

Calling
Kentucky
Baptists to
"shine like
stars in the
world"
Philippians 2:15

WESTERN Recorder

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FOR THE RECORD

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Recovery in progress

As Kentucky digs out from ice storm, Baptist relief teams go to work

By Drew Nichter
News Director

Stanford—"I heard things start snapping and popping and falling on my house," Trudy Dubuque recalled as several inches of ice and snow tore limbs from the dozens of trees in her yard around her Lincoln County home.

In a video posted on the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Web site, the elderly woman described her experience of the ice storm that sunk much of Kentucky into a deep freeze more than two weeks ago.

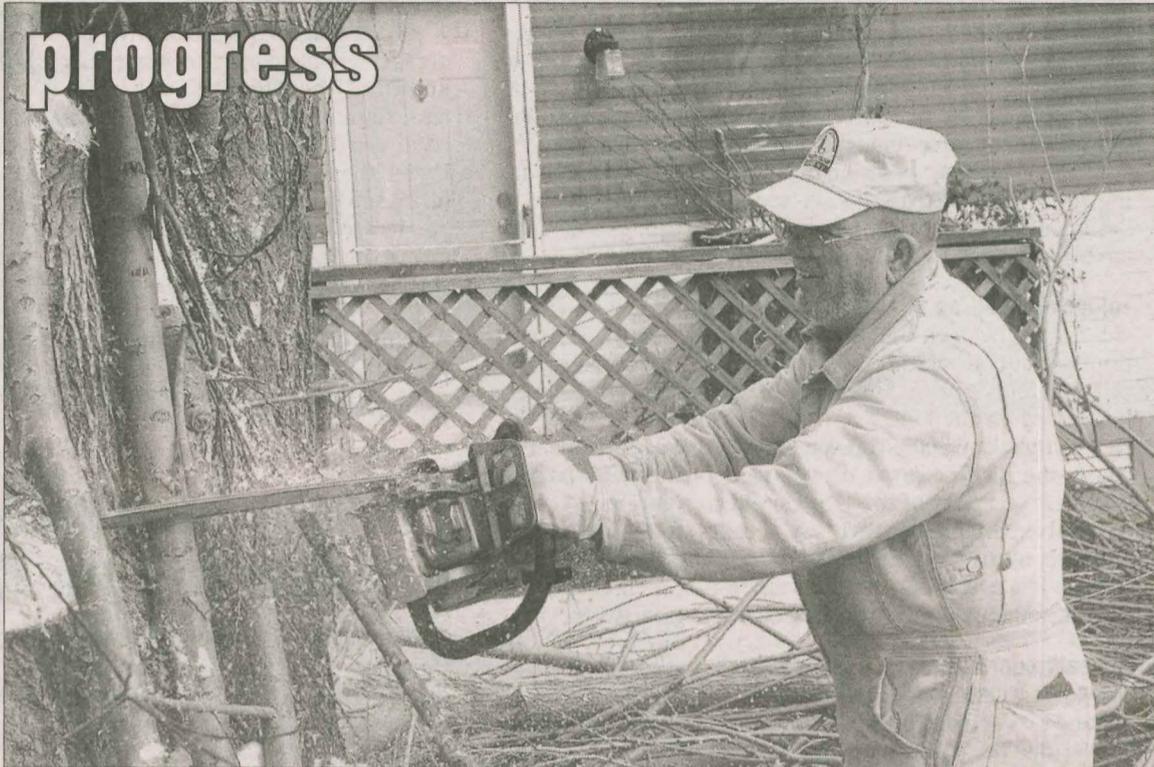
"I couldn't see from inside because the branches had come down over the windows to the point where I couldn't see anything," she said. "It was like living in a nest."

Less than a week later, Kentucky Baptist disaster relief teams swept into Lincoln County, armed with chainsaws and food, ready to help those left stranded in the dark and extreme cold—including Mrs. Dubuque.

"That's the amazing part ... that there are people who care," she said. "Without them, I really don't know what I would have done."

The chainsaw crews and feeding teams in Lincoln County are one of at least 100 teams helping Kentuckians get back on their feet after one of the state's most devastating natural disasters.

