

December 2, 2008
Vol. 182, No. 48**WMU Kentucky Notes**

See insert

FOR THE RECORD**Missions**New NAMB initiative faces criticism from Georgia Baptist newspaper. *Page 2.***Baptists**State Baptist conventions forced to deal with budget woes. *Page 2.***Kentucky**Success of "Fireproof" helps spotlight Kentucky Baptist marriage ministries. *Page 3.***Financial Forum**Always remember the "PIG" principle when investing. *Page 4.***Guest Editorial**What is the church's role within the city? *Page 5.***Kentucky**Kentucky pastors launch new state Baptist historical society. *Page 8.***Nation**What's ahead for hot-button social issues under a Barack Obama White House? *Page 9.***Breaking ground****JAVA JOB** Iowa native Forrest Bohlen pours coffee beans through a shelling machine to prepare them for drying and roasting. Bohlen and his wife, Becky, found that a cup of coffee goes a long way in building friendships among the Venezuelan people. (IMB photo)**Bohlens use ag classes to build relationships with Andean farmers****By Kristen Hiller**
*SBC International Mission Board***Canaguá, Venezuela** (BP)—For the past 27 years, Reinaldo Meza has driven the same yellow Land Cruiser over the dirt roads of the Venezuelan Andes.

Before heading to his farm, Meza stops at a roadside market in Canaguá to buy a few loaves of bread for himself and Southern Baptist International Mission Board missionaries Forrest and Becky Bohlen.

After a 45-minute drive from the

market into the surrounding mountains, Meza pulls the truck off the road. He and the Bohlens will hike 30 minutes on narrow trails before they reach Meza's farm, but they're used to the hike. After six years of working in rural areas of the Venezuelan Andes, the Bohlens also have grown accustomed to the landscape. The couple lives in Mérida but they spend about two weeks each month in Canaguá, a mountain town in the region of Pueblos del Sur (Towns of the South).

They travel mountain roads and hike beaten paths to build relationships with Andean agriculturists like Meza.

"The gospel is not being preached up here," said Forrest Bohlen, a native of Iowa and former Texas pastor. "It's not even being heard. Our goal is to take that gospel to wherever it's not being preached."

This year the Southern Baptist International Mission Board is highlighting the work of missionaries to
□ See Bohlens build ... *Page 6***Kentucky native part of IMB's changing ministry in Chile****By Dannah Prather**
*Partnerships Editor***Vina del Mar, Chile**—Growing up in a one-car family gave future missionary Karen Wright an edge.

Church life always was important to the Wrights, so when they moved from Fairdale to the Highview area of Louisville, they built a house across the street from the local Baptist church. When Dad had the car for work, the rest of the family still participated in church activities.

Wright said her parents taught her, and her brother, Jerry, "by their priorities. Dad scheduled vacation time so we wouldn't miss vacation Bible school."

Today, Jerry is minister of music at First Baptist Church of London.

Their mother taught Sunday school at Highview Baptist Church. "I got my love of teaching from her," Karen Wright explained.

From that foundation, she be-

came a career Southern Baptist missionary to Chile. Soon she will mark 25 years of gospel service in that country.

This year the Southern Baptist International Mission Board is highlighting the work of missionaries to South America during the Nov. 30-Dec. 7 week of prayer and giving to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions.

"Our role in Chile has changed a whole lot," Wright said reflecting on her first years in the country.

Originally she was a Christian education worker for children in southern Chile. "There had never been anybody working directly in education. ... It was a pioneering kind of situation."

Since 2000, Wright has served in Vina del Mar in Valparaiso Province, a coastal area and tourist destination. She spends most of her time
□ See Kentucky native ... *Page 6***Archaeologists sketch out desert palace of Herod****Jerusalem** (RNS)—Archaeologists who have analyzed artifacts discovered at Herodium, an ancient Judean palace built by King Herod, are more convinced than ever that the famed monarch was buried high atop the complex outside Jerusalem.

Herod, who served as the king of Judea from 37 to 4 B.C., built such monumental structures as the Second Jewish Temple, the mountaintop palace at Masada and the palatial Herodium complex.

The vast desert palace, which included a grand residence, a mausoleum, a theater and large pools, baths and gardens, was the largest of its kind in the Roman world of that time, Hebrew University archaeologists noted.

At a press conference at the university last month, researchers said they have been able to determine that the mausoleum where the fragments of Herod's sarcophagus were discovered was "a lavish two-story structure with a concave-conical roof, about 25 meters high," a structure consistent with Herod's tastes and stature.

Professor Ehud Netzer, director of the excavations, said his team also recently discovered the remains of two other sarcophagi, a 650-seat theater below the mausoleum and a loggia—"a VIP viewing and hospitality room"—located at the top of the theater seats and decorated with Italian-style wall paintings and plaster moldings never before seen in Israel.

**TAKING A BREAK** Karen Wright (left) and Anne and Larry Payne take a break while on mission in Santiago, Chile. A Kentucky native, Wright has served more than 20 years as a Southern Baptist missionary to Chile. The Paynes, members of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Louisville, traveled to Chile in October as part of the congregation's second mission trip to Chile.

Georgia paper casts critical eye toward NAMB's 'GPS' plan

Nashville (BP)—The Southern Baptist North American Mission Board's management of its new "GPS" (God's Plan for Sharing) national evangelism initiative was critiqued Nov. 20 in a front-page article in *The Christian Index*, newsjournal of the Georgia Baptist Convention.

The 5,000-word article was written by *Index* managing editor Joe Westbury with additional reporting by Editor J. Gerald Harris. It criticizes NAMB for not setting aside a substantial amount of money to conduct a nationwide media blitz in support of the 10-year GPS initiative, which currently is in pilot stages and officially will launch nationwide in 2010.

The article rehashes the 20-year history of national Southern Baptist evangelism campaigns, beginning with "Good News, America" in 1986. It notes that Southern Baptists' domestic missions entity usually placed funds in reserve to make nationwide media purchases supporting each campaign and points out that no such reserve has been built up to make such purchases for the GPS initiative.

The article also criticizes NAMB for not having a line item for the

GPS national evangelism initiative in its 2009 budget and says Baptist state convention leaders were told by NAMB President Geoff Hammond that purchasing advertisements for the initiative would be their responsibility.

The article says those state convention leaders "declined to be quoted due to a possible harming of funding they receive" from NAMB. The article quotes Alan Quigley, evangelism director for the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, as saying in a letter to his counterparts in other states that "NAMB's decision against a media buy 'has undermined the entire strategy.'"

Hammond's response

Hammond, in a Nov. 14 interview with Westbury and Harris, said the mission board is charting a different media strategy for GPS than has been used in previous national campaigns. In the new initiative, the board had decided to make targeted media purchases in specific locations, rather than a bulk purchase of advertising to blanket North America.

"Every market is different. ... What would work in New York may

not work out in Idaho," Hammond said, according to a transcript of the interview. "We're trying to do it very scientifically with some research and objective facts that we don't just say this is what every American's thinking about in every neighborhood about the gospel."

Different approach?

The board also is studying a broader variety of media that might be used, noted Brandon Pickett, NAMB's communications team leader.

"We are getting research from the top 200 markets," he said, according to the interview transcript. "We're finding that some areas television would be the best way to do it. Some it's actually putting an ad on Google because it's more social media ... or Facebook."

"I mean some pioneer areas it's actually putting things at the Wal-Mart because Wal-Mart is the place that everybody goes but there's not a whole lot of television coverage," Pickett continued. "So we're looking at those markets to find out which would be the best media campaign and that's why we're calling it targeted media campaign based on the

region."

Hammond said in the interview that the entity's budget doesn't have a line item for the national evangelism initiative because "this is so much bigger than one line item."

"We need to bring all of NAMB's resources to bear on NEI," Hammond explained, according to the transcript. "So for example in the Evangelism Group in the 2009 budget, every MMA (Major Ministry Action) will have something related to NEI in it."

Hammond re-emphasized this point later in the interview. "Every missionary, every time we go train, we've got to say ... we're engaging witnessing in the harvest and this is a part of GPS."

In 2006, Westbury wrote an article in *The Christian Index* examining former NAMB President Bob Record's leadership and management, particularly in the areas of evangelism and church planting strategies, NAMB's method of counting missionaries, its relationship with a private media firm and Record's speaking engagements.

The *Christian Index* article can be read in its entirety at www.ChristianIndex.org/4956.article.

Economy forces Baptist state conventions to slash budgets

Hendersonville, Tenn. (ABP)—Southern Baptist state conventions that met around the country this fall are adjusting their finances to cope with a weakening economy.

In the opening session of the Nov. 11-12 Tennessee Baptist Convention annual meeting, Executive Director James Porch described a \$1.4 million shortfall in the convention's budget.

He reported total receipts of less than \$37.1 million, a 3.67 percent shortfall behind an annual budget of \$38.5 million.

Porch challenged messengers returning to their homes to "examine the extravagance that we have in our own life—the things that we can by choice limit—and then we can sacrifice by choice even more to God."

Baptists in Georgia met Nov. 9-11 in Jonesboro with Cooperative Program receipts down more than 5 percent, from \$52 million to \$49 million.

"Every year, it seems like an adjustment needs to be made," Dan Spencer, pastor of First Baptist Church of Thomasville and a leader in the Georgia Baptist Convention, told the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. "We'll have to see how it pans out and what our churches will be able to commit to."

The Florida Baptist Convention met Nov. 10-11 in Lakeland with contributions more than \$562,000 behind its 2008 budget. Executive Director John Sullivan attributed the shortfall to financial difficulties in local churches and said the convention's leadership would have to face "hard decisions" about programs and staff, according to the *Lakeland (Fla.) Ledger*.

The pinch also is being felt at other levels of Baptist life. In October, Alabama's Mobile Baptist Association approved a budget of \$594,905, marking a reduction of more than \$13,000 from the 2008 budget.

Thomas Wright, executive director of missions, said the association's budget and finance committee identified several economic indicators that members thought might affect income to churches, and in turn, the association. According to the *Mobile (Ala.) Press-Register*, the weeks leading up to the annual meeting proved the analysis accurate.

Some state groups are bucking the trend, however. The Mississippi Baptist Convention, approved a record-setting Cooperative Program budget Oct. 28-29 in Jackson. A 2009 budget of less than \$35 million represents an increase of about 2 percent, or \$676,866, over 2008.

Meanwhile, Kentucky Baptist Convention messengers approved a 2009-10 budget of \$24,480,000 at the Nov. 11 annual meeting in Lexington, an increase of 2 percent over the current goal of \$24 million.

S.C. pastor and wife rewarded for benevolence

By Norm Miller
Baptist Press

Clover, S.C. (BP)—Another Monday, another day of feeding needy people at God's Kitchen for Sam Thompson and his wife, Annie, at New Beginnings Baptist Church in Clover, S.C.

They also would be caring for the homeless at New Beginnings' shelter and overseeing a thrift store operated by the church that Thompson planted 13 years ago.

But the couple knew something was different last week when they saw unfamiliar people, along with someone very familiar with the Thompsons' benevolent ministries.

"I had no idea about this—just found out about it when I came into the building. We got plum shocked," the 72-year-old pastor said when he received a \$10,000 check.

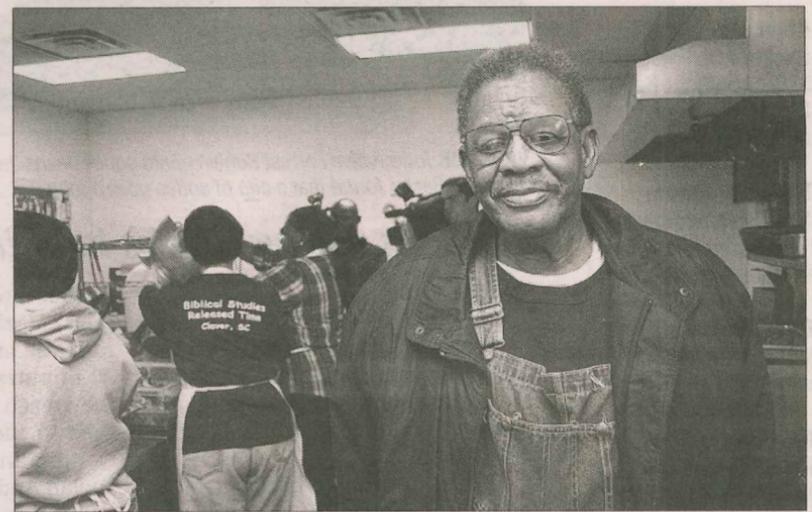
The money was the grand prize from Wachovia bank's second annual "Who Would You Thank?" essay contest, which allows bank customers to essentially nominate who they think best deserves the award.

"Wachovia's initiation of the contest began through a desire to express gratitude to customers in celebration of National Customer Service Week," noted Wayne Thompson, Wachovia's senior editor for corporate communications. "This year's contest ... encouraged customers to thank a person who had made a significant contribution on their life."

The winning essay about the Thompsons was written by Wachovia customer Elizabeth Hartley of nearby Lake Wylie, S.C. Her brief essay was selected from about 4,000 entries.

