association, exaggeration of some small kernel of truth or character-defaming innuendo. Try to find a trace of Jesus in any of it.

Consider the claims of all four of our major candidates that they

are Christians. That means they are all part of the Christian family, all brothers and sisters in Christ. Then consider these words from Philipians 2: "If you have any encouragement from being united with

Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others."

### Portraying the self

Secular politics has no tenderness and compassion. The rivals demonstrate no like-mindedness, no common love, no unity of spirit and purpose. Precisely because of selfish ambition and perhaps even vain conceit every effort is made to portray the self as better than the other, and to advance the interest of my party over the interests of the other party. Secular politics is most often the antithesis of the self-emptying love of a Savior who would leave heaven, assume the form of a servant and die a cruel death for His enemies. Just try to find a trace of Jesus in it.

Jesus said: "You have heard that it was said, Love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

Political campaigns are most often about learning more and more reasons to hate our political enemies. We learn not just to disagree with our opponents' policies but to degrade their character and hate them. Just try to find a trace of Jesus in that.

The Christian Right organized itself a generation ago to "take back America for Christ," and eventu-

ally settled on a political strategy for winning its battle. Electing the right kind of Republicans would do it. Today, one can find a smaller but parallel Christian Left organized to take back America from the (Republican) Christian Right, with a political strategy for winning its battle. Soldiers of Christ in truth arrayed, for God, country and party. And Jesus is nowhere to be seen.

This politicized strategy has swallowed up the mission of the church. It has repeatedly defamed the name of Christ. Its ugliness has obscured the beauty of Christ—and slimed the Bride of Christ, His Church.

In attempting to use worldly means to achieve Christian goals the church has adopted the spirit and tactics of the world and lost its mission and identity. In the end, we did not make America more godly; we made the church more ungodly, thus hurting both the church and America. Just try to find a trace of Jesus in that.

The early church "turned the world upside down" (Acts 17:6) not by playing the world's game better than the world but by forming faithful communities that obeyed and imitated Jesus Christ. They embodied a better way to live and thus transformed their culture.

Insofar as "Christians" are just another political tribe playing the world's game in the world's way, we are the most wretched of people and will face the sternest of judgments. We must leave this path behind and rediscover our original calling and identity as followers of Jesus Christ.

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

### What are you thinking?

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

## Four excellent KBC churches

One of the privileges of serving as executive director is that I get invited to speak in so many excellent Kentucky Baptist Convention churches. Let me tell you about four that my wife, Kay, and I recently visited.

Bethlehem Baptist Church in Louisville, where David Hughes serves as pastor, has an excellent ministry to the local elementary school. Each fall, in cooperation with the school, families are invited to the church's family life center for a meal, time of fun and gifts of school supplies.

Pat Reaves, Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union president, and her husband, Dudley, are active members at Bethlehem in the outreach and missions ministries.

First Baptist Church of Salyersville is another excellent church. The church has a revival emphasis on Sunday and Monday nights in October. Richard Gaines, pastor of Consolidated Baptist Church in Lexington; Hershanel York, pastor of Buck Run Baptist Church in Frankfort; and Paul Badgett, pastor

of First Baptist Church of Pikeville, have been some of this year's guest speakers.

Pastor Matthew Gullion has involved the church in relocation and construction of one of the finest mission facilities in Eastern Kentucky. The beautiful sanctuary will seat more than 400. Work is still ongoing in the educational wing and family life center. Hundreds of guests and local volunteers have assisted with this outstanding project.

The unique missional feature of the building is that dorm rooms and bathroom facilities are incorporated into the design to accommodate volunteers who come to work in the community.

I also recently had the opportunity to speak at Carlisle Avenue Baptist Church in Louisville where Jason Allen is pastor. He is a warm-hearted and loving pastor who is grateful for his staff and faithful members. On the Sunday we were present, Jason baptized two teens, and two young men came for bap-

### FIRST PERSON

### STEWARDSHIP

## Lean on the Lord in these troubled financial times

By Doug Strader

The last few weeks have been a financial roller coaster ride for a lot of people, especially those of us who are invested in the stock market. Many banks and financial institutions are having a difficult

time staying afloat. The federal government has had to step in and take unprecedented measures to help stem the tide. But even with that move the financial situation around the world is still shaky.

What is a Christian to do when there is so much turmoil in our financial world? I am not a financial expert and I certainly do not have all the right answers for such a complex worldwide situation. But I do think there are some guidelines that Christians can follow to help us through these difficult times.

■ Times like these should certainly cause us to read the Bible and follow God's principles of finances. We should pray for wisdom from our Father to help us know what we should do. This almost sounds passé, but we need to recognize that God is still on His throne and He is still in control. Our trust is not in the stock market, banks or our investments. Our trust is in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and our commitment is to be faithful to Him in all things at all times.

■ We should talk with our most trusted financial advisers and seek their input before we make any hasty decisions that may have a long-term effect on our financial situations. I have found that in most cases it is best to get a second opinion, weigh all possibilities, then make an informed decision.

■ Difficult financial times also provide us an opportunity to take a new look at our lifestyles to see if we are being good stewards of all that God has allowed us to manage for Him in this life. It is so easy to get caught up in the affluent lifestyle and to think that the good life of earning and spending more and more is an entitlement. Just maybe God is seeking to get our attention so that He can continue to be our teacher and our guide in managing His resources.

In the meantime, be patient, do not panic and continue to trust in the Lord, for He is good.

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



### PARTNERS IN THE MISSION



Bill Mackey

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

## Road to fixing a rocky marriage may begin at the movie theater

**Q: I have decided I want a divorce. I have been thinking about it for a long time, but I haven't told my husband or my family yet. I guess I thought I would feel better if I did something so I could say I tried one more time. I am tired of being ignored and feeling invisible. I don't want to keep living like this for the rest of my life, even though I was taught marriage is forever.**

You do sound like you have hit bottom and are miserable. You are right that when we are miserable we will do about anything to get away from that feeling. The problem is with divorce, sometimes we only trade one misery

for another. What if there really was another way out of this kind of marriage and the answer was not divorce? Would you try it? Even if it was hard? Even if it took a long time? Too often what is quick and seemingly easy is not the best for us.

If you are looking for some motivation, you might want to check out the movie "Fireproof." It might just challenge you to seek another way out of a miserable marriage. I would hate for you to live the rest of your life miserable. I imagine Christ absolutely does not want that for you either. Can you even imagine what God might have envisioned for your marriage?

In the movie, the main character uses a journal from his father to help him see his life and his marriage differently. This is a book called "The Love Dare." It is a "40-day challenge for husbands and wives to understand and practice unconditional love." The neat part about this book is you can do it. You do not have to talk your husband into reading it or doing a study with you. You can start on your own if you truly desire to discover God's vision for your marriage.

Ask for prayer and help from others; you will need it. God does have more for both of you than what you are experiencing. Ask, seek and knock until Christ opens the door to a new marriage and a new life. Know that Christ will not do the work for you, you will have to choose to do the work yourself.—Valerie Vincent

### Q: How can I help my child prepare for marriage?

At first blush, the above question seems ludicrous. However, childhood offers parents a wonderful opportunity to begin shaping the way their children think about their own marriages—as far off as it may be.

During a recent Sunday school lesson about God's plans and purposes for marriage, sixth grade girls at my church created the following description for "Husband of the Year in 2020": fun to be with; a Christian; nice; helpful; forgiving; compassionate; friendly; respectful; courteous; dignified; and patient. The boys countered with this description of "Wife of the Year in 2020": a Christian; nice; funny; kind; intelligent; respectful; is kind to animals; likes me; and polite.

As the lesson came to a conclusion, I encouraged each of the pre-teens to make a similar list of their own and file it away until it came time to begin dating. "At that point, pull out your list and let the standards you have set for yourself be a guide for whom you are going to date and build a relationship with," I told them.

I am grateful to Pastor Ken Smith who shared this idea with me. At Ken's suggestion, I sat down with my daughter, Claire, when she was just a child and talked about the kind of person she would want to marry some day. We got the list out when she began dating. As her life unfolds, I hope the standards she set as a child will inspire and guide her in the pursuit of God's best for her life.—David Garrard

#### Family Forum writers are:

**David Garrard**, minister to children at St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville. E-mail: dgarrard@smbclouisville.org.

**James Stillwell**, minister to singles at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington. E-mail: james@ibc-lex.org.