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■ **Top:** A Kentucky Baptist disaster relief volunteer works to clear debris from Trudy Dubuque's Lincoln County home. As many as 100 disaster relief crews currently are working statewide to help Kentuckians clear away debris and get a hot meal, while waiting for power to be restored to their homes. ■ **Right:** A disaster relief crew prays with Dubuque (third from left) and her son, John (second from left). "They're led by the Lord to do the work that they're doing," Dubuque said of the Kentucky Baptist relief team. "Without them, I really don't know what I would have done." (KBC photos by Larry Brannin)



Racially diverse Ky. congregation: 'Christianity has no color'

By Dannah Prather
Partnerships Editor

Louisville—"As a body of Christians, we deplore the un-Christian practices so widely prevalent in many of our racial relationships."

The wording might seem tepid in today's social climate, but in 1937, messengers to the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention made history when they passed the SBC's first resolution on race.

Today, according to the SBC, nearly one in five of all Southern Baptist churches in the U.S. are comprised primarily of non-Anglo members. In Kentucky, 23 of the 45 new churches started in 2006 were ethnic congregations, mostly Hispanic, according to the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Still, the two largest racial groups in Kentucky, Anglos and African-Americans, largely remain segregated on Sundays, even in communities where blacks and whites are neighbors.

An exception in KBC life is Hunsinger Lane Baptist Church in Louisville, a community of faith that reflects its community of residence.

Charlie Davis has served as pastor for 18 years. He said the neighborhood has become more racially



PART OF THE FAMILY Dwight and Berniece Allen enjoy a time of praise with fellow members of Hunsinger Lane Baptist Church in Louisville. Prior to joining the congregation 12 years ago, the couple attended churches comprised primarily of African American members.

diverse in that time. Today, he estimates, about 15 percent of local residents are African-American.

"Thirty to 40 percent of our new members over the past five years have been black," he added. About 350 people attend Sunday services each week.

When Dwight and Berniece Allen first came to Hunsinger Lane, there were very few other black faces in the congregation, they said. Previously the couple attended churches where most of members were black.

Mrs. Allen said when God led her to Hunsinger Lane, she asked Him, "Are you sure?"

That was 12 years ago. Today, she teaches an adult Sunday school class that mirrors the racial diversity of the church.

Dwight Allen, a Louisville native, endured bussing, a segregated city park system and other forms of racial discrimination as a child. He admits he carried bitterness from those experiences, but credits God, and a black pastor's attempt to build a partnership with an Anglo congregation, for letting go of the past.

"God helped me get past that, and when He did, He opened a whole new world to me," Allen said.

That new world includes close friendships with white members of his church family, such as David and Sandra Derryberry.

Originally from Selma, Ala., David Derryberry said he was in the last all-white graduating class of his high school, then attended predominantly white colleges.

Having black friends was something "I'd never really thought about," he said.

The Derryberrys moved to Louisville and in 1998 joined Hunsinger

Lane. They are members of Mrs. Allen's Sunday school class.

David Derryberry considers the Allens "God's missionaries to the white people of the church to help us along" the path to racial diversity, a path that has had a few bumps along the way.

He said there have been gaffes, largely unintentional, that have caused hurt feelings between some of the Anglo and African-American members.

A sense of humor helps, Mrs. Allen said, recalling a white member who speculated the church would need to adjust its worship style to accommodate the new black members.

"I asked, 'Have you been to all the black churches in town?' ... All black people don't do things the same way, just like all white people don't do things the same way."

Derryberry and the Allens said most of the rifts have been temporary and became opportunities for spiritual maturity.

"We're all still human. We're going to hurt each other," Derryberry said. "Thank God He forgives us and we can forgive each other."

□ See Racially diverse ... *Page 3*

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, Feb. 11.

BAPTIST DIGEST

NAMB planning GPS media buy—The North American Mission Board plans to invest up to \$1.2 million in 2010 on a strategic national media buy during that year's implementation of the Southern Baptist Convention-wide evangelism emphasis, God's Plan for Sharing (GPS). The media buys will include television, radio, newspapers and Internet and will be coordinated with state convention partners in order to ensure that the most effective approach is used in each region. NAMB will coordinate the buys through a single source, produce the media pieces and make them available free of charge to state convention partners that choose to participate in GPS. In addition, NAMB is reading a personal evangelism resource that will be released prior to this year's Southern Baptist Convention in Louisville, Ky. "RELAY: Sharing Your Faith Your Way," a six-week, small group study, is designed to help Christians find their "fit" for evangelism based on their personality profile. (BP)