"Me and Miss Annie began this ministry 13 years ago when we started the church," Thompson said. "We had 10 ministry ideas ranging from feeding people, to housing, to helping people find jobs, to clothing people and a tutoring ministry."

Pastor Sam said the tutoring min-



LOVING PEOPLE Pastor Sam Thompson stands in God's Kitchen, a benevolent ministry of New Beginnings Baptist Church in Clover, S.C. The ministry prepares meals delivered five days a week to about 125 shut-ins in addition to feeding about 25 needy people at the kitchen. (Photo by Wayne Thompson/Wachovia)

istry lasted a while, but he needs more volunteers. "I got the children who need the help, but I can't find the people to do this job," he noted. "I need people to help with reading writing, math and spelling."

Adding to God's Kingdom

Reflecting on some of the ministries' successes, Thompson told Baptist Press: "I have a gentleman whose wife died four years ago. He and his four kids were being evicted, and we took them into the shelter. The kids are still in school, and their daddy is working until they can find a place to be."

"One other family—we got them into a trailer and got them restored to Social Services, and even helped the mother get her children back," Thompson recalled.

However, the pastor regards the additions to God's Kingdom as "the best blessings of all."

"In the last couple of months, we've had 12 people come to Christ through the homeless shelter. And

I baptized five of them a few weeks ago. That's God work. Amen," Thompson declared.

He said he looks forward to eventually building a new shelter. "Don't got no money, but got the steel and the plans. Anybody who got any money—we'd be glad to use it to build the shelter. Now I'm not talking about putting up a new church. We're talking about serving the community better."

When asked why he works for no pay, Thompson said, "First of all, we love God and we love everybody. We've had hard times over the years, and we know what it means to do without and not have enough. So it helps us because we know how it feels to walk in those shoes."

"It's about God's love, too," he added. "It ain't about us. We just some little old instruments who fell in His way. We're not so good, but God is. Some kind of way we have been faithful in a few things, and God keeps blessing it over and over in so many ways."

Toby designates chairs for '08-'09 KBC committees

Louisville—Five former state convention presidents are among the 16 committee chairs appointed for the coming year by Kentucky Baptist Convention President John Mark Toby, pastor of Beacon Hill Baptist Church in Somerset.

The committee chairs include 12 pastors and four laypeople. Individuals appointed to chair state convention committees are:

Paul Badgett, pastor of First Baptist Church of Pikeville, Committee on Resolutions.

Rusty Ellison, pastor of Walnut Street Baptist Church in Louisville, Committee on Order of Business.

Chad Fugitt, pastor of First Baptist Church of Monticello, Committee on Nominations.

Mike O'Neal, pastor of Hurstbourne Baptist Church in Louisville, Committee on Credentials.

Linda Polley, director of administration at Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown, Committee on Arrangements.

Paul Strahan, pastor of First Baptist Church of Owensboro, Committee on Public Affairs.

Stephen Wilson, a member of Lone Oak First Baptist Church of Paducah and vice president of academic affairs at Mid-Continent University in Mayfield, Committee on Constitution and Bylaws.

Hershael York, pastor of Buck Run Baptist Church in Frankfort and professor of Christian preaching and associate dean of ministry and proclamation at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Committee on Committees.

Kentucky Baptists appointed by Toby to head KBC Mission Board committees are:

Charles Barnes, a member of Hurstbourne Baptist Church in Louisville, Business and Finance.

Art Beasley, pastor of Central Baptist Church in Winchester, Leadership Development.

Darren Gaddis, pastor of Central Baptist Church in Corbin, Administrative.

Bill Henard, pastor of Porter Memorial Baptist Church in Lexington and assistant professor of evangelism and church growth at Southern Seminary, Church Development and Evangelism.

Will Langford, pastor of Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Independence, Resource Development and Communications.

Chip Pendleton, pastor of Westport Road Baptist Church in Louisville, Agencies and Institutions.

Delores Spears, a member of Lone Oak First Baptist Church of Paducah, Missions Growth.

Michael Stacey, pastor of Buena Vista Baptist Church in Somerset, Nominating.

Movie helps spotlight marriage ministries

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

Crestwood—While the top 10 box-office performance of "Fireproof" has stirred excitement in Southern Baptist circles, a couple who serve as marriage mentors hope the movie's impact on couples stretches deep into the pew.

Dave and Loretta Small have taught various marriage classes at Crestwood Baptist Church in Oldham County and led small groups resolving problems caused by husbands' addiction to pornography.

The Smalls said they admire "Fireproof," produced by Sherwood Baptist Church of Albany, Ga. The film portrays the fractured marriage of a fireman and his wife.

Their union is restored after the husband puts his spouse's interests ahead of his own. Dave said many Christians need to follow the same pattern.

"It's a very 'me' culture; we live for ourselves," Small noted. "But as Rick Warren says (in 'The Purpose-Driven Life'), 'It's not about us.'"

"We also don't have the concept of commitment. We don't understand how big marriage is in the eyes of God. ... We don't realize Jesus Christ is to be the head of the marriage."

Loretta said she sees marriages crumbling because of such obstacles as busyness, immoral programming on television, and spouses' failure to pray together.

Coupled with a lack of regular Bible study, prayerlessness leaves too many Christians trying to face life's challenges through their own strength, she pointed out.

Married for 21 years, the Smalls speak with authority after coming through a marital crisis about 10 years ago. Dave had a pornography problem—an issue spotlighted in "Fireproof"—that was so bad he regularly only slept three hours because of staying up late to cruise X-rated Web sites.

He said he conquered the problem after hearing a clear message from God: "If you continue this, you will die."

"That path is a path of destruction," said Dave, noting that many men fail to understand how deeply their porn use wounds their spouses. "I knew it was wrong, but you can convince yourself of anything."

Meanwhile, Loretta admitted she had her own shortcomings, particularly a flirtatious manner that she picked up observing her father. While dealing with anger over Dave's actions, various Scriptures helped point her in a new direction.

"The Lord showed me He was jealous of the way I was living my life," Mrs. Small recalled. "When I accepted the Lord, I asked Him to take that from me and He did."

Working through their conflicts included attending a course on marriage, where they came to a deeper understanding of each other.

"We learned what the other enjoyed about being married," Loretta said. "The course promoted praying together. That was the big thing that helped us. God honors that. It seems kind of simple but it's hard to do."

Resolving their crisis wasn't easy, though, requiring several years. That

Couple relies on God to 'fireproof' 50-year marriage

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

Paducah—One way Louis and Carol Brinker fireproofed their marriage was through commitment—once together, it never entered their minds that they would not be married to each other.

Such dedication worked. Last May, they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Twelve Oaks Baptist Church in Paducah celebrated the occasion that weekend with a special dinner and ceremony.

"My wife is a wonderful person; I think that has a lot to do with it," said Brinker, who came to Twelve Oaks three years ago after retiring as pastor of First Baptist Church of neighboring Metropolis, Ill. "I've pastored for 46 years and I've never know anyone to be angry at her."

As far as his wife is concerned, faith must be the cornerstone of any marriage that endures. Couples always will face hard times in their lives together and they need faith that God will help them until they improve, Carol noted.

Not surprisingly, when asked for three words to imprint on custom-made M&Ms for their anniversary dinner, she first suggested faith, followed by hope and love.

"If I had a fourth, I'd put laughter on it," said Mrs. Brinker, chuckling. "We are total opposites. Sometimes it's hilarious and sometimes it's not. I like to stay up late and he likes to go to bed early. We just learned to compromise."

The greatest challenge they faced was learning to communicate, Louis noted. "We truly loved one another, so we had the benefit of that," the pastor said. "We enjoy being together."

For Carol, serving as a pastor's wife has represented her greatest trial and reward.

Trying to do the best you can is tough, she acknowledged. Carol struggled to learn the lesson that you cannot please everyone, saying that after trying her best she had to leave the rest up to the Lord.

Keeping up with her husband's boundless energy has been another test. Even at 71 she still



Louis and Carol Brinker

describes Louis as a "go-getter."

"But when you're happy, that gives you the energy," Carol added. "That, and knowing you're loved."

While they never have had a formal counseling ministry, Louis said he and his wife have helped various church members resolve conflicts and tried to offer troubled partners biblically-based solutions and compassion.

"I tell people if they'll work on it and give God a chance, in a period of time things will get better," he explained.

Carol's prescription for long-lasting marriage rests on four pillars:

- Accept each other at face value and don't try to change your partner.
- Let your spouse know he or she is special.
- Take time for each other, especially after the birth of children.
- Keep your love fresh and do not take each other for granted.

She said she also believes in getting involved in church and finding friends who can offer moral support and sound advice. "I tell my girls, 'Don't talk to people who have failed marriages,'" Carol noted. "Talk to someone who has a good marriage and let them give you advice. Women need women to talk to. Men might not think they need a buddy, but they do."

has been a drawback for some couples they have counseled. When Loretta warns it is a long-term process, some say, "There's no way I'm doing this for three or four years."

One avenue for supporting marriage in the church is through "Couplettime" groups, a series of monthly meetings where couples form closer relationships and study a variety of marriage-related material.

Promoted across the state by Crestwood members Penny and David Hudson, Crestwood Baptist has 10 groups with approximately 90 people involved.

Among other churches that support this outreach is First Baptist Church of Richmond. Roger and Pam Bartley coordinate one of six Couplettime groups there.

The Bartleys saw the benefits of striving to improve marriage back in 1979—seven years into their union—at the first Fall Festival of Marriage at Ridgecrest Conference Center in North Carolina.

"It was a big boost for our marriage," Roger noted. "It helped us become aware of concepts underlying marriage and skills needed for it."

"It's been the best thing that happened to us," Pam added. "It gave us a better understanding of who we are; how he as a man relates and I as a woman relate and how we can bring that together."

Though it took awhile before they

got active in marriage support, for the past 15 years the Bartleys have been leading weekend retreats.

Since 1996, they have taught a Sunday school class for newlyweds and engaged couples. Only three of nearly 100 couples who went through the sessions later divorced.

They also oversee their church's pre-marital counseling program, which has five couples trained to offer that service and relieve the pastor of those duties.

If churches are not careful, Roger explained, they can hinder marriages by keeping couples so busy they do not spend much time together or with their children.

In addition to encouraging couples to find ministries they can do together, churches can offer marriage and parenting classes and joint family activities that demonstrate that they value families, he said.

They also can offer marriage workshops, such as one the Bartleys are helping First Baptist, Richmond, host Feb. 27-28 in cooperation with the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Roger said couples especially need to grasp the truth that the goal of marriage is for spouses to serve each other.

"Ephesians 5:20-33 is the model for how a husband and wife are to relate," he noted. "Couples should go back to that. They can place an emphasis on a better marriage."

'Fireproof' DVD scheduled to be released Jan. 27

Albany Ga. (BP)—With "Fireproof" slowly ending its theatrical run, officials announced that the film will be released on DVD Jan. 27, just in time for Valentine's Day and National Marriage Month (February).

"The Love Dare," a book featured in the movie, was No. 1 for three straight weeks on The New York Times' paperback advice bestseller list and now is No. 2.

Fireproof was made by Sherwood Pictures, which is owned by Sherwood Baptist Church in Albany, Ga.

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Box 43969
Louisville, KY 40253
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DREW NICHTER
News Director

THOMAS C. TOWNSEND
Marketing & Business
Manager

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

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After the election

By Penna Dexter

Dallas (BP)—Following every election, my former boss, the late Christian talk radio pioneer Marlin Maddoux said the same thing. He found a different way to say it every time, of course, but it was essentially this: After elections, Christians tend to drop out of politics.

If our guys and gals win, we get complacent. We expect that our agenda will certainly be enacted simply because we have elected the right people. On the other hand, if our favorites lose, we get discouraged. We pull back into the pews and into family life. This is not just true of presidential elections, but elections to all levels of government service.

"Why is it," Marlin would ask his audience, "that even the believers who get really involved in campaigns, don't stay the course? Why don't they take the next logical step and hold those in elected office accountable to what they were elected to do?"

Marlin is gone now. The Lord took him home after a lifetime of hard work in the culture wars. But his message is timeless: The Christian influence is necessary for good government. It's important not just to elect good and moral people, but to hold them to their promises and keep them from drinking the Potomac Kool-Aid. And, when candidates we oppose are elected anyway, we should play offense.

Chrismon symbol

During Advent, it is appropriate to use the fish symbol as a Chrismon on our church's Chrismon tree, since the fish was one of the most important symbols of Christ to the early Christians. The birth and life of Jesus was the fulfillment of the hope the Old Testament prophets proclaimed hundreds of years before His birth. Jesus (Emmanuel) was born into a world

There's an understandable discouragement that comes with a loss, but we should not let that immobilize us. Instead, we should stay informed and support and encourage elected officials who are in the trenches fighting bad legislation.

Never has this been more important than after this particular election. The financial bailout brought premature pronouncements of the death of economic conservatism. And the election results have pundits wondering whether small-government conservatives will be able to regroup to fight the battles to come. The country is approaching a tipping point. When the non-taxpaying sector of the economy approaches 50 percent, it will become nearly impossible to re-implement the conservative principles under which we have prospered.