**Valerie Vincent**, Christian counselor with Hardy Associates in Louisville. E-mail: dr.vincent@insightbb.com.

**Scott Wigginton**, associate professor of pastoral ministries and counseling at Campbellsville University and minister of counseling at Campbellsville Baptist Church. E-mail: sewigginton@campbellsville.edu.

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



## Western Recorder is voice of Ky. Baptists

It seems like every day something crosses my desk which carries the message that the newspaper is a dying breed. And since the Western Recorder is a newspaper, does that mean that it will go the way of other newspapers, and as some suggest, one day be as outdated as film cameras, analog televisions and handwritten letters?

To take liberty with a Mark Twain quote, we believe the death of newspapers is greatly exaggerated. Newspapers, including this one, can still thrive—as long as the basic principles which led to a strong press are not forgotten and abandoned.

That means actively and purposefully informing readers of what is happening in our churches and Baptist life, having more names and photos than ever before, and find more ways to connect to the interests of readers. In essence, for the Western Recorder to remain strong, it must not give up its franchise. It provides coverage that no other newspaper now does, and by remaining faithful to that mission, it can prove the newspaper industry naysayers to be wrong.

You see, content is crucial. Many large newspapers struggle today because their content is old news by the time the paper is in the hands of its readers. They have seen similar material on television or on the Internet. That is where the Western Recorder has such an advantage—it provides unique content that should strike a chord with readers.

But we have to be realistic to the challenges of today's world.

■ Providing the best, most interesting content possible is a demanding task. For years now, the Western Recorder has done an excellent job of reporting on Kentucky Baptist life. But in the newspaper business, you never have too many sources or too many ideas. That is where the readership and your involvement

comes in. There are many stories worthy of being told, but they are never brought to public life because the information is not shared. If you have an idea or information for a possible story, pass that along to the Western Recorder staff. That does not mean every suggestion can develop into a story, but at least give the staff an opportunity to consider it.

■ Like the secular press, the Western Recorder will struggle to keep younger readers. That means there must be a concerted effort to include stories which appeal to that generation. There is no doubt that will continue to be the goal of the Western Recorder; the difficulty arises in figuring out just what that content is.

■ Growing readership is a challenge every newspaper faces. One way the Western Recorder can meet this challenge is by more participation in the church newsletter program. That enables a church to include their newsletter on the back page of the Western Recorder. A dual purpose is served—members are informed of the activities and events of their church, but they also get access to information on what is happening in other churches.

We are more convinced than ever that the Western Recorder is vital to the health of Kentucky Baptists. Its statewide voice of affirming biblical principles is vital when you consider the battle that is being waged in society today—the attack on the unborn has reached unprecedented heights, there are more homosexuals portrayed on television than ever before, and with each passing day there are more concerted efforts to remove the Christian influence from our world. It would indeed be a shame if the Western Recorder's voice ever passed from the scene.

Chip Hutcheson is publisher of the Princeton Times Leader and a member of Southside Baptist Church in Princeton

### GUEST EDITORIAL



Chip Hutcheson

## Br'er Bear and the briar patch

By Mark Coppenger

**Evanston, Ill. (BP)**—A recent top Chicago Tribune newspaper headline screamed, "All signs pointing to panic," and Matt Drudge crowns his Web page with the photo of a snarling bear. These are, indeed, tough bear-market times.

But I'm reminded of and encouraged by remembrance of another bear, Br'er Bear.

You know, the one in Joel Chandler Harris's "Uncle Remus" stories, brought to the screen in the old (and, yes, racially embarrassing) Disney picture, "Song of the South."

As you recall, Br'er Bear and his pal Br'er Fox had tricked Br'er Rabbit into picking a fight with a figure fashioned from tar. Before long, the rabbit was hopelessly stuck. While the bear was considering his options (including knocking Br'er Rabbit's head "clean off"), the captive implored, "Do anything you want, but please, please, don't throw me into that briar patch!"

The reverse psychology worked—and that's exactly what the fox did, only to discover that Br'er Rabbit loved the briar patch. After all, rabbits were born there. And so the clever hare made his escape, laughing all the way.

Now, it seems that Christians, along with their unbelieving friends, are being thrown into the briar patch of economic difficulty. And while shouts of horror fill the airwaves and printed page, the redeemed in Christ should have an-

other perspective, even a spirit of happy anticipation.

Is this crazy? Not if we favor spiritual vitality over economic vitality, for Christians are at their distinctive best in tragedy and calamity. Where lost people are inclined to wail, "We've lost everything," "He wrecked our lives," and "My career is ruined," healthy Christians are apt to say things like, "God is good," "We know the Lord will provide" and "Sorry. Can't talk now. Got to check on my neighbor." In other words, it's a great day for shining testimonies of trust and peace.

Furthermore, we may be on the brink of prayed-for awakening. It's happened before in the face of financial collapse. Go back to the fall of 1857, when banks and factories were closing everywhere in America. The little prayer meeting started by Jeremiah Lanphier in the Reformed church on New York's Fulton Street simply exploded. Starting with six, it topped 6,000 by late winter. And this was just in New York. Before that revival ran its course in 1858, a million people had been added to American church rolls. And that was with a national population of 30 million. In today's terms, it would mean a 10-million-person gain.

As long as we're fat and sassy, we tend to fill our lives with entertainments, the acquisition of material things and ethically questionable activities. But when our fortunes come crashing down, we're more

likely to seek God. We find ourselves in teachable moments, and Jesus has His lesson plans at the ready.

That's why we speak of the "cycle of revival": The truth and Spirit of God rescues people from self-destructive lives. Renewed, they prosper in every way. Prosperity undermines consecration. Hence, the need for a fresh revival, which God is gracious to send. Circle complete.

So maybe it's time again. Maybe this current anxiety will turn many eyes toward the Bible. Maybe the obstinate will let down their guard. Maybe we will have opportunities to witness we never dreamed would open.

What a shame it would be to miss these opportunities. But we will miss them if we join the chorus of moaners and groaners or if we suffer spiritual paralysis.

Keep praising the Lord. Keep encouraging the brethren. Keep tithing. Keep scanning the town for people freshly ready to hear a saving word from God. Start sharing your stuff.

"Oh, please, please, Br'er Bear Market, don't throw us into the briar patch of economic recession, depression, compression, contusion and laceration." But the church winks when it says this. After all, it was born and raised at the cross, in the Coliseum, in the Catacombs and through the Diaspora. What the world calls disaster, we call homecoming.

Mark Coppenger is pastor of Evanston Baptist Church near Chicago and professor of Christian apologetics at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville

## Book: American Protestants lacking in spiritual maturity

Continued from page 1

■ Only 16 percent of Protestant churchgoers read their Bible daily and another 20 percent read it "a few times a week."

■ Twenty-three percent "agreed strongly" with the statement, "When I come to realize that some aspect of my life is not right in God's eyes, I make the necessary changes."

■ Among evangelicals, 70 percent have identified their primary spiritual gifts through a class, spiritual gifts inventory or some other process.

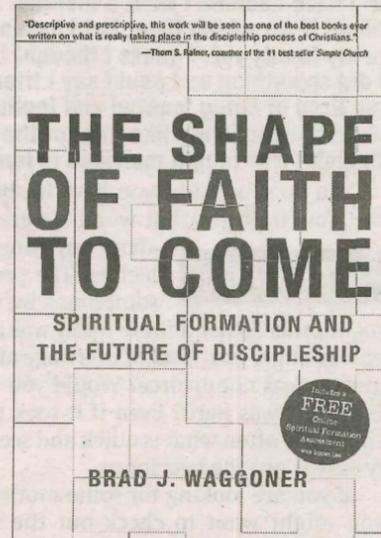
■ In the past six months, 29 percent of respondents said they shared with someone how to become a Christian twice or more, 14 percent once and 57 percent not at all.

■ Close to half of Protestant churchgoers admitted to just "going through the motions" often during the singing and prayer portions of worship services. One-quarter strongly disagreed that they merely go through the motions.

■ Fasting was perhaps the most neglected spiritual discipline, with 80 percent of respondents saying they had not fasted during the past six months.

When surveyed one year later, churchgoers evidenced very little change in overall discipleship or spiritual formation. However, a majority believed they had grown spiritually over the course of the year.

"We discovered a problem with these self-perceptions for growth or decline," Waggoner writes. "Fifty-five percent of our respondents believed they had grown spiritually in the last year. However, based on SFI scores, only 3.5 percent showed



a statistically significant level of growth."