Tolliver tapped as Missouri executive—In a 44-4 vote, David Tolliver was elected by the Missouri Baptist Convention's executive board Feb. 3 as the MBC's 12th executive director. A fourth-generation Missouri Baptist pastor, Tolliver has served on the MBC's staff as an associate executive director since May 2005. Tolliver, 58, a native of St. Louis, becomes the 12th executive director/general superintendent/executive secretary of the 175-year-old convention 1917. His pastoral experience of nearly two decades stretches from urban St. Louis to rural mid-Missouri to suburban Kansas City. He also is a past MBC president and a past member of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee. (BP)

Appeals court sides with Windermere—Windermere Baptist Conference Center acted within its legal rights when it changed its articles of incorporation, a Missouri appellate court ruled Feb. 3. A three-judge panel of the Missouri Court of Appeals, Western District, unanimously upheld a lower court's March 4, 2008, ruling in a nearly seven-year legal battle the Missouri Baptist Convention has waged against Windermere, The Baptist Home, Missouri Baptist University, Word & Way and the Missouri Baptist Foundation in an effort to force the entities to rescind changes they had made in their corporate charters. In an opinion filed Feb. 3, the appellate court upheld a lower-court ruling that the state convention is not a legal member of Windermere's corporation and no contract exists between the two organizations. State law requires that non-profit organizations state whether the corporation will have members, the justices said, and Windermere's articles of incorporation state clearly that it does not. The panel rejected the Missouri Baptist Convention's contention that previously granting the group authority to elect trustees gave it de facto member status. (ABP)

Baptist delegation meets Azerbaijan leader—A delegation of Baptists met with the head of a government committee on religion in Azerbaijan in January. The delegation, which included Tony Peck, Baptist World Alliance Regional Secretary for Europe, and Paul Montacute, Director of Baptist World Aid, was primarily concerned about recent human rights abuses and restrictions on religious liberty in the South Caucasus country, which gained its independence after the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991. Also part of the Baptist delegation were Christer Daelander, religious freedom representative with the European Baptist Federation, one of six regional fellowships of the BWA, Parush Parushev, academic dean at the International Baptist Theological Seminary in Prague, Czech Republic, and Ebbe Holm, an attorney at law. The group highlighted the situation in the town of Aliabad, where two Baptist pastors were arrested and imprisoned on what were regarded as trumped up charges. There are 22 Baptist churches and 3,000 baptized believers in the country of 8.7 million people.

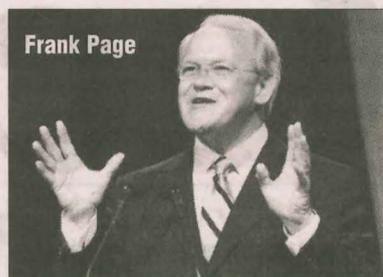
LifeWay unveils next generation in music—LifeWay Worship unveiled the next generation in digital music today at a ceremony in Nashville, introducing SongMap to Christian and mainstream music industry executives, worship and music ministers, and government and civic leaders. SongMap is the first Web-based technology that enables users to choose specific sections of songs—such as verses, choruses and transitions—in the keys they prefer and then download sheet music and audio files of the custom arrangements. The technology was developed to meet the needs of worship leaders who want more ease and flexibility arranging songs. It's the culmination of three years of work involving hundreds of specialists ranging from theologians to software engineers, 150 studio musicians, and the recording of more than 900 of the most loved church songs. Users simply register free of charge at www.lifewayworship.com.

Page serving on Obama advisory council

Washington—President Obama named Joshua DuBois Feb. 5 to head the newly named White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and established an advisory council that includes former Southern Baptist Convention President Frank Page.

Obama signed an executive order bringing changes to what was known as the Office of Faith-based and Community Initiatives created under President George W. Bush. Under the Bush administration, the office sought largely to help remove barriers to faith-based organizations competing for federal funding as they provided social services.

The White House said the newly designed office would be a resource for secular and faith-based organizations as they serve their communities. The office also will have a role in helping the administration ad-



Frank Page

dress such social needs as reducing "the need for abortion" and in assisting the National Security Council in fostering interfaith relationships globally.

DuBois, 26, served as director of religious outreach for Obama during the presidential campaign.

Page, SBC president from 2006 to 2008, will serve as one of 25 members of the advisory council for the initiative. The council of religious and secular leaders will include 25 members serving one-year terms.

Page is pastor of First Baptist Church in Taylors, S.C.