Benjamin Franklin wrote, "When the people find that they can vote themselves money, that will herald the end of the republic." Are we there? Not yet. But, in order to make sure the government ownership of private assets and institutions is temporary, we must take every opportunity to emphasize that America functions best when people work for what they consume and think of God, not government, as their provider.

Policies and laws dealing with the sanctity of human life and marriage go to the core of who we are as

in disarray; a world and its people in need of a Savior.

It probably is safe to say the world has always been, and is even to this day, in disarray. When our lives are burdened with heavy loads, sometimes all we have to cling to is hope. When Jesus paid the supreme sacrifice to save us from our sins, our Creator kept hope alive forever. As long as we have hope, we have nothing to fear, for God is with us and will provide



GO TELL the Story of Jesus

The theme for this year's Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions is "GO TELL the Story of Jesus." The goal is \$170 million, which will challenge all of us to give more sacrificially than ever due to the downturn in the economy.

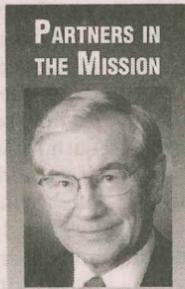
The offering is named for missionary Lottie Moon who for 37 years endured hardship and danger in China at a time when it was a land oppressed by famine, disease and war. In the end, she loved the Chinese more than life itself and gave so much of her own food to starving neighbors that she died of starvation herself.

"How many there are ... who imagine that because Jesus paid it all, they need pay nothing, forgetting that the prime object of their salvation was that they should follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ in bringing back a lost world to God," Lottie Moon once wrote in one of her numerous letters home urging Southern Baptists to greater mis-

sions involvement and support. That letter triggered the first offering by Southern Baptists for international missions in 1888—enough to send three more missionaries to China.

Today, we can rejoice over the encouraging results being reported by some 5,318 Southern Baptist International Mission Board missionaries (as of April 9). According to the IMB's 2007 Annual Statistical Report, there were 25,497 new churches, 609,968 new baptisms and 567,413 new believers to rejoice over through the efforts of our missionaries. This is a tremendous testimony to the glory of God as He manifests Himself through the faithful ministries of these missionaries.

Yet there are still so many who have not heard of Jesus' saving love and grace. According to IMB President Jerry Rankin, there are 5,903 "last frontier" people groups where less than 2 percent of the population is evangelical and there is no active



Bill Mackey

a nation. Hard-fought restrictions on abortion hang in the balance under the next administration. So does the institution of marriage. The successes of protecting marriage in California, Florida and Arizona demonstrate what happens when people of faith get their backs up and take action. Thirty states now have marriage amendments. The toughest battles remain. If Christians are not the watchmen and the diligent workers, who will be?

Cultural commentator Michael Craven asks the question: "Have we become unfit for democracy?" Only if Christians give up. Believers should involve themselves in the political process because our system was designed to operate best in the hands of religious people. Our constitution was written based upon the truth that man is inherently sinful and government must act as a restraint upon human nature. The less religious and moral the citizenry, the bigger and more powerful the government must be to control economic and moral chaos.

God is sovereign. He orders the events of history. Proverbs 8:15-16 says: "By me kings reign ... By me princes rule." The Lord raises leaders. He brings them down. The election results are no surprise to Him. He has a plan and we should look to Him for our next steps.

Penna Dexter is a conservative activist, an announcer on the syndicated pro-life radio program "Life on the Line," and serves as a consultant for KMA Direct Communications in Plano, Texas

ways for our needs to be met. When it is time for us to depart God's Kingdom on earth, God has prepared a wonderful, eternal home for us. From cradle to grave and even beyond, Jesus is the Hope we can trust.

Christ-like hope was born on Christmas Day more than 2,000 years ago. Hope and love always trump fear. Two byproducts of hope and love are joy and peace. The fish Chrismon reminds us that hope is with us always.

*Paul Whiteley Sr.
Louisville*

church planting. There are another 6,508 unreached people groups with populations that are less than 2 percent evangelical, but where there is at least active church planting going on.

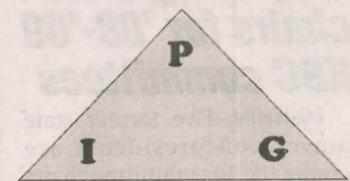
IMB leaders believe it will take another 3,000 missionaries, along with partnerships with churches, national Baptists and other Great Commission individuals to reach all people groups.

These numbers can be overwhelming, but it becomes personal when you have close friends who are serving in very stressful and challenging places. Every day, our missionaries are pouring their lives into the lives of the peoples of the world, just as Lottie Moon did.

Remember that every gift is important. One dollar can bring an audio Gospel tape to a non-reading tribe so that many can come to Christ. Just \$4.56 can support a missionary for an hour, and \$768.02 can support a missionary for one week. By doing what you can, you can make an eternal difference for many people.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

STEWARDSHIP



Always remember the 'PIG' principle when investing

By Don Spencer

No, I'm not referring to hoarding things or being stingy. Note the triangle with each point labeled either "P", "I", or "G". Each of these represents an element to be remembered in investing.

P—Protecting Principal. For many folks, it is important for them to reduce the possibility of losing some of their principal. They are very uncomfortable with market volatility. The extreme view is of people who do not trust banks and keep their money in secret hiding places. No risk, no loss, no gain.

I—Income. This can be in the form of interest payments or dividends.

G—Growth. This typically involves investing in stocks. It can, however, refer to other types of investments.

Now, combine these three elements together in the very simple "PIG" principle represented on the triangle. The concept to remember is that the more you move toward any one point on the triangle, the more you move away from the other two points.

If protecting principal is of maximum importance to you, you will not realize significant income or growth.

If you want maximum growth in investing, you must move away from protecting principal and income-oriented investments.

If having a steady income stream is important, then you must move away from growth-oriented investments. And, as you increase the level of income to be generated, the more you move away from protecting principal.

As you select various investments, whether in a retirement plan or elsewhere, always remember that you cannot have maximum protection, income and growth in the same investment. You must be willing to move away from two of these to maximize the third. If you are well diversified in your investments, you will have some in each—but that's a topic for another column.

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



Future husbands must learn to be 'positive influence' early on

Q: As a single mother, I'm trying to impress upon my teenage son the importance of treating young women well. As a Christian man, what would you want him to know?

Since it is likely that one day your son will become a husband, it is never too early for him to begin practicing the roles of a leader, lover, protector and provider. Called to be a positive influence on the young women he is around, your son might be seen doing the following, especially if he is dating my daughter:

- Carefully screening movies before inviting her, doing his best to avoid films that are inappropriate, vulgar or coarse.
- Demonstrating healthy habits in worship attendance, service and Bible study.
- Respecting curfews, even beating the curfew by a half hour or more.
- Spending time with the girl's family, getting to know them and talking with parents and siblings.
- Opening doors for her.
- Complimenting her on her looks, qualities or talents.
- Supporting activities in which she is involved through attendance and encouragement.
- Balancing alone time with time spent with friends so as to avoid unhealthy enmeshment.
- Limiting physical involvement and periods of extended time alone.
- Honoring her parents by approving plans in advance.
- Walking her to the door when returning late at night.
- Offering to pay for reasonable expenses on dates which he has initiated.
- Demonstrating that he pays attention to his physical appearance through diet, exercise, dress and good hygiene.
- Initiating prayer and spiritual conversations.

Young men should remember Paul's word to young Timothy, "Don't let anyone look down on you because you're young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity."—Scott Wigginton

Q: Should I let my child see the new movie "Twilight?"

A Fox news reporter said, "If you haven't heard about it, ask your 12-year-old daughter." That was the first I had heard about "Twilight," the new movie based on the best-selling novel by Stephenie Meyer. I decided I had better check it out.

Several things tipped me off that something special was up. First, our little Shelby County theater was showing the movie in two theaters at the same time. Second, there was a huge line to get in. Third, and perhaps most important, the audience was packed with young girls between the ages of 10 and 14.

As we settled into our seats amid all the adolescent excitement, we weren't sure what we were getting into, but I must say that my wife and I both enjoyed the movie. The story was interesting and held our attention. There was no offensive language. There was the boy/girl attraction, but no lines were crossed.

I did not find anything wrong with the story. The presence of vampires will put some off—reminiscent of the magic and wizardry of the Harry Potter stories—but it just reminded me of the old Dracula and Wolfman movies from my generation—pure fantasy that can be enjoyed without being believed.

Some sixth graders at my church were aware of "Twilight," others were not. Several said their parents had not allowed them to read the books. As I probed a bit further, parental reservations had more to do with age appropriateness than content. I would concur. There were some scenes I believe could cause nightmares for younger children. My take would be that there are much better films to take your young children to. They can enjoy "Twilight" when they are a bit older.—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 Emmanuel Baptist Church in Lexington. E-mail: james@ibs-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.



What is the church's role within the city?

Luke 4:18-19 informs my thinking about the role of the church in the cities of our world:

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, To release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

I often remind my congregation that living in Lexington puts us in yet another category of being a "minority." Researchers at the United Nations and other experts noted last year that more people live in America's—and the world's—cities than in rural areas. As soon as one thinks of New York; Chicago; Los Angeles; Houston; Miami; Atlanta; Philadelphia; or Detroit, expand what it means to think of Mexico City; New Delhi; Shanghai, China; Sao Paulo, Brazil; or Cairo, Egypt. The world's "megacities" pose major environmental, economic and social ramifications for the work of the church—from clean water and air, to transportation and the broad sweep of what it means to feed and house all of God's people.

From Bogotá, Colombia, to Baltimore, if the ministry of Christians is to be effective and efficient, we are required to reassess our priorities in terms of seeing to it that children do not live in slums; that as many people as possible are free from disease and the threat of violence; that they are educated; and that they are filled with the hope that Christ requires from those of us who have accepted the call to preach the Good News.

Of all the theologians I am familiar with, none advised us better of our need to know the special work involved when ministering to people who are "crowded" into the world's cities than Howard Thurman, especially in his 1949 book, "Jesus and the Disinherited." Martin Luther King Jr. proudly talked of how he carried Thurman's magnum opus in his pocket while he was a seminarian in Boston.

The harsh realities of urban living, are the breeding grounds for unfriendliness and a myriad source of uncertainty.

I implore my flock in Lexington—a mid-sized city—to heed the words of Amos 6:1, "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion." As Marvin McMickle of Antioch Baptist Church in Cleveland wrote in his book, "Preaching to the Black Middle Class," "We cannot live well, eat the choicest cuts of meat, drink the best wines, live in luxurious homes, and anoint ourselves with the most expensive fragrances and 'not grieve over the ruin of Joseph,'" (Amos 6:6).

Brother McMickle—in the vein of recommendations made by the late C. Eric Lincoln in his 1991 book, "The Black Church in the African American Experience"—suggested that churches located in America's cities can fulfill the mandate from Jesus by being engaged in such areas as social services; economic development; land acquisition and development; credit union and financial management seminars; education from pre-K through 12th grade; health and wellness; voter registration and education; civil rights advocacy; ministering to the incarcerated and those (recently) released from prisons; and making traditional spiritual programs available in non-traditional ways to the community.

Surely Jesus was speaking through Martin Luther King, Jr. when he said, "Those who passively accept evil are as much involved in it as those who help to perpetrate it. Those who accept evil without protesting against it are really cooperating with it."

Let us—men and women anointed by God to be ministers—go into the world, especially its cities, and proclaim the Lord's favors.

Willis Polk is pastor of Imani Baptist Church in Lexington and president of the Kentucky Baptist African-American Pastors' Fellowship

GUEST EDITORIAL



Willis Polk

Youth ministry and Christmas

The older I get the more two individual families within our church things "make" Christmas for me. family.

The first, obviously, is the celebration of the birth of our Savior. The second is time spent with family. It's amazing that these often are the two things that seem to get lost the most in our Christmas celebrations. That's why this time of year is one of my favorite in ministry; it gives us time to do what we should do best—tell the story of Jesus and be a family.

There also are some principles of youth ministry that we can exercise during this time of year.

Family ministry. My son, Jordan, was about 4 when, as a Pre-K student at Heritage Christian Academy in Hopkinsville, he memorized the Christmas story from the Gospel of Luke. That year at the Christmas Eve service, my wife, Gina, my daughter, Karen, and I sat around him while he recited the Christmas story. I couldn't tell you what else happened during the service, but that moment stands out. Our family got to be part of the larger church family in celebrating the Christmas season.

During the advent season, our church would have a different family unit lead us in the advent devotion—a three- or four-generation family, a single parent family, a blended family, single adults. It was who we were as a church, and it was good to see the church family represented. What a great opportunity we have to reach out and uplift in-

Visitor friendly. Christmas also is a time for pageants, plays and musicals, all of which bring visitors from the community into the church building. Have we done our best to present our best for company? I'm not sure how it is at your home, but in mine, when we know company's coming, the house will look its best. You know how it is: There's clean, Mama clean and company clean.

Do our churches have greeters at the doors welcoming people? Are there people in the parking lot helping to find spots and directing visitors to the correct entrances? Have we thought about how to gather information from visitors and how to follow up with them after the event is over?