In the midst of complex calculations and formulas, Waggoner reports that the No. 1 catalyst for spiritual growth is simple: daily Bible reading. If pastors emphasize Bible reading and church members do it, Christians can expect progress, he writes.

Those who buy the first edition of "The Shape of Faith to Come" will receive an access code to complete the SFI online and evaluate their own spiritual development.

"I will be thrilled if this book, and the SFI that comes with the book, help individual believers and church leaders engage in very honest and objective assessments of the degree to which they are becoming more like Christ and the degree to which our churches are actually producing biblical disciples and not mere 'churchgoers,'" Waggoner said.

## Report calls church giving in the United States 'lukewarm'

Champaign, Ill. (RNS)—Americans spent nearly twice as much on first-day sales of the video game "Grand Theft Auto IV" as would be needed by the Southern Baptist Convention to share the gospel with all the world's "unreached people groups" by 2010, according to a new report on church giving.

The annual report, by the Illinois-based group empty tomb inc., found a general downward trend in church member giving through 2006, which led authors to propose a "global triage to treat what ails the church."

They said focusing on reaching new "people groups" and preventing child deaths around the world would help U.S. churches "sort out their priorities" to use what funds they do have more efficiently.

"It's difficult to avoid the label of 'lukewarm' when analyzing the church's level of response to Jesus' Great Commandment and Great Commission," noted John Ronswalle, who co-authored the study with his wife, Sylvia.

Even Southern Baptists, a group highlighted as a "denomination that takes this religious task seriously," have not launched an aggres-

sive campaign to fund the estimated additional 2,800 missionaries that would be needed to "engage" unreached groups by 2010.

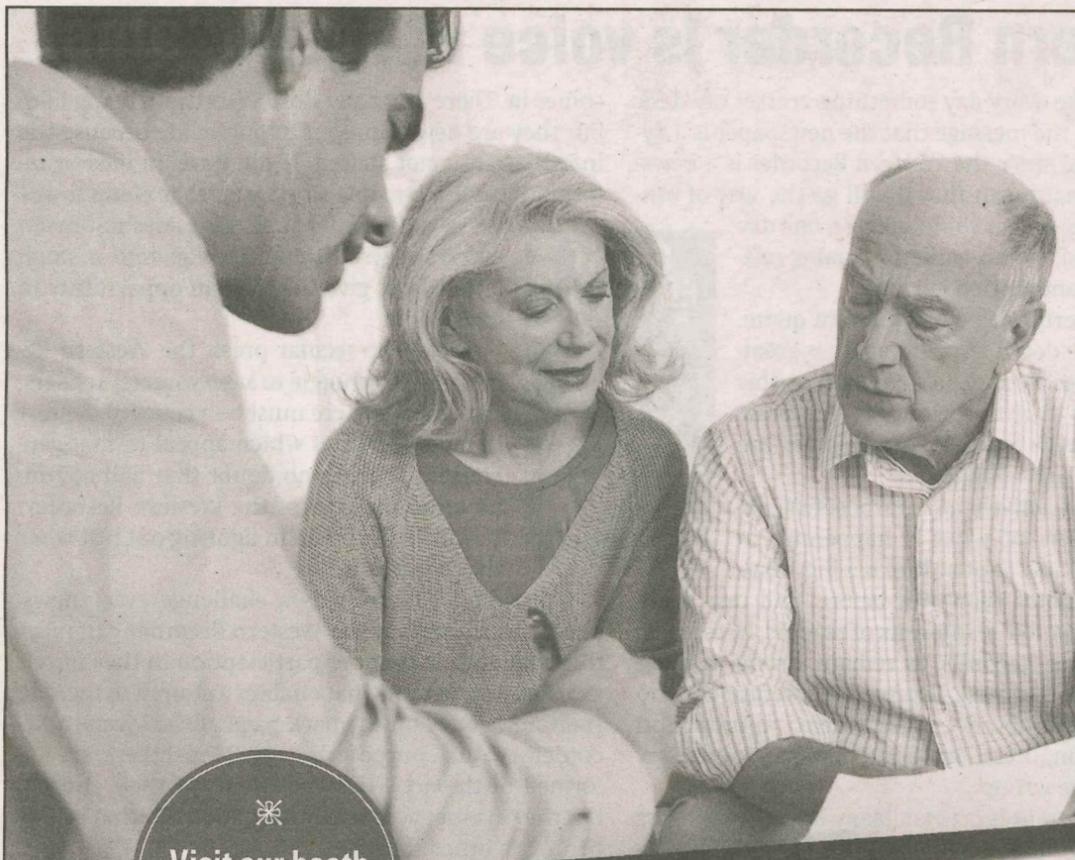
Empty tomb estimated it would cost about \$11 per Southern Baptist to fund those extra missionaries; instead, the denomination's 2008 goal of \$170 million to support existing missionaries is the equivalent of asking each Southern Baptist to donate just 31 cents more than last year.

By contrast, Americans spent \$310 million in first-day sales for "Grand Theft Auto IV."

"The total portion of per capita income given to churches in 2006 was lower (that year) than in the worst year of the Great Depression," the authors found.

The report estimated that for only \$26 a year per person, U.S. evangelicals as a whole could fund \$544 million in efforts through evangelical-affiliated denominations and other missions agencies.

The report also estimated that it would cost each U.S. church member just 8 cents a day to help reach the United Nations' Millennium Development goal of cutting infant mortality by two-thirds by 2015.



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Patience in unsettling times

**Volatile market requires a solid investment approach**

These have been unsettling and unprecedented times in the financial markets. As a result, I wanted to remind you of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation's disciplined approach to the investment of funds entrusted to it for management and oversight. The disciplined approach, we believe, serves well the various beneficial interests we serve under all market conditions, and especially in down markets.

**KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION**



Barry Allen

Our disciplined investment approach includes:

- Diversification among asset classes and strategies.
- A selection of investment management firms with different, but complementary styles and decision-making processes.
- Fully-invested positions instead of market timing.
- Automatic rebalancing of accounts when they move more than five percentage points beyond their target allocations.

Currently, there are 313 individual holdings in our Equity Fund, no one of which exceeds 5 percent of the fund. Approximately 75 percent of the Fixed Fund is invested in U.S. government securities and

cash equivalents; the remaining 25 percent is spread among quality corporates and other fixed income instruments with less than 2 percent in mortgage-backed securities. The Alternative Investments Fund includes strategies intended to expand diversification, lower volatility and generate positive absolute returns in any market, which it has done.

Nobody has seen anything like what has been happening in the financial markets since the Great Depression. I am reminded of what Mark

Twain once said, "It ain't what you don't know that gets you into trouble; it's what you know for sure that just ain't so." What we have known in the past "just ain't going to be so" in the future. When the cleanup is over, we'll be in a new economy, and unlike the one of the 1990's, this one doesn't promise to grow to the stars.

Your KBF, as a fiduciary, will continue to use the same, care, skill, prudence and diligence in the future as it has in the past, which includes patience, not fear or greed.

Barry Allen is president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, PO Box 436389, Louisville, KY 40253; toll-free (866) 489-3533; [www.kybaptistfoundation.org](http://www.kybaptistfoundation.org)

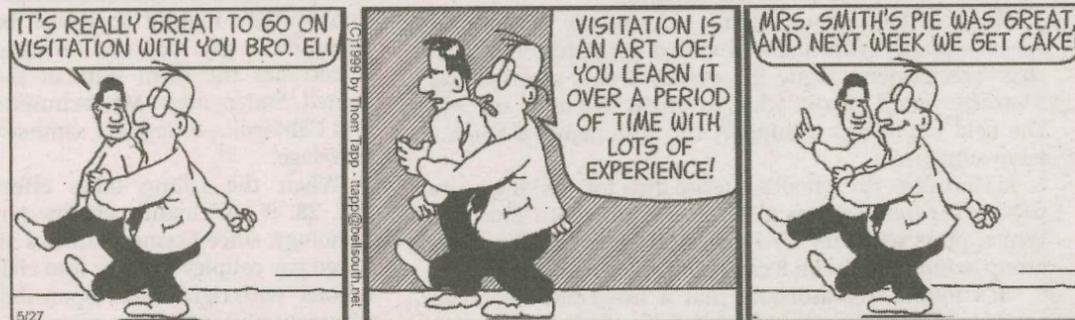
For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