"The Office's top priority will be making community groups an integral part of our economic recovery and poverty a burden fewer have to bear when recovery is complete," a White House release said. "It will be one voice among several in the administration that will look at how we support women and children, address teenage pregnancy, and reduce the need for abortion."

"The Office will strive to support fathers who stand by their families, which involves working to get young men off the streets and into well-paying jobs, and encouraging responsible fatherhood. Finally, beyond American shores this Office will work with the National Security Council to foster interfaith dialogue with leaders and scholars around the world." (BP)

Former Samford University president Tom Corts dies

Birmingham, Ala.—Former Samford University President Tom Corts died unexpectedly Feb. 4 of an apparent heart attack.

Corts, 67, died after being taken by ambulance to Brookwood Medical Center in Birmingham, Ala., accompanied by his wife of 44 years, Marla.

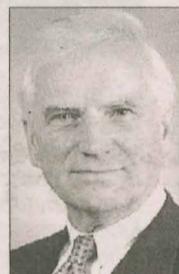
Corts held the title of president emeritus at Samford, a Baptist-affiliated university in Birmingham, which he led from 1983 until his retirement in 2006. After that he served briefly as executive director of the International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities.

He also served as interim chancellor of the Alabama College System in 2006 and 2007. He had recently returned home to Birmingham after serving the Bush administration as coordinator of basic education for all United States government assistance to the developing world, an appointment he accepted in 2007.

Corts' 23 years at Samford's helm were some of the brightest in the school's history. During his tenure Samford's endowment grew from \$8 million to \$258 million. Thirty new buildings were constructed on campus.

Corts was born in Terre Haute, Ind., the fifth of seven children in his family. He grew up in Ashtabula, Ohio, and graduated from Georgetown College in Kentucky in 1963. He went on to earn a master's degree and doctorate from Indiana University.

He was president of Wingate College (now Wingate University) in North Carolina for nine years before becoming Samford's 18th president. He was a former president of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, an accrediting agency for 11 states spanning from Virginia to Texas, and a founding director of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. (ABP)



Thomas Corts

Bible Bee competition offers \$260,000 in prize money

Nashville—A new competition is providing another opportunity for churches to encourage Scripture memorization among their children. The Bible Bee, a Bible memory competition for children and youth from 7 to 18, adds a new twist to the traditional Bible Drills that Southern Baptists have used for decades.

"The goal of the Bible Bee is to build godly character in young people by calling them back to the lost discipline of Scripture memorization," a news release stated.

"Most people are familiar with the Scripps National Spelling Bee, where youth compete annually in the nation's longest-running educational contest. While it is certainly beneficial for our children to commit the spelling of words to memory, imagine how much more life-changing it will be for them to memorize the Word of God," the release said.

The bee is coordinated by the Shelby Kennedy Foundation, named after a woman who died of cancer in 2005 at age 23. Inspired by Kennedy's reliance on God's Word, the nonprofit ministry encourages children and youth to grow in Christ through Scripture memorization.

The Bible Bee requires contestants to learn Bible passages and facts—with an ultimate goal of equipping the next generation to be bold ambassadors for Jesus. A written multiple-choice test and oral questions involving the Bible are part of each competition.

Local Bible Bees will be conducted throughout the country Sept. 12, and 100 finalists from each of three age categories will advance to the National Bible Bee in Washington, D.C., Nov. 5-6. The competition will distribute more than \$260,000 in prize money with \$100,000 being awarded to the winner. (BP)

Carter urges breaking down racial barriers

Birmingham, Ala.—Former President Jimmy Carter stepped into the pulpit of Sixteenth Street Baptist Church on Jan. 31 and spoke to a standing-room-only crowd of about 1,200 people who filled the balcony and lined the walls.

"There is no way for us to ignore Jesus' emphasis on the poor, the brokenhearted," Carter told the Southeast regional meeting of the New Baptist Covenant, which he helped found last year with an interracial, interdenominational gathering that drew 15,000 in Atlanta.

The meetings have emphasized racial reconciliation and cooperation on social issues, especially among groups of black and white Baptists.

"I have found this evolution of the New Baptist Covenant to be the highlight of my religious life," Carter said.

He spoke at a service that was followed by workshops on poverty and racism. He recalled a time when racial prejudice was rampant in churches, and theologians defended separate worship.

"The Baptist church was a stalwart defender of segregation," he said. "It was ingrained in our conscience."

Carter said the meeting will help churches work better together. "I would like to see a complete breakdown in separation of people."