Community involvement. Maybe no other time of year are we as intensely focused on the community as Christmastime. From collecting toys, filling shoeboxes, serving in soup kitchens to providing gloves, mittens, scarves and coats for those in need, we do great at reaching out to those in our communities who are less fortunate than we are.

It is said that this generation of students is one of the most socially conscious generations to come along. What a great way for us to involve students in the life of the church. It also is a great way for us to build relationships with individual students in our church families.

There are great opportunities for conversations while serving those in our communities.

School involvement. Many schools have a Christmas program; they may not call it that, but they have one. Our attendance at these concerts, plays and events show our students they matter to us outside the church walls. It also is a great way to meet the families of our students, and it says a lot to a parent about how important their child is to us when we show up at these events.

We also can open our churches to host these events. For years, one of the highlights of Christmas for me was the Hopkinsville High School's Christmas concert in the sanctuary of Hopkinsville's First Baptist Church. When the lights would dim, and the choir would walk in singing "Angels We Have Heard on High," it was a taste of heaven. The sanctuary at First Baptist wasn't as big as the high school gym, but it was a lot more conducive to music, and it was a great way to minister to the choir students.

At Edgewood Baptist Church in Hopkinsville, we hosted the Christian County Middle School choir on more than one occasion for either their Christmas or spring concert. We always were willing hosts and it showed students, administrators and the community that we cared.

There are a plethora of other ideas. Let us not get so consumed in the season that we forget to proclaim the story of the arrival of a Savior.

Joe Ball, a former youth minister at Edgewood Baptist Church in Hopkinsville, is youth strategist for the Kentucky Baptist Convention

YOUTH MINISTRY CORNER



Joe Ball

Bohlens build friendships with Andean farmers

Continued from page 1

South America during the Nov. 30-Dec. 7 week of prayer and giving to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions.

Many of the Andean people have heard the name of Jesus but few know who He is or have a personal relationship with Him, noted Becky, a native of Arizona. While the agriculturists around them plant seeds in the mountainside, the Bohlens

are planting seeds of the gospel.

"Here in this country, there's a phrase they use: 'Palanca.' It's who you know," Becky said. "Relationships are the bottom line. It's the bridge to be able to share Christ with them."

In the agricultural communities of Pueblos del Sur, coffee is the precursor to those relationships. After checking his livestock in the fields, Meza returns to the cottage

where Forrest prepares coffee over an open fire. As they pass around a loaf of bread and sip traditional Venezuelan coffee, the Bohlens talk and laugh with Meza.

"It's just a cultural thing to offer someone something when they come into your home ... and normally it's coffee," Forrest explained. "If we came in talking about the Bible or Jesus first thing, we'd be shooting ourselves in the foot because they would put up their wall."

Over cups of coffee, friendships build. "I actually think most of the time, we're not even sowing seeds, we're breaking ground," Forrest said. "We have to go in and break that hard, crusty, spiritual soil before we can even plant a seed—and that's the relationships."

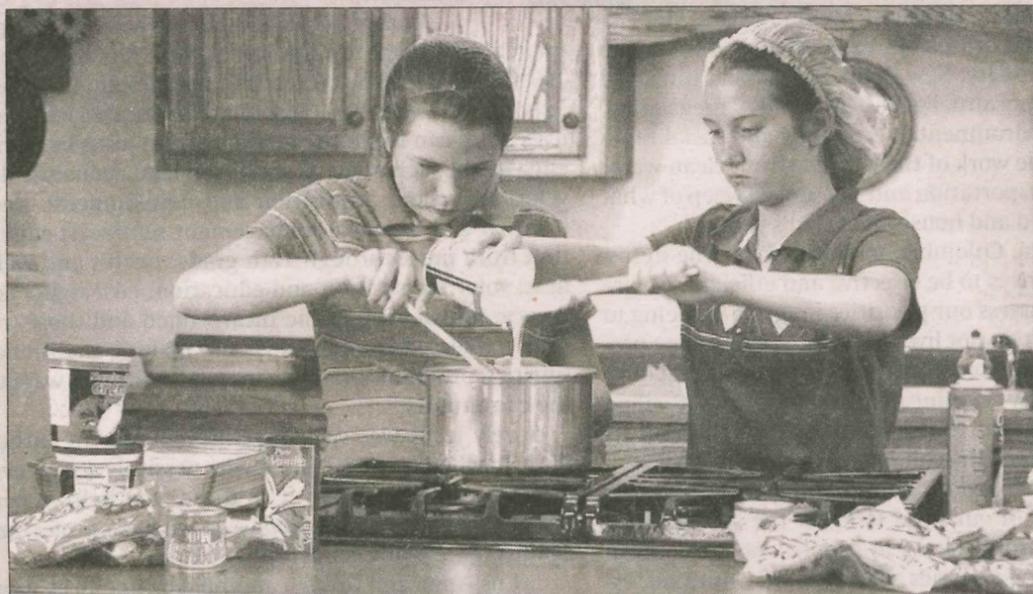
The Bohlens served 10 years among the urban poor in San Cristóbal where they noticed that people in the city were selling agricultural products and studying agriculture and veterinary medicine.

So Becky and Forrest, who grew up on a dairy farm, created the Sower Agricultural Foundation—Fundación Agropecuaria El Sembrador or FUNDASEM—to offer local farming classes with the help of volunteers from the States.

When the Bohlens toured an agricultural school in Mucuchachí, a town near Canaguá, professor Liliimar Rivas invited them and a few teachers to lunch at her home.

By the end of the day, Rivas and fellow teacher Zulay Guillén prayed to receive Christ.

Richmond twins support missions with candy business



Cara and Tara Johnson prepare a batch of fudge at their home in Richmond. The twins sell chocolate and peanut butter fudge and donate the money to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions. The girls were featured in the Southern Baptist International Mission Board's Kids on Missions DVD as part of this year's offering promotion. (IMB photo)



HARVEST On the road to Canaguá in the Andes Mountains, Forrest and Becky Bohlen stop to get acquainted with potato farmers working in fields along the mountain pass. Here the farmers work together to sack the potatoes. (IMB photo)

Kentucky native part of IMB's changing ministry in Chile

Continued from page 1

working with youth and adults.

"Now I'm more directly involved in church planting and mentoring and training Chilean people to be involved," she said.

Empowering local Christians to serve as church leaders among their neighbors is an approach that works and is exciting to witness, Wright noted.

"The last two years have been the most rewarding because I've seen my ministry multiply in other people," she said.

The small house churches popping up around the province are a dramatic change for most Chileans who grew up attending mass at Catholic cathedrals.

"Although 80 percent of the people are Catholic, maybe 12-14 percent are practicing," Wright explained. "There's not a concept of a personal relationship with God. ... The small-group approach ... gives them a chance to express themselves, to feel a real part, and also have a leadership role."

Wright hosts two Bible studies in her home each week. She also travels around the region discipling Chilean Christians. A method of education and encouragement she uses is "Acts 29."

There are only 28 chapters in the book of Acts, which follows the trials and successes of the early church. Examining the "proclamation" and "opposition" new believers faced can help current believers focus on specific ways to improve their own ministries and respond to challeng-

es, she noted.

"At the end they are asked to write a projection of their Acts 29, the vision God has for this neighborhood and this group of people," she explained.

The past two years, David Hughes, pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Louisville, has traveled to Chile with a group of church members to assist Wright. He said the faith of Chilean Christians is inspiring.

"They're fully capable of carrying the ball," Hughes said. "There are a lot of very dedicated young people there."

Progress has not come quickly or without intercession. "The things I've seen in the last few years have been a direct result of prayer," Wright acknowledged.

For eight years she prayed God would call some of the residents of a local apartment complex to faith in Christ, and also compel them to open their homes to host a Bible study. Recently that prayer was answered when two women came forward wanting to serve.

A college ministry that began years ago and then stalled only recently was revitalized after much prayer, Wright reported.

Now students lead two sessions each week—one for worship and evangelization, another for discipleship—that draw about 100 young people.

Despite progress, much work remains. "We are dedicated to finding groups of people who are not being reached," Wright said, such as professionals and members of the up-



DISCIPLING Volunteer Shirley Taliaferro (left), a member of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Louisville, teaches a conference on prayer for Chilean believers. At right is Southern Baptist missionary and Kentucky native Karen Wright who translated Taliaferro's presentation. (Photos courtesy of Karen Wright)

per-middle class.

"People are open to relationships and they're interested in the Bible and what it says as long as they don't perceive you as trying to change their traditions."

The message that Christ is the only way to salvation is not accepted easily by many people, she added.

Hughes said the language barrier actually was an advantage in sharing the gospel because it forced him to communicate concisely.

"You can go into a home with a Chilean national and have that person interpret very simply ... and see people make decisions for Christ,"

he noted. "It's a matter of being transparent with people."

Some Kentucky Baptists might feel removed from Wright's work in Chile but she said anyone who gives to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering is part of the effort.

"I realize the economic situation in the U.S. is not good. A lot of support comes from people who sacrifice to give every year," she said. "It gives me a sense of responsibility on how I spend the money I have ... how I use the resources you've given me."

Kentucky Baptists can become part of Wright's prayer team by e-mailing her at kwright@samregion.com.

KENTUCKYNOTES WMU

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Go Tell the Story of Jesus
Season of International Missions

Week of Prayer: Nov. 30 - Dec. 7, 2008
Focus: Unreached People in South America

National Goal for the
Lottie Moon Christmas Offering
\$170 million

Kentucky churches gave
\$4,435,031.69 to LMCO
during 2007-08
The largest ever from Kentucky!
Can we top it this year??!

Winter 2008-09

God's Amazing Grace

2009 Kentucky WMU Annual Meeting

Friday - Saturday

March 27-28, 2009

First Baptist Church, Richmond

- Gifts of Grace**.....Friday morning session (9:30 a.m.-12:00 noon)
Responding to God's Grace..... Friday afternoon session (1:30-3:00 p.m.)
Acting on God's Grace.....Ministry Projects (3-6 p.m.)
Called by Grace.....Friday evening session (7-9 p.m.)
Embracing God's Grace.....Saturday morning session (9-11:30 a.m.)

Special Guests:

Dr. Geoffrey Hammond, President, North American Mission Board
Dr. Bill Mackey, Executive Director, Kentucky Baptist Convention
Sandy Wisdom-Martin, WMU Executive Director, Illinois
Charles & Carolyn Dixon, Tanzania
Greg & Alice Whitetree, Freeda Harris Baptist Center
Teresa Parrett, Missions Mobilization Coordinator, KBC
Last Frontier Missionary
Jon Barron, Campus Minister, Eastern Kentucky University
Dewayne Waldrup, Bluegrass Cowboy Church

2009 Special Features:

Lunch with a Missionary, Friday, noon
Pre-registration for ministry projects and transportation assistance if needed.
Ministry projects will be in the community and at the church.
Baptist Nursing Fellowship Breakfast, Saturday, 7 a.m.

Watch for publicity and registration form for meal events, child care,
deaf interpretation to be mailed in early January.

Join us for all or part of the 2009 Kentucky WMU Annual Meeting.
The program, ministries, and fellowship will be worth the trip!

Annual Meeting Lodging

Hotels near First Baptist Church in Richmond, KY
Use I-75, Exit 87 for all of the following hotels:

Hampton Inn

1099 Barnes Mill Road
859-626-1002

Cut off date (for this rate): March 1, 2009

Rate: \$79.00 + tax

Please give the hotel the confirmation number
81739985 when calling to make reservations.

Comfort Suites

2007 Colby Taylor Drive
859-624-0770

Best Western Holiday Plaza

100 Eastern By-Pass / I-75
859-623-9220

Jameson Inn

2006 Colby Taylor Drive
859-624-0063

A Personal Word

During these difficult economic days, many charitable organizations are concerned. These organizations experience overwhelming demand while at the same time experiencing declining resources. Although we must be wise in these days, we must also demonstrate faith. Do we believe that God will meet our needs? How we give in challenging times is a greater demonstration of our faith in God than our giving in good times.



Joy Bolton
Executive
Director-
Treasurer

Kentucky WMU has a partnership with the Kentucky Baptist Foundation and PhilanthroCorp to provide information and resources for planned giving. Many people mistakenly think they have no need of a financial plan, including a will. Yet if you own a car, house, household goods, and personal items, you need a plan.

In one conference on planned giving, the presenter used two jars. One was filled with 80 or 90 pennies, the other with 10-20. The small jar represented our current income. The large jar represented our assets, such as a house, car, retirement plan, and insurance policies. After explaining the contents of the large jar, most of us realized that we had a lot more assets than we realized. And then he asked the important question: Who is going to decide what to do with what's in the large jar when you die?

Without a will, the state decides how the large jar is distributed. The state will not tithe or contribute to charitable causes. But with a will, not only can family members be given gifts, but resources can be allocated to the Lord's work that can make an eternal impact.