Church of the Covered Dish

Thom Tapp



Bible Crosswords

By Janet Adkins

Across

- 1 And so on (abbr.)
- 4 Describing nonclergy
- 8 "This \_\_\_ Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven" (Acts 1:11)
- 12 Gala event, to Gabrielle
- 13 \_\_\_ Domini
- 14 "The Lord be a \_\_\_ and faithful witness" (Jeremiah 42:5)
- 15 Poetic contraction
- 16 Welcome benefit or blessing
- 17 Transportation (colloq.)
- 18 "All the land of Canaan fainted by \_\_\_ of the famine" (Genesis 47:13)
- 20 "The children of Keros, the children of \_\_\_" (Nehemiah 7:47)
- 22 Uncle of Saul (1 Samuel 14)
- 23 Fortified rampart
- 27 Hit TV show
- 29 "And his \_\_\_ went throughout all Syria" (Matthew 4:24)
- 30 Busy one
- 31 Untried, as talent
- 33 "Beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of \_\_\_" (Luke 16:20)
- 34 Singleton, in Strasbourg
- 35 Doctors' support group (abbr.)
- 36 Mythological god of war
- 37 KJV word for "bud," as on a flower (Exodus 25)
- 38 "I will utter dark \_\_\_ of old" (Psalm 78:2)
- 40 "Lord, if it be thou, \_\_\_ me come unto thee on the water" (Matthew 14:28)
- 41 The year 1501, to Flavius
- 42 Son of Levi (Numbers 3:17)
- 45 Continent
- 48 Change direction slightly

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12				13					14			
15				16					17			
18			19				20	21				
		22				23				24	25	26
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38			39					40				
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45	46	47				48	49			50		
51						52				53		
54						55					56	

- 50 Land where Cain dwelt (Genesis 4)
- 51 What is unfurled
- 52 Fencing sword
- 53 Food fish
- 54 Actress Daly
- 55 Actress Talbot
- 56 WWII milieu (abbr.)

Down

- 1 Father of Peleg and Joktan (Genesis 10:25)
- 2 Noxious weed (Matthew 13)
- 3 "Create in me a \_\_\_ heart, O God" (Psalm 51:10)
- 4 Apply some elbow grease
- 5 Therefore (arch.)
- 6 Ending for many words in Italian
- 7 Devours
- 8 "She [Rebekah] said ... We have both \_\_\_ and provender enough" (Genesis 24:25)
- 9 Onassis
- 10 Miry clay
- 11 Shoe width
- 19 "I will \_\_\_ no wicked thing before mine eyes" (Psalm 101:3)
- 21 The Philippines, for example, to Rene
- 23 Uncovers
- 24 "And he brought forth the spoil of the city in great \_\_\_" (2 Samuel 12:30)

- 25 Nevada city
- 26 "Thou wilt \_\_\_ him in perfect peace" (Isaiah 26:3)
- 27 Times of historical significance
- 28 "In \_\_\_ was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping" (Matthew 2:18)
- 29 "Be of good cheer; thy sins be \_\_\_ thee" (Matthew 9:2)
- 32 "After the \_\_\_ which they call heresy" (Acts 24:14)
- 33 "A foolish man, which built his house upon the \_\_\_" (Matthew 7:26)
- 37 "In the night \_\_\_ of Moab is laid waste, and brought to silence" (Isaiah 15:1)
- 39 Another word for idol
- 40 City of Macedonia where Paul preached
- 42 "With them in the clouds, to \_\_\_ the Lord in the air" (1 Thessalonians 4:17)
- 43 "For he shall grow up ... as a \_\_\_ out of a dry ground" (Isaiah 53:2)
- 44 \_\_\_ the seer (2 Chronicles 12:15)
- 45 Rear of a ship
- 46 Cunning
- 47 John (Scot.)
- 49 On or upon (prefix)

Last week's solution

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
T	A	P	A	R	A	M	S	A	S	E
E	S	A	L	A	T	U	I	G	O	R
R	I	T	I	E	R	N	O	N	E	
M	A	R	V	E	L	M	E	A		
I	E	R	J	U	N	I	P	E	R	
S	E	A	T	T	A	R	O	R	A	E
E	R	S	A	K	E	S	O	S	E	
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A	T	H	A	I	A	H	A	N	E	
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V	E	T	O	L	A	T	A	R		
E	D	E	N	N	O	E	L	E	R	N

UNIVERSITY of the CUMBERLANDS

Alumni and Friends Dinner

Come and enjoy fellowship with Alumni and other friends attending the Kentucky Baptist Convention

Tuesday, November 11, 2008

4:30 p.m.

Immanuel Baptist Church, Lexington

Dinner is free, but reservations are required.

To make reservations, call 606-539-4462 by Thursday, November 6, 2008.

## First graders allowed to take field trip to same-sex wedding

**San Francisco (BP)**—The debate in California over whether same-sex marriage legalization would impact what is taught in public schools heated up Oct. 10, when a San Francisco first-grade class took a field trip to city hall to help celebrate a lesbian wedding.

The 18 first graders—from Creative Arts Charter School, a public school—took the field trip to surprise their teacher, Erin Carder, who had just married her partner, Kerri McCoy, the San Francisco Chronicle reported. Following the ceremony the children tossed pink rose petals and blew bubbles at the women, the newspaper said. San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom officiated the wedding.

The field trip comes as both sides of the debate over Proposition 8—California's proposed constitutional marriage amendment—argue in advertisements whether gay marriage would impact what is taught in public schools. The field trip seems to support the arguments of amendment supporters.

Liz Jaroslow, the school's interim director, told the newspaper the ceremony was a "teachable moment." But Chip White, press secretary for ProtectMarriage.com, the main group behind the Yes on 8 campaign, disagreed.

"It's totally unreasonable that a first-grade field trip would be to a same-sex wedding," White said in a statement. "This is overt indoctrination of children who are too young to understand it."

The ProtectMarriage.com Web site says the wedding demonstrates that "unless Prop. 8 passes, children will be taught about same-sex marriage in public schools."

"Not only can it happen, it has already happened," White emphasized.

According to the San Francisco Chronicle, two families did opt out of the field trip.

Parents who attended the wedding said they did not think it was a big deal.

"How many days in school are they going to remember?" parent Marc Lipsett was quoted as asking. "This is a day they'll definitely remember."

Prop 8, if passed, would reverse a May decision by the California Supreme Court legalizing gay marriage. That ruling overturned a voter-approved initiative from 2000 that protected the biblical definition of marriage.

## Connecticut legalizes same-sex marriage

### State becomes third to extend marriage rights to gay couples

**Hartford, Conn. (ABP)**—The Connecticut Supreme Court Oct. 10 made that state the latest in the country to offer full marriage rights to same-sex couples.

The state's justices ruled 4-3 that the equal-protection and due-process provisions of the Connecticut Constitution require marriage be extended to gay men and lesbians. It becomes the third state in the United States—after Massachusetts and California—to legalize same-sex marriage.

When the ruling takes effect Oct. 28, it will mainly change terminology, since Connecticut has allowed gay couples to enter into civil unions—with rights and responsibilities virtually identical to marriage—since 2005. When the state's legislators passed that bill and Republican Gov. Jodi Rell signed it, Connecticut became the first state to approve civil unions without being under judicial pressure to do so.

But the latest decision determined civil unions are not enough. While not specifically enumerated in the state's charter, Justice Richard Palmer said in the majority opinion, marriage "has long been deemed a basic civil right."

"Interpreting our state constitutional provisions in accordance with firmly established equal-protection principles leads inevitably to the conclusion that gay persons are entitled to marry the oth-

erwise-qualified same-sex partner of their choice," he wrote. "To decide otherwise would require us to apply one set of constitutional principles to gay persons and another to all others."

While acknowledging that marriage has been traditionally viewed as between a man and woman, the court said history teaches that society's prevailing views and practices often mask unfairness and discrimination not recognized by those not directly harmed. They cited previous bans on interracial marriage, exclusion of women in occupations and official duties and relegating minorities to "separate but equal" institutions.

"Like these once-prevalent views, our conventional understanding of marriage must yield to a more contemporary appreciation of the rights entitled to constitutional protection," the decision stated.

#### Court's decision to make?

In one of three separate dissenting opinions, however, Justice Peter Zarella said decisions on same-sex marriage should be left up to the democratic process rather than a judicial one.

"The ancient definition of marriage as the union of one man and one woman has its basis in biology, not bigotry," Zarella wrote. "If the state no longer has an interest in the regulation of procreation, then that is a decision for the legislature or the people of the state and not this court."