He encouraged Baptists of different races to share worship. "I hope in the future the barriers will be broken down."

"The people of God are not going to be dragged kicking and screaming," said Gary Furr, pastor of Vestavia Hills Baptist Church and an event chairman. "We want to lead the way."

This was the first of several regional meetings planned to follow up on last year's New Baptist Covenant in Atlanta. (RNS)

Racially diverse congregation: 'Christianity has no color'

Continued from page 1

During tense times, Allen said, he has tried to be "open, honest and truthful" and allow God to work through the difficulties. "That's what growth is," he said.

The three friends said talking about differences between the cultures instead of trying to ignore them reduces the common fear of saying something inappropriate.

As the friendships have grown, church members have become comfortable enough with one another to do some teasing, Mrs. Allen said. Once, a white member offered her coffee with the joking assumption that Mrs. Allen would "take it black."

She said she laughed and replied, "I don't even drink coffee."

Davis said as more people of different races began attending Hunsinger Lane Baptist Church, some Anglo members approached him with concerns. "It was mostly fear of the unknown," Davis said, but noted that interracial dating and marriage was mentioned most often, along with changes in worship style.

Some people "are more concerned with their child marrying someone of another race than if their child married a non-Christian," he said.

The Bible clearly accepts marriages between people of different races, he added. "From what I've studied, the forbidding of marriages (had more to do with) God's people marrying pagans."

Believers should re-examine gospel

Mrs. Allen said she believes the reason Southern Baptists and other evangelical Christians remain segregated on Sundays is because many people refuse to discuss the issue in the light of God's teachings.

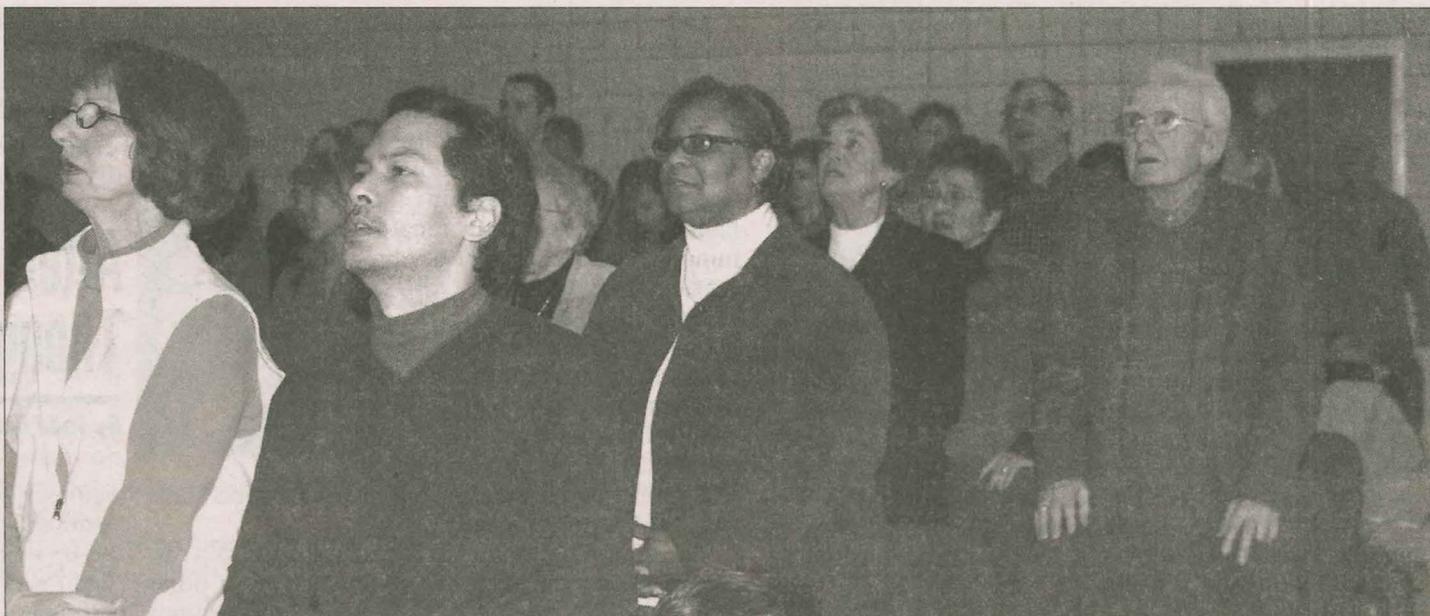
"We don't talk about it as Christians," she said.