To help you write or review your will, we can provide you with the PhilanthroCorp "Estate Plan Organizer." This fill-in the blank document organizes the information necessary to complete a will. It is an excellent document to keep with your will and other financial papers because of the significant information pulled together in one place. It can be filled out on-line (all information remains confidential for your use only) and printed after it is completed. Or you can print a blank copy and complete it by hand. For more information, go to www.kywmu.org/estateplanning.

After leaving a church my father once pastored, my parents learned that the church was being disbanded due to the sale of the church property. My parents visited the congregation as they considered what they should do with the money for the property. Dad encouraged them to give the proceeds to the Mississippi Baptist Foundation. This congregation has now given more to missions than they had given as an active congregation. The same can be true of us if we give to the Lord's work from the big jar.

2007-08 was a great year for missions giving in Kentucky. All of our missions offerings (Lottie Moon, Annie Armstrong, and Eliza Broadus) were the largest ever given. I pray that we will exceed last year in 2008-09! During our Season of Prayer for International Missions, remember that around the world there are people who need us to "Go Tell the Story of Jesus."



Photo courtesy of the Western Recorder

Churchwide



As we approach winter there are things we need to plan and prepare to lead our churches in missions and missions education.

We are in the Week of Prayer for International Missions. If you have not done the study in your church, it is not too late! The issues in Venezuela are tough. Yet, the Holy Spirit is at work and people are coming to know Christ. Lead your church in understanding how our missionaries are making a difference and how we make a difference by giving to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

Focus on WMU is February 9-15. This is your chance to showcase WMU. Let your church family know what WMU is all about.

Whether you have GA or CiA in your church or not, your children can be involved in Children's Ministry Day. What a wonderful way to spend Valentine's Day sharing God's love with someone. The children in your church will thank you for getting them involved in missions.

Leadership is Like a Box of Chocolates is a national WMU training event, February 19-22 at Shocco Springs Baptist Conference Center in Talladega, AL. This training is for those in leadership roles in the church and association. Attendees will explore leadership models and choose from sessions on topics such as worldview; relationship building; culture clashes; mentoring; public speaking; time management and organization; handling conflict; ministry and multi-tasking. The cost is \$129.00. Please call the WMU office for a registration form or go to www.wmu.com/ events.

Christmas Blessings!

Wanda Walker

Adults

Hallelujah, Thine the Glory! The 2008 Fall retreats were a blessing with over 350 in attendance. Our God is an awesome God! Who else could have brought this many women together to worship and praise Him? Katie Richards, our speaker, is an incredible young woman with a heart that yearns to serve God. We are going to be hearing great things about how God is using her in the future. The music was inspirational and encouraging; many thanks to "Led to Testify" at Jonathan Creek and Laura Spragg at Cedarmore. The missionaries and workshop leaders led with enthusiasm and encouragement. God was in the house!

The winter retreat is going to be here before you know it. Gayla Parker, former IMB missionary to the Philippines and current Executive Director of Maryland-Delaware, WMU will be our retreat leader. She will lead us to understand the impact of Active Compassion.

If you are looking for a way to bring missions into a new light, begin a Round Table Book Club. December brings a timely book, with all the hurriedness of the season, *Beyond Me: Living a You First Life in a Me First World*. In January, those who love Queen Esther will enjoy *Queen Esther's Reflection: A Portrait of Grace, Courage and Excellence*.

In February, *Winds of Hope* provides devotions for those who have experienced disaster and trauma.

During 2008, we had over twenty new Women on Mission or Adults on Mission groups. God is using missions education to grow His kingdom. Isn't it exciting to be part of it? It is for me. I receive blessings beyond comprehension. You are an amazing group of believers. Thanks for your passion to beCalled to Love.



Peace Joy and Blessings!

Wanda Walker

Youth

Plans are underway for Exalt 2009 at Central Baptist in Corbin, April 17-18. The theme this year is "Metamorphosis" based on Romans 12:2. Wini Moran will be our speaker. Wini spoke at Exalt 2006. Wini loves ministering to students, especially young women, alongside her husband who is a youth minister. Shelby Crawford will be the worship leader. Shelby is a student at University of the Cumberland where she is the BCM worship leader. A youth ministry intern, she has been leading worship for four years.



The guys of your church will benefit from 4:GO, the all guys conference which will also be held at Central Baptist, April 17-18. For information, go to www.kybaptist.org/4GO.

There will be a Christian magic show with David Garrard for both Exalt and 4:GO. David's mix of magic, faith and music has made him popular with audiences throughout the United States. When not traveling with his magic, David casts a spell on the boys and girls at St. Matthews Baptist Church, where he is the Minister to Children. David says that in all the years he has been involved with magic that he has seen some amazing things. "However, in all my life, I have never seen anything as amazing as God's love."

This time of year we focus on international missions. You will want to challenge your youth to "Go tell the story of Jesus" with the International Mission Study available from national WMU. The study focuses on Venezuela.

It is not too late for you to begin planning a mission trip or ministry project for this summer. Mission trips are a great way to help your youth put their faith into practice and make it their own. Please call me if you need any ideas.

You and your youth can receive training for missions opportunities at the Youth Missions Workshop at the Creative Ministries Festival. The festival will be held at Southern Seminary in Louisville March 6-7 and at First Baptist, Bowling Green on March 13-14. Contact me for more information.

LaRaine Rice



Preschool and Children

PRESCHOOL ----

Mission Friends are happy! Mission Friends have fun! During the winter quarter:



-Involve preschoolers in the International Mission Study in December. The study, which focuses on Venezuela, is in the 2008 International Missions Study Teaching Guide for Preschoolers.

-Help your church recognize Missions Friends as part of WMU during Focus on WMU, Feb. 9-15. Work with your WMU director using suggestions in Start and the 2008-09 WMU Year Book pages 28-29.

- Begin preparing for the North American Mission Study coming up in March! The unit in Start focuses on missions in Florida.

-Check out www.missionfriends.com for more information about Mission Friends, including the Leader Forum, where you can share ideas and thoughts with other Mission Friends and WMU leaders.

Special Note: Missions in Kentucky will be highlighted in the January unit in Start as preschoolers learn about Cowboy Church and Missionary Chris Clarke from Paris, Kentucky. What a great opportunity for Mission Friends in our state as well as preschoolers across the United States!

CHILDREN -----

As Girls in Action and Children in Action continue "Mission: Possible", make sure to include these highlights:



December marks the emphasis for International Missions. Involve the children in your church with the 2008 International Mission Study for Children. Children will learn about missions in Venezuela and how missionaries reach out to share God's love. Encourage members of Girls in Action, Royal Ambassadors, and Children in Action to attend. Use this special time to invite

boys and girls who are not involved in missions education.

Children's Ministry Day in 2008 was a great success AND Children's Ministry Day, February 14, 2009 can be even better! This special day, sponsored by national WMU, is for all children in the church to get involved in hands-on ministry. Children and leaders across Kentucky, as well as throughout North America, are encouraged to participate in ministry projects to meet needs in their own communities. Think about the impact thousands of children's groups can have when they reach out to others through acts of compassion. Visit www.childrensmiissions.com to learn more about the special day and the resources available. While you are there, check out the discussion forum where you can share ideas and thoughts with other children's missions leaders.

Brenda Price



President's Perspective

Well, again I have had one of those "beyond belief" experiences! Going back to Korea in August was certainly that. It was so much fun getting off the airplane and seeing familiar faces. We have made many friends during their time here and ours there. The ladies are so gracious and so much fun – just like our American friends.

Sandra Duguid, our vice president, Dolores Gilmore, Joy and I made the trip. We were allowed to go into North Korea for a one-day tour. For me, it was a depressing time. We planned to take prayer cards to pray while there, but we were told not to take any written material. Of course, we could pray without the cards and we did. I found it hard to pray other than to say, "Lord they need so much – you know what it is – please provide".



Pat Reaves
Kentucky WMU
President

Our interaction with the people was very limited we could only speak with those that were our guides and some at the sites where we stopped. No pictures were allowed except when they said, "You may take a picture here". None were allowed from the bus and they checked our camera, looking at every picture when we left. We were the only Americans in the tour of about 300 people. Many were elderly South Koreans. I'm sure they never thought they would get to return or go into North Korea. While having lunch I was seated next to several young Korean girls. They were wearing shirts that said, "I love Jesus" in English. And we were afraid to take our printed material in! How brave they were with their witness. I was ashamed of mine!

The Korean WMU annual meeting was a great time. We sat through a business meeting and it was so much like ours. Even though we couldn't understand what they said, we could tell we had been there! Thanks for the opportunity to be your representative.

Thanks, too, for all you have done or are doing for our Eliza Broadus Offering. I have heard of some creative ways people have raised money for the offering. The GA group at First Baptist Church of Mt. Washington sold cookbooks and made over a \$1,000. The Acteens group at Bethlehem Baptist Church in Louisville (my church) had an Eliza Purse Boutique. They had a silent auction of gently used and new purses. The total for Eliza was over \$520. Eliza likes being a millionaire so we can't stop working!

The WMU Executive Board met at the end of October. These ladies work hard for several days – some come on Thursday the rest on Friday and stay until Sunday afternoon. I really appreciate all they do for the Lord and His mission through WMU. If you know one of our board members, let them know you appreciate them. I want to express my gratitude to the staff also.

I hope you are making plans to come to Richmond for our annual meeting in March. We have confirmed that Dr. Geoffrey Hammond, President of the North American Mission Board will be one of our guests. You don't want to miss it! Love God. Love Others.

Working together,
Pat Reaves

Kentucky WMU Heritage Fund June 1—August 31, 2008

The following persons were honored or remembered through gifts to the Kentucky WMU Heritage Fund during the fourth quarter of the 2007-08 fiscal year. Our thanks to each person who gave to the Heritage Fund in honor of or in memory of someone significant to you and WMU. In addition, gifts for the 1000² Campaign for the Heritage Fund continue to come in. Pledge gifts are noted each quarter and may also be given in honor or memory of someone. You can participate in the 1000² Campaign by making a pledge or gift today!

In Honor of:

Brenda Price
Sherry Collins
Pat & Dudley Reaves

Treva Foley
Myrtle Woolum
Mary S. Hummel
Mary Wallace
JeanAllen
Juanita Gaines
Pat & Bob Key
Joy Bolton
Juanita Gaines
Pat & Bob Key

In Memory of:

Nancy Royalty
William Akridge
Joe Tackett
Mary Margaret Coign
Jack Guerin
John Wallace
Elnora Ison
Mary White
Uydene Wells
Jeweldyne Johnson
Harriet Montgomery
John Wallace

Donor:

Marilyn & William Lamkin (toward pledge)
PGDL Circle, New Salem Baptist (toward pledge)
Laura, Barry, Faith & Caleigh Morris and
Kristen, Jennings & Luke Hager
Grace Baptist Church
Patty & Charles Renfrow (toward pledge)
Marilyn & William Lamkin (toward pledge)
Donald & Anna White
Poplar Grove Baptist Church
Irma Woodrow
Pat & Dudley Reaves
Long Run Association WMU
Patty & Dick Stone
George & Cathy Chinn (toward pledge)

Donor:

Irma Woodrow
Louise Sandidge
Maribeth & Horace Hambrick
Charles & Patty Renfrow (toward pledge)
Mary Williams Circle, Beth Baptist Church
Donald & Anna White
Maribeth Hambrick
Georgetown Baptist Church WMU
Elk Lick Baptist Church Women on Mission
Elk Lick Baptist Church Women on Mission
Myrtle Woolum
Elkhorn Baptist Association WMU

1000² Campaign Contributions (includes \$1,000 gifts, pledge payments, and other gifts):

Bill & Charmaine Nichols	Jo Pelham
Dover Baptist Church	Dry Ridge Night Women on Mission
Brenda Adams	Oakland Avenue Baptist Church
Grafenburg Baptist Church WMU	Clayvillage Baptist Church
Ruth McConnell	Boone's Creek Baptist Association WMU
Crestwood Baptist WMU	Central Baptist Church- Life Changers Goup
Cheryl Hatfield	Nancy Buchanan

Thank You, Kentucky Baptists! Eliza Broadus Offering Overage for 2007-08

We are celebrating the \$1,105,721.92 given to the 2007-08 Eliza Broadus Offering, the largest Eliza Broadus Offering ever given! We are celebrating not only reaching but significantly exceeding the one million dollar goal. The overage funds will be used for evangelism, including Crossover 2009 when the Southern Baptist Convention meets in Louisville.

The specific projects to be funded include:

2009 Crossover- Metro Louisville	\$ 65,000
Associational Crusades & Evangelistic Events	\$ 30,000
2009 Crossover & SBC- Collegiate Expenses	\$ 3,000
Reach- University of the Cumberlands	\$ 2,000
Evangelistic Special Ministry Projects	\$ 5,725
TOTAL	\$105,725

Active Compassion

Women on Mission Winter Retreat
January 30-31, 2009
Laurel Lake Baptist Camp, Corbin, KY

Our retreat leader will be Gayla Parker,
former missionary to the Philippines and
current WMU Director of Maryland-Delaware

Cost: \$50.00

Includes lodging, meals, and all program materials
(linens not included)

Brochures are available by calling the WMU office.
Registration deadline is January 23.