The majority noted the state's main rationale for denying marriage to same-sex couples was to preserve

the institution of marriage exclusively for heterosexuals. That reason alone, they ruled, is insufficient to justify a ban on same-sex marriage.

The majority also said recognizing the right of gays to wed does not jeopardize religious freedom, because religious organizations will not be required to perform same-sex marriages.

"Because, however, marriage is a state-sanctioned and state-regulated institution, religious objections to same-sex marriage cannot play a role in our determination of whether constitutional principles of equal protection mandate same-sex marriage," the court ruled.

Rell's office quickly released a statement saying that, while she disagreed with the ruling, she would enforce it, adding that attempts to reverse the decision would "not meet with success."

Predictably, gay-rights groups hailed the ruling while conservative religious groups pointed to it as another example of why they believe a federal constitutional amendment banning gay marriage is necessary.

However, the decision—unlike a comparable Massachusetts court ruling on gay marriage prior to the 2004 presidential election—may have little effect on the upcoming contest. Unlike in 2004, same-sex marriage bans are on the ballot in only a handful of states this year.

Additionally, recent polls suggest that issues such as the economy and the war in Iraq are far more important—even to conservative religious voters—than gay marriage or other divisive social issues in determining their voting decisions.

## 'I will sing praises unto thy name'

### Oneida's school choir experiences joy of worship in many different settings

The Bible has many references to singing praises unto the Lord. I have always enjoyed singing, particularly singing praises to the Lord. I trust that He hears my words more than the quality of my voice. The verse 2 Samuel 22:50 is especially meaningful to me: "Therefore I will praise you, O Lord, among the nations; I will sing praises to your name." Possibly because I enjoy singing so much I love to hear our school choir, especially as we travel across this state to sing for churches that have invited us.

For nearly 40 years, our school choir has been blessed to be invited to hundreds of churches—large and small—to share in song. Some years we have a smaller number of choir members, while other years we have so many that the bus will not seat them all.

Oneida encourages every student to be involved in a variety of co-curricular activities. We don't dwell on their talents, but rather on their desire to participate. Each year we have new students who likely have never sung in a choir before; possibly their friends or roommates encouraged them to try it. Because we do not believe in tryouts and we do not cut students because of a lack of ability, often they join choir with little in the way of singing talent. We accept them and work with them, trying to help them individually and collectively to be the best they can.

Our first performance—and likely our weakest—was Oct. 12 at Everts Baptist Church, which has invited the OBI choir several times over the years. Many of our students were understandably anxious about singing for the first time. Many

have not had a regular time of worship prior to coming to our campus. Needless to say, different churches have different expressions of worship. It often takes a little time for our students to understand that even though the worship style may be different, every church is simply trying to express their love for the Lord.

One of the most notable differences is the response the choir receives at the churches. There have been times when the choir sang unusual-

ly well, even after getting up very early and traveling several hours. But at the end of the performance there was little response from the congregation. Other times, the choir has not done as well and they knew it—but the congregation gave them a very warm response and applause. To the newer choir members this can be a little confusing. I normally try to explain to the newer members each year that just because a church did not show an outward sign of apprecia-

tion, that does not mean they were not blessed. It goes back to the various worship styles of each church.

The choir will perform many times between now and the end of the academic year in May. They will have traveled thousands of miles, including one overnight trip to Alabama. Hopefully each choir member will have a greater appreciation of how important singing is in worship and will understand that congregations choose to worship differently. This is a wonderful experience for our students. Most will never again see such a diversity of worship styles the rest of their lives.

W.F. Underwood is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, Box 67, Oneida, KY 40972; [www.oneida-school.org](http://www.oneida-school.org); e-mail: [president@oneidaschool.org](mailto:president@oneidaschool.org)

#### THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

## 'I am pursuing my calling now'

### Kinner excited to follow God's call at Clear Creek

Since the average age of our students is about 32, I usually joke that most of them have been running from the Lord for about 10 years when they finally get to Clear Creek.

Twenty-two-year-old freshman Jonathan Kinner admits that he spent time running from God's call, but realized he could not run that long. "I was saved and grew up in a church in Middletown, Ohio," Kinner recalled. "As I was nearing graduation from high school, I realized God was calling me to commit my life to the gospel ministry. My pastor at the time

was a Clear Creek graduate. He told me I needed to think about the possibility of going to Clear Creek. ... I came for a visit then and liked it, but I allowed other circumstances to keep me from coming at that time.

"After that," Kinner noted, "I came back home and got involved in some ministry activities, but I knew in my heart that I was not where God wanted me to be. I met my wife Jennifer and we were married this past February."

So what changed to get Jonathan to Clear Creek now? "I final-

ly stopped fighting God," he admitted. "I had multiple jobs these last few years just floating around from one place to the other. Every time I would go in to work ... I knew in my heart I was not supposed to be there. I was trying everything I could but nothing would satisfy me.

"I finally lost my last job and I knew in my heart that I needed to go back to Clear Creek to fulfill the call God had placed on my life years ago. My wife was skeptical. But I told her we have to go; I know this is what God wants us to do.

"On the trip back from visiting Clear Creek we didn't hardly say anything to each other. But after we got back, my wife just looked at me and asked, 'When are we going to move?' I told her we were going to move this fall and she just said, 'Let's get ready to go.'

"It is a great feeling to know that I am pursuing my calling now. I feel God is leading me to help churches connect with each other and work in unity with one goal and one mission as His body."

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

#### CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Donnie Fox

## Atheist group files suit against Bush over Day of Prayer

Madison, Wis. (RNS)—A Wisconsin-based group of atheists and agnostics has filed suit against President Bush over the federal law designating a National Day of Prayer.

The Freedom From Religion Foundation, which urges a strict separation of church and state, also names White House Press Secretary Dana Perino, Wisconsin Gov. Jim Doyle, and National Day of Prayer Task Force Chairwoman Shirley Dobson in the lawsuit filed Oct. 3.

The law, created in 1952 by Congress and signed by President Harry Truman, establishes an annual prayer day. In 1988, President Reagan amended the law, permanently setting the day as the first Thursday of May.

"Designations of an official Day of Prayer by presidential and gubernatorial proclamations ... create a hostile environment for nonbelievers," the complaint stated.

The Freedom From Religion Foundation maintains the law violates the First Amendment's prohibition against an official establishment of religion.

The suit charges that the National Day of Prayer Task Force has ties to James Dobson's Focus on the Family, a nonprofit evangelical organization. Shirley Dobson is James Dobson's wife.

## Ike-damaged Texas churches getting help

By Mickey Noah  
SBC North American Mission Board

Vidor, Texas (BP)—Dozens of Southern Baptist churches whose buildings were destroyed or damaged by Hurricane Ike in Texas will benefit from relief initiatives launched by both the Baptist General Convention of Texas and the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention.

The SBTC has created an "Adopt-A-Church" ministry to connect Ike-impacted congregations with other churches, associations or individuals who want to "adopt" a church and provide assistance. The BGCT has launched its "Church2Church" initiative, designed to help with recovery and re-entry efforts for BGCT churches and members in the wake of Hurricane Ike.

Twenty BGCT member churches had buildings totally destroyed by Hurricane Ike, and more than 100 church buildings in the hurricane impact areas were damaged to some degree. Eleven SBTC church buildings sustained major damage and are unable to hold services due to flooding or structural damage; 12 churches recorded "medium" or "minimal" damage and 33 suffered only "minor" damage.

Terry Wright, pastor of First Baptist Church of Vidor, Texas, an SBTC church, has taken on the role of coordinating the joint response to these devastated churches, many of which had no flood insurance and may never be able to open their doors again.

"We're feeding information from damaged Baptist churches to both



**DESTROYED** Liberty Baptist Church in Bridge City, Texas, was cut off by floodwaters in Hurricane Ike's storm surge. The church's 62-year-old pastor also lost all his personal and family belongings. (NAMB photo)

Texas conventions and to NAMB," Wright noted. "We're compiling a list of churches that have the greatest needs, because not all churches have the same level of need."

### Various needs to be met

Twelve Galveston Baptist Association churches suffered major damage. Two were totally destroyed and all that's left of one is the slab. Wright said First Baptist Church of Galveston took on a lot of water and sewage. The church had some flood insurance but not enough, he said.

Wright said that in Golden Triangle Association—comprised of Jefferson, Orange and part of Chambers counties—18 churches have been identified as having total or substantial hurricane damage.

Four more church buildings were flooded and heavily damaged in Bridge City. Wright pointed out that First Baptist Church of Bridge City will not get an insurance settlement despite the fact the church's property and parsonage were destroyed. The church's pastor and staff also lost everything.