Some people believe differences in culture provide a sort of permission to keep blacks and whites separated on Sundays, Davis said. He disagrees strongly.

"Every aspect of our culture in the United States is integrated," he said, noting schools, businesses and the legal definition of marriage are, by law, color blind.

"What that says is the world has less issue with the unity of race than the church does." The ongoing segregation of churches, "is more than discouraging," he added. "I think it's a sin."

Davis, Derryberry and the Allens credit God for the racial diversity and harmony at HLBC.



RACIAL REPRESENTATION Above: Participating in worship on a recent Sunday morning at Hunsinger Lane Baptist Church in Louisville are (from left) Nancy Tadatada and husband, Eric, who is Filipino; behind Eric is Charlotte Kellam, whose husband, Marshall, serves as the church's worship leader; and behind her are longtime church members James Carlton and Bonnie Howard. Left: Pastor Charlie Davis (left), relaxes with vocalist John Rogers and worship leader Marshall Kellam (right) prior to the Sunday morning sermon. Davis, who has been pastor of HLBC for 18 years, said the racial make-up of the congregation reflects the neighborhood, noting that about 15 percent of the immediate population is African American. He estimated about 20 percent of church members and regular attendees are black. (Photos by Dannah Prather)

The issue cannot be addressed successfully through a book or a program, Davis explained. "It is a work of God's Spirit through the gospel."

"The gospel provides all men and women with a new righteous standing before God. That's part of the gospel," he said. "The other part of the gospel is a social transformation ... that because of the gospel, we as races and people come together, and come to one another, equally."

"That's the part of the gospel that we as a church are not addressing," he continued. He refers to this as an understanding of "our new race" as Christians.

Dwight Allen sums it up another way: "Christianity has no color."

If a church wants to be more welcoming to people of other races, more is required

than a couple of joint services annually with a congregation of another color, Mrs. Allen said.

Such efforts often accomplish little "other than to sit on the pew with someone of another race. ... No real relationships are built."

Davis agreed, noting that a racially diverse church family begins its journey worshipping together on Sunday mornings, then progresses outside the sanctuary.

At Hunsinger Lane, racial diversity extends to committees and the deacon board, the Sunday school class and also to the church staff.

A big step, Davis said, is when black or white homes are opened, perhaps for the first time, to people of another race.

"You have to pay attention to God and

see how He wants to do it," Derryberry said. "If you're open to loving people, God's going to bring you people to love. Some of them are going to be white; some of them are going to be black."

Mrs. Allen said taking time to learn the racial and cultural make-up of the community around the church is important and can prevent members from seeming phony about efforts to be multi-cultural.

"Live who you are," she said. "If you live in a diverse community, you should have a diverse church."

Davis agreed. "I'm not saying every church should be fully integrated but I think every Christian church that says, 'we believe the gospel' should be working towards it."

With information from Baptist Press

KBC Evangelism Conference 2009

Caner, Hill, York, others highlight annual Kentucky Baptist event

Lexington—Kentucky Baptists seeking to increase effectiveness in sharing their faith are invited to attend the upcoming Evangelism Conference for inspiration and instruction Feb. 23-24 at Porter Memorial Baptist Church in Lexington.

Sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention, this year's conference will feature 11 guest speakers from across the nation, featuring Ergun Caner, president of Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary in Lynchburg, Va.; vocational evangelist Junior Hill; and Hershael York, pastor of Buck Run Baptist Church in Frankfort.

Focusing on the theme, "The Ultimate Sacrifice," conference and breakout session speakers will encourage pastors and church leaders to keep the message of the cross

central as they share their Christian faith. Topics will include the missionary church, evangelism in a post-modern culture and evangelistic strategy, among many others.

"Christians know that the ultimate sacrifice was Jesus' death on the cross," said Ross Bauscher, KBC's evangelism growth team leader. "This year's conference will challenge us to remember that sacrifice and to share God's gift with others."

Other conference speakers include:

- David Burton, evangelism division director for the Florida Baptist Convention.

- Dan Garland, director of pastoral ministries and church consulting for LifeWay Christian Resources and a former Kentucky Baptist pastor.

- Kevin Hamm, senior pastor at

First Baptist Church of Gardendale, Ala.

- Thomas Hammond, senior director of the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board's church evangelism division.