Scholarships Available!!!

Kentucky WMU would like to encourage young women seeking a career in missions, social work, or a full time church related vocation. We offer college and seminary scholarships, as well as scholarships for Acteens. Most scholarships are for Kentucky women, although men and out of state applicants are eligible for some scholarships. Please contact our office for a scholarship brochure and application. Applications are due in the WMU office by February 1, 2009.

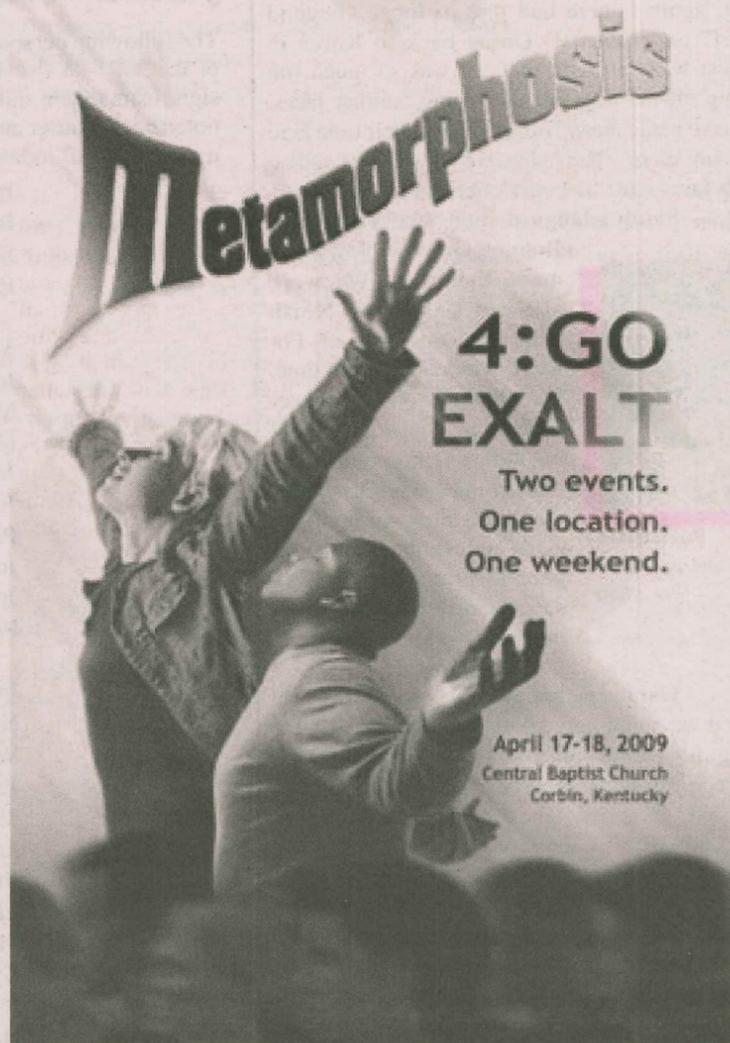
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4:GO EXALT

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April 17-18, 2009
Central Baptist Church
Corbin, Kentucky

Calendar

December

11/30-12/7 Week of Prayer for International Missions
& Lottie Moon Christmas Offering

January 2009

30-31 Women on Mission Regional Retreat,
Laurel Lake, Corbin

February

9-15 Focus on WMU

14 Children's Ministry Day

19-21 "Leadership Is Like a Box of Chocolates" National WMU
Traing Event, Shocco Springs, AL

March

1-8 Season of Prayer for North American Missions
& Annie Armstrong Easter Offering

6-7 Creative Ministries Festival & Youth Missions
Workshop, SBTS, Louisville

7 Hispanic WMU Event, Parkland Baptist Church,
Louisville

13-14 Creative Ministries Festival & Youth Missions Workshop,
First Baptist Church, Bowling Green

27-28 Kentucky WMU Annual Meeting,
First Baptist Church, Richmond

April

17-18 Exalt & 4:GO, Central Baptist Church, Corbin

New society to 'promote and preserve' Ky. Baptist history

Lexington—Determined to increase awareness and appreciation for Kentucky Baptist history, the J.H. Spencer Historical Society held its inaugural meeting last month prior to the Kentucky Baptist Convention annual meeting in Lexington.

The purpose of the new group is "to promote and preserve Kentucky Baptist history," according to Ben Stratton, pastor of Farmington Baptist Church and the society's elected secretary/treasurer.

With a modest current membership of about 20 pastors and laypeople, Stratton said he hopes the society can become a significant resource that rivals those of other state conventions.

"Kentucky is one of the few states that doesn't have a Baptist historical society," he pointed out. But it once did.

Messengers to the 1999 KBC annual meeting voted to disband the former Kentucky Baptist Historical Commission. In its place, the Kentucky Baptist Archives Advisory Board was formed.

Members of that board decided last year that it "really wasn't accomplishing as much as it could," Stratton noted. The KBC Mission Board in May approved the dissolution of the advisory board while simultaneously affirming the formation of the J.H. Spencer Historical Society.

It is named for historian J.H. Spencer, who authored the two-volume narrative "A History of Kentucky Baptists," which chronicles Baptist life in the commonwealth from 1769 to 1885.

About 16 people attended the group's inaugural meeting last month, Stratton said. Participants elected officers and heard a series of messages regarding Baptist history. The society's elected officers are Stan Williams, pastor of First Baptist Church of Cannonsburg, president; Charles Blair, pastor of Poplar Grove Baptist Church in Hickman, vice president; and Stratton, secretary/treasurer.

"There's as much Baptist history in Kentucky as anywhere," Stratton explained. "A lot of great things have happened here, but a lot of it is forgotten."

The society intends to hold yearly meetings and put out an annual publication, he said. It likely would contain sermons from past Kentucky Baptist pastors and evangelists as a way "to bring back things that have been forgotten," Stratton added.

While the J.H. Spencer Historical Society is not officially connected with the KBC, Stratton said the group does plan to work with the convention's archives office. KBC Assistant Executive Director Steve Thompson said the relationship with the society is "loosely defined," but the KBC will provide a limited amount of funding for expenses.

The J.H. Spencer Historical Society is open to all Kentucky Baptist pastors and laypeople. Membership is \$10 for one year; \$17 for two years. For more information about the society or to become a member, contact Stan Williams at (606) 928-4981, or sdwilliams@zoominternet.net.

Cumberlands earns NAIA honor

Williamsburg—The University of the Cumberlands athletics department has been recognized as a Champions of Character institution for the 2007-08 school year by the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics.

The NAIA created the Champions of Character award with a mission to raise up a generation of students who demonstrate respect, responsibility, integrity, servant leadership and sportsmanship in their everyday lives. These five core values are incorporated into the campus community and educate the student-athletes, coaches and parents on these specific standards and expectations. According to the NAIA Web site, "The program is dedicated to the principle that character is a choice

and that being a champion is not just about winning, but making good decisions consistently in daily life."

"We are excited to be named a Champions of Character Institution by the NAIA for the eighth straight year," said Cumberlands Athletic Director Randy Vernon. "Our student athletes work very hard and take great pride in fulfilling the requirements of respect, integrity, responsibility, servant leadership and sportsmanship that are required by the Champions of Character program. Each year all of our teams contribute to reaching this goal and several go above and beyond the minimum requirements. I am very proud of our student athletes for this accomplishment."

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Oneida's four-fold ministry, part 4

Ministering to the physically poor and spiritually lost are priorities

The final part of our four-fold ministry has to do with our approach as a Christian school to the spiritually lost. Oneida is one of only a handful of boarding schools that has survived in the past 100-plus years.

Often ask the Lord to give me insight into why He has allowed our ministry to continue when so many others have closed. God has never given me a list of things we do that please Him, but I have been given a deep conviction about some of them.

For example, I believe that one of the things that we do that finds favor in the eyes of the Lord is our approach to helping students from low-income homes. I firmly believe that if we took a less compassionate approach to helping those who could not otherwise afford to attend OBI, God would not be pleased.

A second area I believe pleases God is our attitude toward allowing those who are not believers to attend our school. When my wife and I were students here in the 1960s, we knew a lot of the students were not Christians. And, yes, we both saw and heard things that normally would not be tolerated in a Christian school. But I don't think Kay or I were in any way deprived of the Christian education we both wanted because of the actions of those who were not believers.

Until I became OBI administrator in 1994, I presumed that all Christian schools were similar to ours in that they allowed unbelievers to attend. I was saddened to discover that Christian schools often do not allow students who are not believers.

The most common reason given was that the

purpose of having a Christian school was to provide an environment free of the negative influences often found in public schools. I don't think the Scriptures support that approach.

Several years ago, I attended a meeting with about 30 other Christian school administrators. I overheard one of the leaders say that Oneida should not consider itself a Christian school because we had so many boys and girls who were not Christian.



W.F. Underwood

That statement sent me on a Scripture search to see what God's Word said about ministering to the lost. Luke 19:10 says it all: "The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost." I am not a pastor or theologian, but even a young person can understand what Jesus was saying in that verse.

I firmly believe that nothing we do in any ministry is more important than doing what Christ said He came to do, and He came to seek and save the lost.

I don't deny that sometimes things are done and said on our campus that do not please God or us. Sometimes our students embarrass us. However, I have never felt a need to apologize for seeking out those who need Jesus. Each year many students find Christ here, including two Chinese students who became Christians last April.

I trust our friends and supporters understand the importance of inviting those who do not know Christ to be a part of our school. If we ever close that door, I honestly believe that God will be greatly displeased. Helping the poor and lost are two basic responsibilities of this ministry.

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

'I thought I was too old for college'

Hays thankful for opportunity to learn from CCBBC faculty

"I had known about Jesus Christ and the church all my life," said Larry Hays, a senior from Crossville, Tenn. "I was raised by my grandmother who was a wonderful Christian woman, "but I still didn't surrender my life to Christ as my Savior until I was 58 years old.

"I started serving in my church in Crossville by driving the church bus and teaching Sunday school," Hays continued. "A few months after I accepted Christ, ... I began to serve at a local rescue mission that our church supports called Bread of Life Rescue Mission." Clear Creek alumnus Ralph Reagan directs the mission.

"Ralph began to mentor me," Hays said. "We became really good friends. As I ministered there in the mission, I felt the Lord was calling me to do more with my life, and I felt I needed some education. I thought I was too old to go to college. No one really encouraged me except for Ralph. He kept telling me that I could do it if God was calling me to go on to college and get some training. Naturally, he recommended Clear Creek. I prayed about it and felt that God wanted me to come here."

Hays said his work at the mission has led to a new ministry opportunity.

"While serving at the mission I began to be drawn to a lot of guys who had been in prison. I got an opportunity to start working with a prison ministry called Focus Ministries," he said. "They do life skills classes, evangelism events and Bible studies in all the prisons in the Eastern half of the state of Tennessee. They also have transitional housing for the men when they come out of prison. The transitional housing is a big ministry. Many of the men have nowhere to live when they get out of prison.

"Clear Creek has been a great place of preparation for me," Hays continued. "Everybody has to have a model. I have been privileged to be exposed to people here who have devoted their lives to teaching me what they have experienced. That has provided great preparation for me. It's not just a job for these people who serve here; it is a calling. It's not what they do; it's what they are"

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Donnie Fox

What's ahead for social issues under an Obama White House?

By Brittney Bain
Religion News Service

Washington (RNS)—Americans voted to put a Democrat in the White House Nov. 4 and also strengthened the party's hand in Congress, giving Democrats complete control of the branches of government for the first time since 1993.

Just how much will the party's agenda change the political landscape on hot-button social concerns? What actions are expected by advocates on both sides of these issues? Here's an early look:



Barack Obama

Immigration

In 2006, illegal immigration made headlines when Congress tried, and failed, to pass comprehensive reform policies. Many Republicans were against plans that put those who entered the country illegally on a path to citizenship. Both Sens. Barack Obama and John McCain supported legislation that would have offered a way for some of the estimated 12 million illegal immigrants to achieve citizenship.

Rachel Laser, who directs the culture program at the Washington-based progressive group Third Way, said comprehensive immigration reform is going to be a tough issue for Obama, even with a Democratic Congress.

But Brian Darling, director for Senate relations at the conservative Heritage Foundation think tank, disagreed.

"The expectation is this is an issue that will come up early in the Obama administration," Darling noted.

Gay marriage

Democrats are widely seen as sympathetic to the gay rights cause, but gay marriage bans that passed in California, Florida and Arizona are likely to put the ice on the push for same-sex marriage in the short term, at least in the courts.

One issue to watch will be the Defense of Marriage Act, signed in 1996 by President Clinton, which defines marriage as between a man and a woman on the federal level, and mandates that no state will be forced to recognize a same-sex marriage performed in another state. Repealing DOMA is a top priority for gay groups, and Obama has indicated he would support its repeal.

Some gay groups also have their sights set on introducing same-sex marriage for the District of Columbia, which is supported by the mayor and most of the City Council. Congress could, however, step in to overrule that step, if it happens. Many see Washington as a test case in the Democrats' support of same-sex marriage—and Republicans' ability to stop it.