Liberty Baptist Church in Bridge City was destroyed by floodwaters, and its 62-year-old pastor lost all his belongings, Wright noted.

"Some churches can't meet so there are no weekly offerings. There's no money for payroll or to pay the mortgages they're carrying,"

Wright explained. "They are in dire straits."

Six churches in Trinity River Baptist Association also recorded substantial damage to churches, parsonages or to members' homes. Trinity Baptist Church in Port Arthur, a congregation in Southern Baptists of Southeast Texas Association, also reported significant wind damage.

In disaster relief activity related to Hurricanes Ike and Gustav, Southern Baptist Convention disaster relief feeding kitchens have prepared more than 4.8 million hot meals for hurricane victims and volunteers.

Three feeding units—staffed by volunteers from Maryland/Delaware, Michigan and SBTC—have been cooking 30,000 meals a day on Galveston Island. North Carolina feeding units have been operating in Baytown, and feeding continues in Orange. Volunteers from Ohio and Minnesota/Wisconsin arrived in Galveston last weekend to take over the feeding operation there.

Through last week, Southern Baptist disaster relief teams in Louisiana and Texas have chalked up 40,000 volunteer days; completed 3,800 mud-out, chainsaw, roofing and repair jobs; provided 41,000 showers and 13,000 laundry loads; and recorded some 19,000 ministry contacts, including 3,100 chaplaincy contacts, 845 gospel presentations and 171 professions of faith.

## Neb. judge denies lawsuit vs. God over address

Omaha, Neb. (RNS)—A judge has dismissed a Nebraska legislator's lawsuit against God, saying the Almighty could not be served notice of the litigation.

"Given that this court finds that there can never be service effectuated on the named defendant, this action will be dismissed with prejudice," wrote Douglas County District Court Judge Marlon Polk of Omaha, Neb., Oct. 14.

State Sen. Ernie Chambers filed suit in 2007 to seek a permanent injunction against God, the Associated Press reported. He accused God of causing "widespread death, destruction and terrorization of millions upon millions of the Earth's inhabitants."

Chambers has said he filed the suit to demonstrate that everyone—rich or poor—should have access to the court system.

The law school graduate who never took the bar exam questioned the judge's ruling, the AP reported. "Since God knows everything, God has notice of this lawsuit," Chambers insisted.

The state senator has 30 days to determine if he will appeal.

### Mississippi Baptist Minister Hosts:

## Classic European Tour

13 Days from \$1999\*

Departs March 20, 2009 -- Start in Paris - End in Rome

Travel with other Southern Baptists and your chaplain, Baptist Minister Rev. Billy Williams. This will be Rev. Williams' sixth trip as a YMT Baptist Chaplain. Baptist services will be available some days on tour for those in the group who wish to participate. Rev. Williams has been serving for 49 years as a Baptist minister, 23 years of which he was pastor of the First Baptist Church in Gautier, Mississippi. He is currently active in Broadmoor Baptist Church in Madison, Mississippi. Your group will start in Paris (3 nights) and see the historic Eiffel Tower, spectacular Louvre Museum, and world-famous Notre Dame cathedral. Next, you'll travel through beautiful French and Swiss alpine landscape. In Geneva (2 nights), enjoy a city tour that includes a guided tour of the Red Cross Museum. Visit the village of Sisteron, a town founded over 4,000 years ago by the Romans. Enjoy romantic Nice (2 nights) on the beautiful French Riviera. Tour Nice's Notre Dame Church and sightsee in the village of Eze for a visit to the Fragonard Perfume Factory. Travel along the Italian-Mediterranean coast to Montecatini-Terme (2 nights) before your drive through scenic Tuscan countryside en route to see the Leaning Tower in Pisa. Stop in Florence and spend the entire day exploring the city including a visit to the Duomo, Florence's famous cathedral. Enjoy city tours of medieval Siena and eternal Rome, including the Pantheon, Quirinale Palace, Roman Forum, Colosseum and Arch of Constantine. \*Price includes European, English-speaking escort quality hotels with private bath 16 meals motor coach sight-seeing per person / double occupancy. Add \$259 tax, service & gov't fees. Airfare is extra. Call for details.

For information, brochure & letter from Rev. Williams call:

YMT Vacations Affordable vacations since 1967! 1-800-736-7300

## New law may reduce Down syndrome abortions

Washington (BP)—President Bush has signed into law a measure that may help to curtail the number of abortions of babies diagnosed with Down syndrome and other conditions.

The Prenatally and Postnatally Diagnosed Conditions Awareness Act requires parents whose children receive a diagnosis of Down syndrome or another malady to be provided with the latest information on the condition and be informed of support services available. This would apply to a diagnosis on a child before birth or until a year after birth. The measure also would establish a registry of families willing to adopt special-needs children.

The measure seeks to address the reported lack of information and support given to parents whose unborn children test positive for conditions such as Down syndrome.

It has been estimated about 90 percent of American children diagnosed in the womb with Down syndrome are aborted, sometimes after their parents have been given hopeless descriptions of their offspring's futures. A simi-

lar abortion percentage exists for unborn babies diagnosed with spina bifida, cystic fibrosis and dwarfism, the bill's sponsor, Sen. Sam Brownback (R-Kan.), has reported.

"This is a great victory for the culture of life we should all seek to promote," Brownback said in a written statement Oct. 8. The 90 percent abortion rate for unborn babies diagnosed with Down syndrome "is much too high and suggests that we as a society are not doing everything we can to protect every human life, at every stage."

The new law means parents "will be more likely to receive up-to-date, scientific information about life expectancy, clinical course, intellectual and functional development, and prenatal and postnatal treatment options," the National Down Syndrome Society and National Down Syndrome Congress said in a joint release after Congress approved the legislation.

The House of Representatives passed the bill by voice vote Sept. 25, two days after the Senate approved it by unanimous consent.

## PRAYER PARTNERS

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

■ Pray that Kentucky Baptist churches will respond to the increasing number of missions projects available through the Maryland/Delaware partnership and overseas.

■ Pray for those KBC churches and associations that already are forming partnerships with various mission fields.

■ Pray for the KBC missions growth team's upcoming mission vision trip to Wilmington, Del.

■ Pray for the planning of next April's Acts 1:8 Challenge Conferences to be held in the four regions of Kentucky.

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

## MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **BARDSTOWN**—New Beginning Church will hold revival services Oct. 24-26 with **Todd Wells** as evangelist. **Isaac Ferguson** is pastor.

■ **BEAVER DAM**—Beaver Dam Church will honor longtime pastor **Glenn Armstrong** Oct. 26 by naming him pastor emeritus, and his wife, **Elaine**, first lady emeritus.

■ **CADIZ**—Ponderosa Church will hold revival services Oct. 25-29 with **James Edwards**, pastor of Pleasant Valley Community Church in Owensboro, as evangelist. **Norman Cotton** is pastor.

■ **CENTRAL CITY**—First Church will hold revival services Oct. 26-29 with **Rick Shannon**, pastor of Alton Church in Lawrenceburg, as evangelist. **Bob Lowery** is pastor.

■ **DRY RIDGE**—Dry Ridge Church will hold revival services Oct. 24-26 with a team from Campbellsville University as evangelists. **Joe Kitchens** is pastor.

■ **HENDERSON**—Airline Church will hold revival services Oct. 26, 10:45 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Oct. 27-29, 7 p.m., with **Andy Weaver**, pastor of Audubon Church in Henderson, as evangelist.

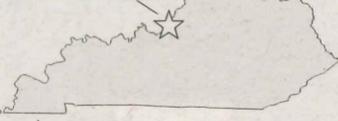
■ **LEXINGTON**—Boone's Creek Church will celebrate its 223rd anniversary with homecoming services Oct. 26. **Kristian Booth** will provide special music and a meal will follow the morning service. **Matthew Perry** is pastor.

■ **LONDON**—New Salem Church will hold homecoming services Oct. 26, 10:45 a.m. **The Bond Singers, Emilia Bustle** and **The Johnson Sisters** will provide special music. **Greg Deaton** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Cloverleaf Church will

### Spotlight on ...

#### Louisville



St. Stephen Church will hold its Super Sunday Celebration Oct. 25-26 in an attempt to have 2,900 people attend Sunday school at the church's two locations in Louisville and Jeffersonville, Ind. According to Pastor **Kevin Cosby**, the goal would set a Sunday school attendance record among African-American churches.

host its Fall Festival Oct. 25, 3 p.m., and Trunk or Treat, 5 p.m. Canned goods will be collected in support of the Southern Baptist Convention's World Hunger Day and donated to Louisville's Dare to Care program. **Geoffrey Lacefield** is pastor.