- Robert Smith, preaching professor at Beeson Divinity School of Samford University in Birmingham, Ala.

- Dennis Swanberg, Christian comedian based in West Monroe, La.

- David Wheeler, evangelist and church planting professor at Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary.

- Hayes Wicker, senior pastor at First Baptist Church of Naples, Fla.

Southern Baptist Theological Seminary President Albert Mohler originally was scheduled to speak, but had to withdraw because of a conflicting engagement.

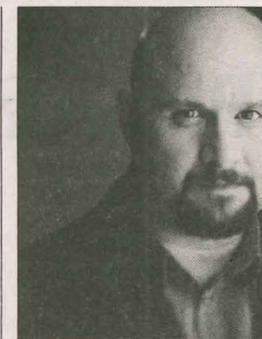
Praise and worship sessions will

be led by The Specks.

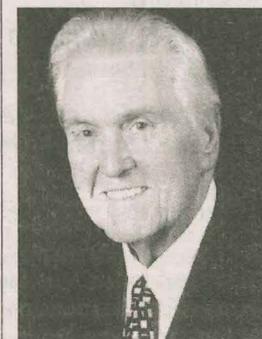
The Evangelism Conference is free, and registration is not required. Lunches during Tuesday's breakout sessions can be reserved online for \$8. For more information, visit www.KyBaptist.org/Evangelism Conference, or call (502) 489-3576, or toll free in Kentucky, (866) 489-3576.

Women's emphasis

A special women's event will be held Feb. 24 at Porter Memorial in conjunction with the Evangelism Conference. The event will run from 10 a.m.-1:35 p.m. and will feature singer/songwriter Michael O'Brien and his wife, Heidi, as well as registered nurse Wanda Taylor Smith. The cost for that event is \$15. Registration is available online at www.KyBaptist.org/ECWomen.



Ergun Caner



Junior Hill

Churches respond to ice storm

Following one of the worst winter storms in memory, Kentucky citizens are just now beginning to recover.

As I am sure most of you know, the ice storm extended more than 300 miles from West Kentucky south of the Ohio River through Louisville and beyond Lexington.

Partners in the Mission



By Bill Mackey

Some Louisville and beyond Lexington electric power for several days.

I am told that in Hopkins County, more utility polls were down than were left standing. And sadly, some 25 people lost their lives due to the ice storm.

Despite the difficulties and tragedies, I have been encouraged by the response of Baptists. Churches and disaster relief volunteers began responding almost immediately.

The North American Mission Board has set up a disaster relief headquarters in the Kentucky Baptist Building to help coordinate the many volunteers from Kentucky and other state conventions.

In the days following the storm, a number of Kentucky Baptist Convention staff members and I were able to fan out across the state to offer help to churches and associations in areas where the storms had severely limited communications.

As I visited, it was gratifying to see how local church staff and members were responding. Many provided emergency shelter, food and spiritual support. Some of the church leaders were sleeping only two or three hours at their church buildings in order to serve others.

At Second Baptist Church, Greenville, for example, members brought frozen food to the church and the schools opened their pantries to help feed more than 350 people for six days.

Other churches in Muhlenberg County that provided emergency shelters included Bethlehem, Nelson Creek and the First Baptist Church of Greenville.

Bob Lowery, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Central City, took time between deliveries of meals to emergency shelters to show me the aftermath of three major storms the area has suffered in the last year.

The pastor and staff of the First Baptist Church of Leitchfield were assisting in the distribution of food and water to 750 families on the day of my visit and 80 emergency workers were staying in the church's family life center.

These are just a few limited examples. Hundreds of Kentucky Baptist ministers and church members served and are continuing to serve sacrificially.

Many of the churches did not have electric power but the power of love has never been brighter. That may have an everlasting impact as people who experienced the ministry of churches expressed their desire to return to church.

Please pray for the safety of the many workers who are restoring services and removing debris. Pray as well that the witness of compassion will result in new and renewed commitments to Jesus Christ and His church.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

A chilly welcome, but warmth still felt

Our welcome may have been chilly, but the warmth of Kentucky Baptist hearts has revived our spirits.

As we approached Louisville on the evening of Jan. 18, heavy snow pelted the windshields of our cars. By the time my family reached the Gene Snyder Expressway, cars and trucks were sliding off the shoulders and into each other like first-time skaters flailing on an ice rink. In a matter of minutes, the road was nearly imperceptible and impassable.