Stem cell research

Democratic members could open Congress next year with

efforts to approve federal money for embryonic stem cell research, a measure blocked by President Bush in 2001.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi indicated as much when she told reporters last month that "the stem cell research legislation to increase research and (funding for) embryonic stem cell research" will be at the top of the party agenda.

Some religious groups argue embryonic stem cell research is an issue involving human life and they fear the possibility of cloning.

Abortion

Sally Steenland, a senior policy adviser to the Faith and Progressive Policy Initiative at the left-leaning Center for American Progress, said the Democrats were clear in their platform at the Denver convention about their desire to reduce the number of abortions. "They're wanting a common sense, common ground, practical way to actually do something about it," she noted.

"Obama has made a commitment to a dual track agenda—both protecting the right to choose while simultaneously reducing abortions in America," Laser said. The key for reducing abortions will be both preventing unwanted pregnancies and supporting pregnant women, she added.

Faith-based initiatives

Obama has said federal funding for religious-based organizations will be a key part of his plan to help the needy. He also has said that he plans to keep President Bush's White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.

Tom Minnery, senior vice president of public policy at Focus on the Family, said the key issue is whether or not faith-based organizations getting the funding will be allowed to limit hiring to people of the same religion without fear of equal opportunity issues. Obama already has indicated he would like to change rules that allow faith-based groups to discriminate in hiring.

Judicial nominations

Minnery noted there is concern about nominees to the federal judiciary under the new administration. "We're fearful that Obama will nominate federal judges that will be extreme leftists," Minnery said.

Conservatives have pushed for years to establish a solid anti-abortion majority on the high court. And observers expect as many as three current justices to retire in Obama's first term, although most are expected to come from the court's small liberal wing.

"There will be a stark contrast in the nominees by Obama and those by President Bush and a stark difference in judicial policy overall," Darling noted.

eHarmony to launch site to match homosexual couples

By Michael Foust
Baptist Press

Trenton, N.J. (BP)—eHarmony, Inc., the company behind the Internet matchmaking Web site founded by an evangelical psychologist and initially targeted to the Christian community, has decided to launch a new matchmaking site for homosexual singles instead of fighting a nearly four-year-old complaint in court.

The news came as a shock to many pro-family leaders and attorneys, who expected the well-respected company—still popular among Christian singles—to take the matter to court. Those same leaders, though, say the news is another example of how laws protecting homosexuality are incompatible with religious freedom.

eHarmony posted a statement on its Web site last month announcing it had reached a settlement with the New Jersey attorney general. The state began looking at the company early in 2005 when a homosexual man filed a complaint alleging that the company's policy of matching only opposite-sex couples violated New Jersey's anti-discrimination law, which covers sexual orientation.

According to the settlement, eHarmony will launch a new Web site, CompatiblePartners.net, aimed solely at the homosexual community. The company will advertise the site in homosexual media outlets, will allow the first 10,000 users to register free and will pay \$50,000 to the attorney general's office and \$5,000 to the complainant.

eHarmony representatives said the company did not violate the law but felt the need to settle the case.

The matchmaking site was launched in 2000 by psychologist Neil Clark Warren and its first commercials often targeted Christian audiences, particularly on radio. Since its founding, eHarmony has broadened its audience considerably. It cites data and claims that "more

than 236 eHarmony members" are married every day in the United States.

News of the settlement, legal experts say, is further evidence that the cultural, political and legal battle over gay marriage and other laws protecting homosexuality is not a "live and let live" issue.

"This situation just demonstrates once again those involved in the homosexual agenda will not tolerate anyone who doesn't embrace their views and promote their ideas," said Jim Campbell, an attorney with the Alliance Defense Fund. "Unfortunately, in this case, eHarmony surrendered to their demands. We feel they could have had a valid argument and could have taken a stand against this."

In a statement, eHarmony attorney Theodore Olson said the company wanted to keep the matter out of the courts.

"Even though we believed that the complaint resulted from an unfair characterization of our business, we ultimately decided it was best to settle this case with the Attorney General since litigation outcomes can be unpredictable," Olson said.

Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council, criticized eHarmony, saying that "the surest way to lose the culture war is refusing to fight." He called it a "shocking concession" that was "distressing and damaging" and said the settlement was "sending tremors through the faith community."

Campbell added that the lawsuit and settlement show the dangers of sexual orientation anti-discrimination laws, which often are promoted by state and federal lawmakers without any mention of their wide reach.

"Those laws directly conflict in application with religious liberty," Campbell pointed out. "Religious individuals are often forced to abandon their beliefs in the face of these non-discrimination laws."

NATIONAL NOTES

University apologizes for racist policies. Bob Jones University, a conservative Christian school in Greenville, S.C., that did not admit African-American students until 1971 and banned interracial dating until 2000, has apologized for its past racial policies. The school posted a "Statement about Race at Bob Jones University" on its Web site Nov. 20, saying the school's past policies were shaped "for far too long" by "the segregationist ethos of American culture rather than by biblical principles." Five university alumni collected more than 500 signatures seeking a university statement that past positions on racial discrimination were "mistaken, and God has granted a better perspective." The university's statement was released before the group sent its letter and signatures to the administration.

Economic loss from abortions estimated. The United States not only has lost about 50.5 million children to abortion since it was legalized, but the result has been a \$35 trillion loss to its economy, a pro-life advocate has estimated. Dennis Howard, founder of Movement for a Better America, has been researching abortion's economic impact since 1995, he said. His organization arrived at the \$35 trillion es-

timate by studying what the babies who have been killed through abortion since it became legal would have contributed to the American economy in terms of gross domestic product. The loss grows to \$70 trillion when those lost to sterilization and abortifacients such as RU 486 and the intrauterine device are counted, Howard indicated.

Court orders Arizona to allow license plates.

A federal court has ruled that the Arizona License Plate Commission must approve an anti-abortion group's "Choose Life" specialty license plate. The Arizona Life Coalition applied for the specialty plate in 2002, but the Arizona License Plate Commission, which oversees the requests, rejected its application. Attorneys with the Alliance Defense Fund and the Center for Arizona Policy filed a suit in September of 2003. Last January, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the commission had violated the Arizona Life Coalition's First Amendment right to free speech. The commission appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court to reverse the decision, but the high court refused to hear the case. In a decision issued Nov. 19, U.S. District Judge Paul Rosenblatt ordered the commission to convene by Jan. 23 and approved the license plates.

HOW TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

By Robert Reeves

The day after Thanksgiving marks the traditional start to the Christmas shopping season. Stores open early—some incredibly early—and there are sales galore. Most of us hunt diligently to discover just the right gifts for the people we love.

God has a gift for us as well. Because He loves us so much He gave us His very own son, Jesus. The Bible describes it this way: "For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

That reference to perishing is there because the Bible also tells us that the wrong thoughts, attitudes and actions in our lives—what it calls sin—separate us from God. Romans 3:23 says, "For everyone has sinned: We all fall short of God's glorious standard."

And if we died with this separation, we would be apart from God forever. "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

The thing about a gift though is that it is just a pretty, wrapped box until the moment the recipient accepts it. The same is true of God's gift. He doesn't force it on us. He simply offers it in the sincere hope that we will acknowledge our sinfulness, ask for forgiveness and accept Him into our lives.

And when we do, the Bible says even the angels rejoice. "In the same way, there is joy in the presence of God's angels when even one sinner repents" (Luke 15:10).

Robert Reeves is director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's communications department

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Campbellsville University's School of Music will present its annual Christmas Tapestry concert Dec. 5, 7 p.m., at Ransdell Chapel. Also, the school's Concert Chorus will present "The World Beloved: A Bluegrass Mass" Dec. 8, 8 p.m., at the Gheens Recital Hall on campus. Both events are free. For more information, call (270) 789-5237 for more information.

■ **EDDYVILLE**—Bethany Church recently called **John Mitchell** as pastor.
■ **HENDERSON**—**Chris May** recently resigned as music minister at Calvary Church.

James Taylor recently resigned as pastor of Cash Creek Church.

■ **ROCKFIELD**—Clear Fork Church will celebrate its 175th anniversary Dec. 7, 11 a.m., with KBC Executive Director **Bill Mackey** as guest speaker. The church will hold a dedication service for its new sanctuary at 2 p.m. with a reception to follow. **David Daugherty** is pastor.

■ **SIMPSONVILLE**—Simpsonville Church will present an adaptation of C.S. Lewis' novel, "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe," Dec. 5 & 6, 7 p.m., at the church's Family Life Center. **Steve Boyd** is pastor.

Campbellsville conference explores ways to engage youth in church

Campbellsville—"Youth in churches actually want more from their youth ministry experience," Kentucky Baptist Convention youth ministry specialist **Joe Ball** told a group of 42 youth ministers at the Nov. 15 Think Again Youth Ministry Conference at Campbellsville University.

Ball pointed out that students want to be involved in service projects; deep conversations about faith and life; mission trips; accountability; and most importantly, more time spent in worship. He encouraged youth ministers to think again about youth ministry in light of such promising solutions.

He also explained how the family—not the church—is the primary institution created by God for the discipline of teens. The church, as a secondary institution, acts as a partner to parents, Ball added.

Sharing what he has seen in Kentucky Baptist churches where parents are disconnected from teen-

agers' spiritual lives, Ball said it is not that parents do not know how to spiritually engage their teenagers, it's that they have never viewed discipleship as part of their parental roles.

Ball insisted that youth ministers should place parents more at the center of any strategy for training youth. In this way, he noted, youth ministry will begin to produce youth who are passionate about the church.

Shane Garrison, an instructor at Campbellsville, discussed various youth ministry paradigms that both succeed and fail.

Five promising youth ministry paradigms he noted are missionarial ministries; global-humanitarian ministries; parent-centered ministries; peer-to-peer ministries; and campus crusade ministries.

"These paradigms are challenging and difficult to implement," Garrison said, "but they do show significant differences in student reten-



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December

8-9 KBC Mission Board, Baptist Building, Louisville.

January 2009

15-17 Shepherding the Shepherd, Lexington Downtown Hotel & Conference Center.

22 Pastor/Staff Forum, Baptist Building, Louisville.

22-23 Quarterly Prayer Meeting for Spiritual Awakening, Hope Community Church, Lawrenceburg.

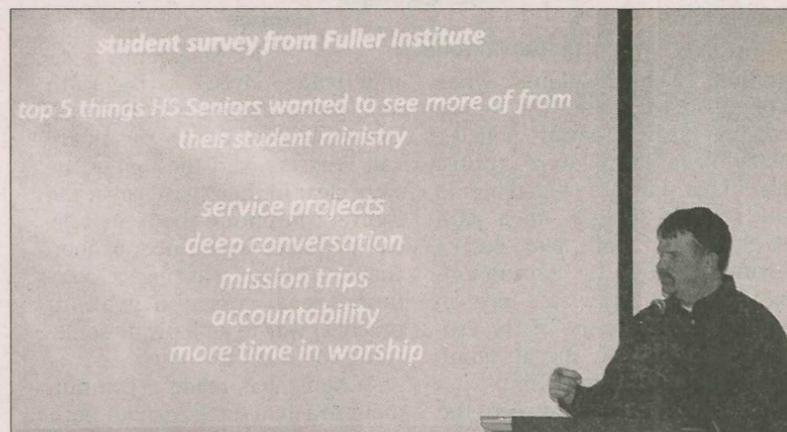
23-24 Region 1 Disaster Relief Certification and Training, Lone Oak First Baptist Church, Paducah.

28-31 Southeast Conclave, Atlanta.

30-31 Preschool/Children's Ministry Meeting, Baptist Building, Louisville.

30-31 Regional Women on Mission Retreat, Laurel Lake Baptist Camp, Corbin.

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



FRESH IDEAS Joe Ball, Kentucky Baptist Convention youth ministry specialist, speaks at Campbellsville University's Think Again Conference Nov. 15. (Campbellsville University photo by Memo Quintana)

tion and discipleship patterns."

He also discussed three youth ministry methods that commonly fail with today's youth. These include: "joke and a Coke," a youth ministry that often is solely event-oriented with no larger role to dis-

ciple youth; "youth room phenomenon," where youth ministry exists to separate youth from the life of the larger church; and "Jo-Jo the Circus Clown," a youth ministry method that centers solely on the personality of the youth minister.

CLASSIFIED ADS

SEEKING: Full-time pastor with experience who demonstrates a godly character, strong leadership skills, has a heart for evangelism, and believes the Bible to be the inerrant Word of God. Send resumés to Parkway Baptist Church, 1915 N. Broadway, Lexington, KY 40511.

SEEKING: First Baptist Church, New Tazewell, Tenn., is prayerfully seeking and accepting resumés for a director of music to lead the adult and youth choirs. Responsibilities also include coordinating worship services and special programs, and assisting with children's choir. Please mail resumés to FBC, PO Box 248, New Tazewell TN 37824, Attn: Worship Leader Search Team; or fax to (423) 626-4773; or e-mail to newtazewellfbc@centurytel.net by Jan. 15, 2009.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of recreation (25 hours per week) for Hall Street Baptist Church. Please send confidential resumés with cover letter to: Hall Street Baptist Church, 1102 Hall St., Owensboro, KY 42303, Attn: Personnel Committee.