■ **MOUNT VERNON**—Mareburg Church will hold revival services Oct. 23-26 with **David Sargent**, pastor of Liberty Church in London, as evangelist. **Wayne Harding** is pastor.

Roundstone Church will hold revival services Oct. 26-29, 7 p.m., with **Dan Gutenson**, pastor of Watts Chapel Church in Crab Orchard, as evangelist. **Rick Reynolds** is pastor.

■ **NICHOLASVILLE**—Mount Pleasant Church will hold renewal services Oct. 26, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Oct. 27-29, 6:30 p.m., with Kentucky Baptist Convention Executive Director **Bill Mackey**, as evangelist. **William Hall** is pastor.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### October

**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](http://www.kybaptist.org)

## AFA ends boycott of McDonald's

**Tupelo, Miss. (RNS)**—The American Family Association has dropped its boycott of McDonald's after learning a representative of the restaurant chain is no longer serving on the board of the National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce.

The Mississippi-based conservative Christian organization called for the boycott last May.

"We appreciate the decision by McDonald's to no longer support political activity by homosexual activist organizations," said American Family Association Chairman Donald Wildmon.

William Whitman, a vice president of McDonald's, said Richard Ellis, a former McDonald's USA vice president, "made a personal decision to step down" from the board of the Washington-based gay organiza-

tion after accepting a position with the chain's Canadian branch.

"Diversity and inclusion are integral components of our brand and our heritage," Whitman noted. "We continue to have strong employee networks throughout our company and will continue to align our brand with individuals and organizations that share our belief in supporting our people and the communities we serve."

In an Oct. 9 statement, the National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce said McDonald's "has been a good partner with the Chamber. There has been no discussion between the NGLCC and McDonald's regarding continuing membership, nor has the NGLCC been notified of any move not to renew our work together."

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**AVAILABLE:** Straightway Quartet, a traditional Southern Gospel male quartet, wants to share in your worship experiences. Contact Dylan Mays, (502) 275-1794.

**RETREAT:** Ski Youth Retreat Package. Timberline Four Seasons Resort, W.V. Starting at \$99/night (plus tax). Includes: lodging, meals, skis, lifts, lesson. Info: [www.timberlinerestort.com](http://www.timberlinerestort.com); (800) 392-0152. West Virginia Wild & Wonderful.

**SEEKING:** Part-time music minister for South Jefferson Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky. Blended style worship. Send resumé to [katmb@insightbb.com](mailto:katmb@insightbb.com).

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for First Baptist Church, Mayfield, Ky. Degree from a Southern Baptist seminary. Salary package: \$80,000 plus. Please send resumé and non-returnable video or DVD to: Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 118 West South St., Mayfield, KY 42066.

**SEEKING:** Director of missions. Polk County Baptist Association is praying for a God-called, mission-minded man to come alongside and continue to unite our churches in mission efforts as a DOM. Recommendations and resúmes can be prayerfully submitted up to Nov. 14 to the DOM Search Committee, c/o PCBA, PO Box 289, Benton, TN 37307; or e-mail to [polkbaptist@bellsouth.net](mailto:polkbaptist@bellsouth.net); put "DOM search" as the subject.

**SEEKING:** Full-time youth minister for First Baptist Church, Princeton, Ky. Please send resumé to Youth Search Committee, c/o Bro. Tom Hughes, 300 West Main St., Princeton, KY 42445.

**SEEKING:** Minister of education. Virginia church seeks experienced candidate with passion for evangelism, discipleship and missions. Must possess good administrative and relational skills. For more information about church, visit [www.mthermonchurch.org](http://www.mthermonchurch.org). Send resúmes to: Mount Hermon Baptist Church, 4385 Franklin Turnpike, Danville, VA 24540; or [david@david.satterfield.com](mailto:david@david.satterfield.com).

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for Petrey Memorial Baptist Church in Hazard, Ky. Please forward resúmes and, if possible, DVD, CD or tape, to Pastor Search Team, Petrey Memorial Baptist Church, 141 Alto St., Hazard, KY 41701. [www.petreymemorial.org](http://www.petreymemorial.org).

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for northern Kentucky Baptist church in Ten Mile Association. Conservative, support SBC and mission giving. Mail resúmes to Brian Richards, 10735 Hwy 127N, Glencoe, KY 41046; or e-mail to [holbertju@fuse.net](mailto:holbertju@fuse.net).

**SEEKING:** Pastor for rural church in southern Woodford County. Parsonage available. Contact Mike Chapman, 1516 Mundys Landing, Versailles, KY 40383. (859) 873-3237.

**SEEKING:** Pastor for FBC of Grayson, Ky. Send resumé and salary requirements to Roger Whitehead, 1114 Griffith Ave., Grayson, KY 41143.

**SEEKING:** Experienced income tax preparers for Lexington office. FT/PT, seasonal employment. Closed Sundays. (859) 489-1040.

**SEEKING:** Part-time children's minister (K-8th) for a small, but growing church in Shelby County. Request PD or send resumé to Salem Baptist Church, 8311 Mount Eden Road, Shelbyville, KY 40065; or [drjamese1@bellsouth.net](mailto:drjamese1@bellsouth.net).

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of music to lead blended worship at Gethsemane Baptist Church, a conservative Southern Baptist church in Danville. For more information, please call the church office at (859) 236-2581; or Mike Gordon at (859) 516-5169. All resúmes may be sent to 123 Quisenberry Ave., Danville, KY 40422.

**SEEKING:** Full-time, enthusiastic, God-called children's/recreation minister to serve an energetic, loving, growing church with exceptional support from dedicated parents and congregation. Full job description available upon request. Please send resúmes to FLC Search Committee, Marion Baptist Church, PO Box 384, Marion, KY 42064; or [searchcommittee@marionbaptistchurch.com](mailto:searchcommittee@marionbaptistchurch.com). Deadline is Oct. 31.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for East Hickman Baptist Church, an historic church located 4 miles from Lexington, Ky. Send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, 2125 Azalea Drive, Lexington, KY 40504.

**SEEKING:** Part-time children's minister. Send resumé and references to: Friendship Baptist, 5411 Bengal Road, Campbellsville, KY 42718.

**SEEKING:** Part-time music minister for Audubon Baptist Church, 1046 Hess Lane, Louisville, KY 40217. Responsible for blended style congregational worship and choir directing. Mail resúmes by Nov. 15, 2008, to Linda Owen, Worship Committee. Cell: (502) 836-8683.

**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](mailto:trpoore@hotmail.com); or fax to (423) 869-8777.

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

# Roadside witness

*NAMB missionary uses hitchhiking to share gospel 'one highway at a time'*

By Mickey Noah

SBC North American Mission Board

La Puente, Calif. (BP)—He's "J.L." on his business card. His wife calls him "Mac." Some friends call him "James," although he often forgets to stand up when he is introduced as James. But he is best known simply as "The Hitchhiker," especially among Southern Baptists in California.

James McCollough's motto is, "Sharing the Gospel around the world, one highway at a time."

A 59-year-old former Marine, McCollough has been hitchhiking all his life—not because he can't drive or doesn't own a car. He can and does. Hitchhiking is his God-led ministry, his chosen method to share Christ, literally, on the highways and byways of life.

McCollough is a Southern Baptist North American Mission Board Mission Service Corps missionary and works for Los Angeles Southern Baptist Association. His ministry is aptly named "BlackTop Ministries." From California to Mexico to Indiana to Florida, this man has traversed plenty of blacktop.

"I go out about every day," said The Hitchhiker, who on this day was in Nevada, dressed in his usual "USMC" reflective orange vest, "Jesus Saves" belt buckle and red "I love Jesus" baseball cap. For added safety, he wears bright yellow reflective wristbands. His ID badge from the mission board simply says "The Hitchhiker."

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, he hitches the 25 miles from La Puente to Downey, Calif., to work at the association office. But on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, he is on the real "gospel road" again—going wherever the Lord leads and kind drivers will take him. He prefers the back roads, where hitching is not against the law.

And he prefers not to ride with Christians unless it is almost dark or raining, explaining that "they don't need me. I want to ride with the lost. I can help them by sharing Christ."