SEEKING: Part-time music minister for Evergreen Baptist Church, Frankfort, Ky. EBC has 150-plus congregation, traditional and contemporary. Send to EBC, 2698 Evergreen Road, Frankfort, KY 40601, Attn: M. Hughes; or e-mail to office@evergreenbaptistchurch.us.

SEEKING: Part-time student minister (grades 7-12), central Pulaski County. Great congregation standing on God's Word with strong emphasis on youth. Seeking someone who is energetic and equipped to teach and reach youth for Christ. Send resumés to Ferguson Baptist Church, PO Box 247, Ferguson, KY 42533. Phone: (606) 679-1690.

SEEKING: Associational director of missions for Clear Creek Baptist Association. We are an association of 43 churches in beautiful southern Illinois. We have member churches in Union, Alexander, Pulaski and Johnson counties. Our churches range in size from 18 to 1,350 members. Our association currently is very healthy and positioned for a wonderful future, having had only two executive directors in the last 48 years. Interested individuals can learn more about this position at <http://clearcreekexecsearch.wordpress.com>.

SEEKING: Full-time high school/college pastor for Valley View Church in Louisville. Candidates should have a verifiable track record (8-10 years) of successful student ministry experience (ministry growth and spiritual development) with a group of approximately 60 students within a larger church context. Candidates should possess skills in communicating God's Word in practical ways, a

vision for building a team of volunteers, and an understanding of current student cultures. We seek candidates prepared for a long-term commitment. In addition, we prefer candidates to have formal youth ministry training, past focused concentration on high school ministry, experience with college students and experience in a church of approximately 700. Administrative and budget-conscious skill sets are a plus. More details are available upon request. Candidates should send a cover letter, resumés and message sample, along with a current photograph, to the following address or e-mail: Valley View Church, 8911 Third Street Road, Louisville, KY 40272, Attn: High School Position; studentpastorsearch@valleyviewchurch.org.

SEEKING: Senior pastor. First Baptist Church, Morganfield, Ky., is looking to call a pastor who is community-minded for a church having an existing community outreach presence. FBC is located in a small, western Kentucky town and has an average attendance of 200-250. We have two Sunday morning services, one contemporary and one blended. This is an awesome church that has a strong potential for growth. Send resumés to: Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 200 North Morgan St., Morganfield, KY 42437.

SEEKING: Part-time music minister for South Jefferson Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky. Blended style worship. Send resumés to katmb@insightbb.com.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Providence First Baptist Church. Send resumés and, if possible, a photo, DVD or cassette, and references, to Mr. Ray Gobin, 214 Benjamin Terrace, Providence, KY 42450. Phone: (270) 667-2307.

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

SEEKING: Part-time music director for church in central Pulaski County. We are seeking someone who is energetic and equipped to lead our choir and be responsible for all musical arrangements for services. Send resumés to Ferguson Baptist Church, PO Box 247, Ferguson, KY 42533. Phone: (606) 679-1690.

WORSHIP RESOURCES: Do you need a good pianist? We have piano CDs for churches to sing by. Call Worship Service Resources at (877) 977-6800; or visit www.pianocds.org for info and a free sample CD. Hymns, praise songs, Christmas, blended, etc. Special church pricing.

Cinema churches bring God to the big screen

By Ashley Gipson
Religion News Service

Washington (RNS)—When the medieval church wanted to communicate biblical narratives to a largely illiterate society, it used stained glass windows to illustrate the stories.

As the modern church looks for ways to reach a generation unfamiliar with the Bible, the most obvious medium, they say, is movie theaters.

"Theaters are our 21st century stained glass," said Joel Schmidgall, one of the pastors of National Community Church, a congregation that meets in four campuses—three movie theaters and a church-owned coffeehouse—around Washington.

"We wanted to be in the middle of the marketplace where people are used to going already," he said.

Most people who attend National Community Church grew up going to church but stopped. Others have never been to church at all, he said.

"People might not be comfortable going to a church building, but they might go and check out something at a movie theater," he said.

Churches have been meeting in theaters for years, but recently the exploded. Barry Brown, director of regional sales at National Cine Media, pointed out six years ago only three churches were meeting in its theaters; today, there are more than 180.

"The theaters have down time on Sunday mornings, and from a church perspective, it's a cost-effective way to get some space," Brown noted.

On a recent Sunday morning, worshippers filed past an empty food court in the basement of Washington's Union Station and into the movie theater that National Community Church calls home. Some

stopped at the concession stand for a cup of coffee that they carried into the dimly lit theater.

Inside, people filled the tiers of seats and some dozed off in the quiet. As the service began, a live band sprang to life and lyrics to praise songs flashed on the giant screen. Schmidgall used the screen to show a short film clip and to broadcast a PowerPoint outline of his sermon.

The congregation of about 1,200 regular attendees uses two theaters at Union Station on Sunday mornings; childcare is provided in the hallways. Services sometimes are broadcast to the two satellite cinema locations and the nearby Ebenezers Coffeehouse, which the church renovated and opened in 2006.

People know what to expect

Having church in a theater may seem a bit unconventional, but pastors say people are attracted to the idea. "They are engaged and excited about what we are doing," noted Jeff Bell, pastor of Granger Community Church in Elkhart, Ind.

Instead of trying to bring people to the church, pastors of cinema churches try to bring the church to the people. People know what to expect when they walk into a movie theater, but that's not always the case when they walk through the doors of a traditional church.

"It's an attempt on behalf of pastors to create space that will be hospitable for people searching for God," said Brian McLaren, the author of "Everything Must Change," and a popular speaker among new-wave Christian leaders. "A lot of people who don't go to church feel like it's foreign."

Bell said his Indiana church initially was "a little hesitant" about

the venue. But because "people come to the movies expecting to be moved by something on a screen," a cinema church feels comfortable and familiar, he explained.

"People are ready to sit back, watch and be moved," Bell said.

Meeting in theaters also allows these churches to go where the people are.

"It's the highest density gathering point," Bell said. "Our original church campus is 15 miles away," he added, and because of the economic downturn, people are less willing to travel far to church. "This allows us to have a presence in the community."

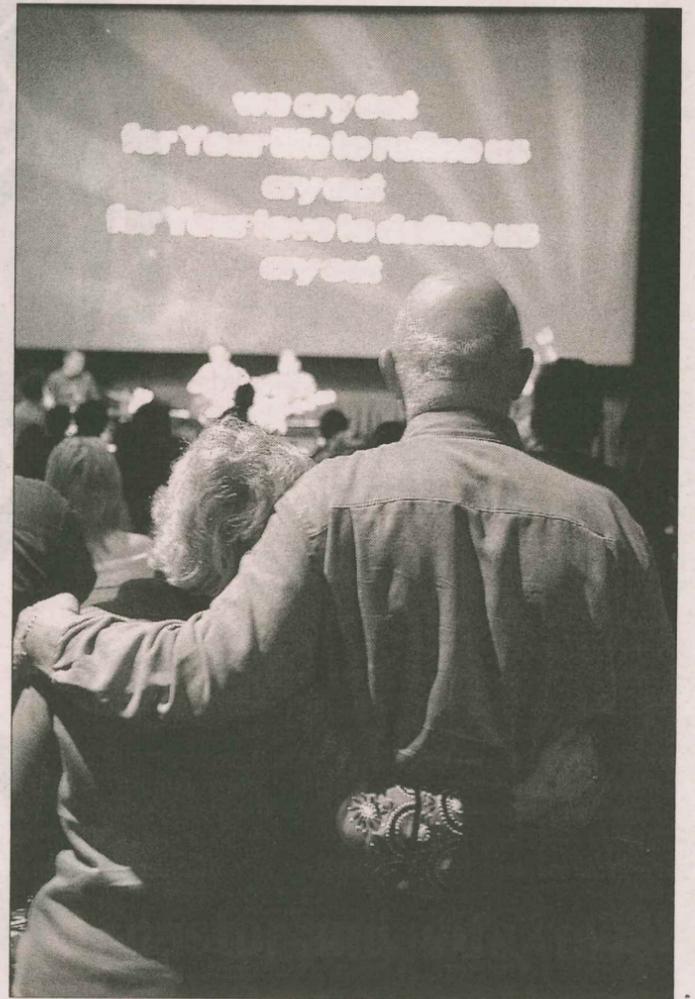
Going into the cities and utilizing the theaters reaches a demographic that has been ignored for a number of years. Decades ago, many churches followed their members to the suburbs, and for some who stayed, members were not willing to drive back downtown for church.

"Statistically, urban areas are the least church-ed part of county with the youngest people," said Mark Driscoll, pastor of Seattle's Mars Hill Church and founder of Acts 29, a church-planting network that has helped start more than 150 churches nationally and internationally.

"The effort is being made to return where culture is made, where influence is to be had," he said, and theater churches are part of a "sincere effort to get back involved."

Not only do these churches go to where the people are, they speak their language. Driscoll's church, for example, allows worshippers to send text messages to the pastor while he's preaching.

"Having a big screen allows access to the digital world, which is native territory for younger adults,"



McLaren noted.

Theater churches and other non-traditional types of services are affecting the people around them. Driscoll's church started 12 years ago and now has 20 services with seven locations in Washington state.

"I think for many people, this is a scary time for the church," McLaren said. "Others of us see it as a time for creativity."

ON-SCREEN HYMNAL
Worshippers at National Community Church in Washington meet at a movie theater on Sunday mornings. National CineMedia reports there are currently 180 churches meeting in its facilities. (RNS photo by David Jolkovski)

Alabama congregation finds surplus funds and gives them away

By Kay Campbell
Huntsville (Ala.) Times

Decatur, Ala. (RNS)—Senior Pastor Doug Ripley looked at Decatur Baptist Church's books and quickly realized the annual budget was totally out of whack.

But he knew exactly what to do next. He gave away \$10,000.

"August and September were two of our biggest financial months," Ripley said. "We were \$13,000 over."

So, he packaged \$10,000 in envelopes of \$5, \$10, \$20 and a few \$100 bills and put the piles of envelopes into the offering baskets.

He included directions to church members: The money was to be used to bless someone else. Recipients could not return it to the offering plate. And they had to report what happened.

It was the longest offertory in his career, Ripley said with a laugh.

"People felt so uncomfortable, reaching into the same basket they put money in," he recalled. "And you multiply that moment of hesitation by every person, and it took several minutes to pass out."

Decatur Baptist is known for its mission work, both locally and around the world. Traveling to places of deep poverty in the world has changed the hearts of the members, church leaders noted.

Handing members a visible repre-



GIVERS Richard and Dara Cobb took the money they received from Decatur Baptist Church, which had a \$13,000 surplus, and pooled it with others to fix a neighborhood boy's bike. (RNS photo by Kay Campbell/The Huntsville Times)

sentation of how dollar bills can become tools to help other people energized his congregation of 1,900, Ripley said.

Some members knew exactly how they would use the money. Others prayed for a week or more. Some found that a simple gesture, such as taking flowers to an elderly woman, put them into a situation of also helping another person with their time and presence.

Many church members pooled their money with family members to make one big gesture: helping someone with medical bills, buying baskets of groceries for the com-

munity food pantry, sending a gift directly to missionaries, helping a teacher buy workbooks or school supplies for a child in need.

And most recipients added dollars to the money they received in the envelopes. One teenager went house-to-house to build a collection to purchase a cow for an African girl she sponsors with her own money.

The testimonies of the adventures of generosity unfurl for page after page on the church's Web site, www.DecaturBaptist.org.

"For most, the money in that envelope was a drop in the bucket," Ripley said.

Richard and Dara Cobb were among the Decatur Baptist members who took their envelopes home to pray over.

"Home" for the Cobbs is in one of the economically mixed areas of Decatur, a place they intentionally chose when they married a few years ago. They said they wanted to live near people who could benefit from their help.

In their old neighborhood of fairly expensive homes, "we didn't have a chance to interact with people who really need anything," Dara recalled. "Here, there are some people struggling. There are drug dealers, prostitutes. This is a safe house."

When the Cobbs opened their envelopes, they each found \$5. And

they each had the same idea: They would fix a bike for a neighborhood boy. But if they fixed the boy's bike, they realized they would need to fix his brother's, too.

Some friends heard about their plan and contributed their money so the boys each could have a safety helmet.

Still, even with the addition, the math didn't add up. Reconditioning bikes and buying helmets came to much more than \$40.

But God doesn't balance books the way humans do, Richard noted.

"When you give, it comes back to you," he said.

His wife added: "Brother Doug is always telling us, 'God will give more through you than to you.'"

The joy she saw on the boy's face when he examined his bicycle with new handgrips, a new tire, a kickstand, and other improvements was more than repayment for their investment.

"Why would your church do this for my brother and me?" he asked Dara. "I love your church."

Spreading love is what Christians are supposed to do, Ripley said. Human beings are meant to be a channel, not a reservoir, of divine grace.

"When we give," he explained, "it unleashes God to prove how great He is—that He will open the windows of heaven and pour out His blessings."



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