## Tough way to get around

McCollough will tell you that hitchhiking is not as easy as it was in the '50s and '60s when drivers were more willing to pick up those thumbing for a ride.

"By law, truckers will no longer pick up hitchhikers. You can't hitchhike on the freeways and interstates although you can on the ramps. By California law, you have to be three feet away from the roadway," he explained.

In today's world, hitchhikers probably are feared more than ever. Before he is picked up, a driver will give McCollough a real once-over from a distance to make sure he is not a threat. But once McCollough is in the car's passenger seat, the driver is a captive listener to the gospel. They also will get a tract or a mini-Bible to keep.

For those who accept Christ, McCollough gives them an auto-

graphed Bible. He also adds them into his cell phone and calls them back to check on their progress and see if they are reading their Bible and going to church.

Hitchhiking is hard work because sometimes McCollough must wait hours in the hot California sun for a ride. He insisted, though, that does not discourage him.

"If I have to wait a long time between rides, I just look at it as a divine appointment. I view it as there's someone out there special who God wants me to meet and talk to," McCollough said. "I've already prayed and trusted someone to be there. And usually it turns out to be someone with a real need."

He recently was picked up by a woman from Riverside, Calif., who was fleeing from an abusive relationship with her husband. She had fled with nothing and had little gas in her car. The Hitchhiker shared Christ with her, bought her a tank of gas at his own expense and told her to look up Magnolia Avenue Baptist Church in Riverside and tell them The Hitchhiker had sent her.

## Cross-country trip

When the Southern Baptist Convention held its annual meeting in Indianapolis in June, McCollough's Baptist colleagues told him he could fly to Indy at the associational office's expense.

"I told them to let someone else use the plane tickets, that I'd hitchhike." He did just that for the entire 5,000-mile round trip between La Puente and Indianapolis. At the convention's close, he inspired dozens of NAMB employees when he spoke to them about his ministry.

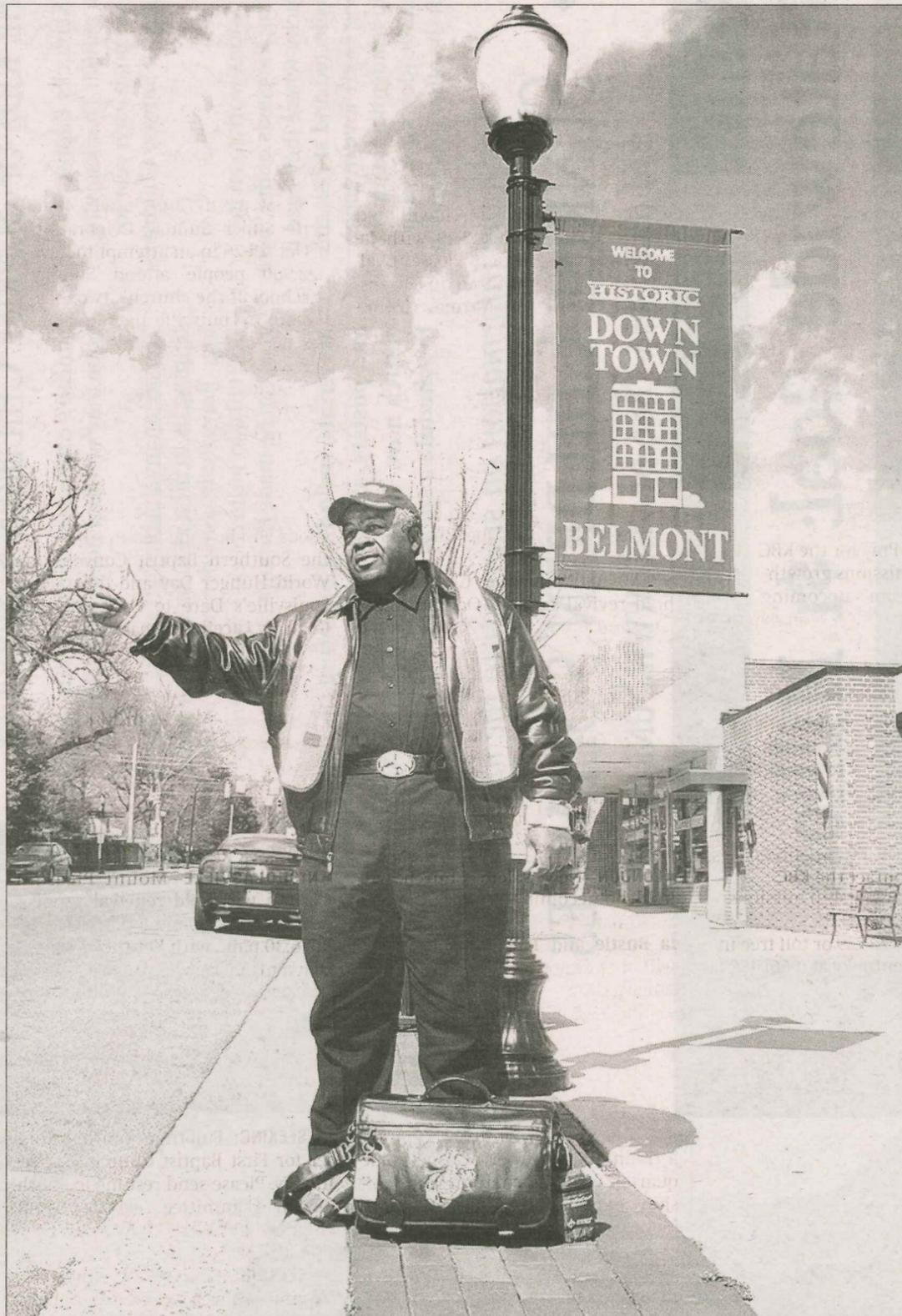
Born in Gastonia, N.C., McCollough overcame polio as a youngster during the polio "scare" of the 1950s. Although neither his truck-driving father nor mother attended church, his mother was a prayer warrior.

"I watched several friends pass away or become crippled by polio," McCollough recalled. "But my mother said, 'I'm not worried. I've already prayed about it. My God is not going to take you.'"

As a teenager, he began hitchhiking to get to and from school. After high school, McCollough then hitchhiked from his home to Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte, N.C., where he studied electrical engineering.

At 19, he joined the Marines, serving in Japan. After his discharge, he decided to make California his home, earning a degree in electronics at Long Beach College. He also worked as manager of a Jack in the Box restaurant. He still was not a Christian but that was about to change.

"I was hitchhiking to work one day on the 405 North in Long Beach and two guys picked me up and shared Christ with me," he recalled. "I was 30. They gave me a Bible and when I got to work, I dropped it in the trash." His future wife, Martha, dug it out and scolded him.



"A few years later, a hard-headed Marine who'd been running for over 30 years, accepted Christ—along with the daughter of the pastor of Central Baptist Church in Carson, Calif.," McCollough said. The pastor's daughter was Martha. They now have been married 30 years, live in La Puente and have seven children, ages 21-27.

## Passenger seat to the pulpit

Already a deacon, The Hitchhiker was ordained as a pastor in 1987. Today, when he is not thumbing down a California highway, he is pastor of Hillside Southern Baptist Church in La Puente. He even hitchhikes to the churches that invite him to preach.

"It's sort of a joke," McCollough noted. "Most pastors tell other pastors that if you invite James to preach, allow him some extra time to get there." Baptist preachers in California also know that if they see McCollough hitchhiking, there's no need to stop and try to pick him up. He is looking for a lost person to

ride with.

Whether it is because he is a bulky ex-Marine or a child of God, McCollough insisted he has absolutely no fear when hitchhiking on the road. And in 40 years of thumbing, he has never been victimized or had a bad experience.

"I just don't worry about any danger," he said. "I feel God appointed me to do this."

McCollough also is in terrific physical shape for a man his age. You have to be to thumb for rides for hours at a time, in all kinds of weather, carrying a load of tracts, mini-Bibles, extra clothes, two coats and extra shoes.

"Hitching on the way back home from the convention in Indianapolis, a young man picked me up and wanted to give me some money. I refused the money so he offered to carry my bag. He could hardly pick it up. It was full of all the stuff you get at the convention."

When he got home, McCollough weighed the duffel bag he carries on the road. It weighed 170 pounds.

**THUMBIN' IT** James McCollough, known as "The Hitchhiker," started hitching as a teenager on his way home from school. Today, it is his primary avenue for sharing his faith. McCollough is a missionary with the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board. (BP photo by Diane Turbyfill/The Belmont (N.C.) BannerNews)

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