Little did we know, this snow storm was only a prequel to the harrowing ice storm that would paralyze nearly three-quarters of the state's counties the following week. While travel was the initial inconvenience, widespread power outages and near-zero wind chills were the heartless menace.

Cheers and sighs of relief of residents rose as a cavalry of utility trucks, bringing linemen from other states, and the volunteers from relief organizations rolled into neighborhoods. Yet, in spite of tireless efforts, in some rural communities dotted across the western part of the state, families are still waiting for electricity to be restored and for wells to begin pumping fresh water again.

No less heroic are the many stories of Baptist laymen and women who have mobilized through our churches in various ministries to storm victims. They, indeed, are living parables of God's love to those among us who are suffering.

At Perryville Baptist Church, where Doug Davis is pastor, about 20 volunteers were out the past two weekends helping clear yards of fallen limbs. The church van was used by emergency personnel to transport storm victims to shelters. Located in one of the hardest hit counties, members of the Perryville congregation have realized the need for more shelters in the area and are making plans to enroll in American Red Cross training.

Meanwhile, at Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown, volunteers from Sunday school classes were enlisted to form chainsaw teams to help those in the community cut down broken tree limbs and clear storm debris.

Second Baptist Church, Greenville, opened its Christian Life Center to house storm victims. As of last Thursday, more than 2,760 meals had been prepared and served, and an average of about 150 people spent one of the preceding four nights there.

Volunteers from the church served 12- to 14-hour shifts each day, as "the people of Muhlenberg County

not only showed they have big hearts, but also showed they have even bigger freezers," quipped Pastor Ray England. Schools, grocery stores and citizens willingly emptied freezers to help feed hundreds of people in hospitals and homes "who didn't know where their next meal was coming from," he rejoiced.

"It's fascinating how God provides. It's exciting the way it happens. It's mind boggling and faith strengthening. It leaves us in awe," England wrote in his church newsletter.

First Baptist Church, Leitchfield, allowed the National Guard to use its facilities as a command center for area relief efforts. The staging center saw more than 3,935 family units—

representing 13,388 individuals—in need of assistance. More than 33,100 meals have been served or distributed by volunteers, and with the help of the American Red Cross and National Guard units, another 25,760 meals and some 28,000 bottles and 5,000 gallon jugs of waters were distributed door to door.

"By serving others, we were able to serve Christ," Campbellsville pastor Skip Alexander observed. "Churches are at their best when focused outward, rather than inward. When we love others, Christ is able to do through us, what we could not do on our own."

By working with local officials, church members were able to contact every citizen in its community at least twice, he noted. Five years ago, church members attended disaster relief training; five years later, they were glad they were ready, and as a result, an 80-year-old, WWII veteran accepted Christ, he rejoiced.

In Owensboro, First Baptist Church provided shelter to at least 100 storm victims, while staff members and volunteers manned phones to make sure those in the church family, particularly shut-ins, were OK. Volunteers helped carry hot meals to those in need.

Pastor Paul Strahan encouraged individual church members to see the ice storm not as a hardship, but, rather, as "another opportunity to be intentional in sharing Christ with others."

Perhaps a member of a Louisville congregation, though, best captured the spirit of Christian charity exhibited: "I am moved by the kindness of strangers and neighbors who have opened their homes, shared their resources, and forgotten to feel inconvenienced by what has taken place."

In spite of bone-chilling temperatures and widespread electrical outages, our true Power never went off, as Kentucky Baptists bore testimony to the Savior by "shining like the stars in the world."

After Thought

By Todd Deaton



Making a way for others to go and serve

By David Jeremiah

El Cajon, Calif.—We can't all go to the mission field. Nor does God call every one of us to be career missionaries. But anyone can pave the way for others. Here is what you can do to support other messengers of God.

■ **Open your hands.** There's no getting around it. It's the Christian's responsibility to provide a financial base for the gospel. The secular world will never pay to be evangelized.

Preachers coming Gaius' way went forth in Christ's name, taking nothing with them (3 John 1: 7). Many missionaries and ministers surrender lucrative career opportunities to serve God. The church must meet their needs. Gaius opened his own hands to sacrifice financially for them.

Many can't go, but by giving financial support, we can make a way for others. Helping those who go makes us co-laborers with them as if we are proclaiming the truth to the lost ourselves. "We are God's fellow workers" (1 Corinthians 3:9). When

we open our hands, our gifts allow us to become direct participants in the Gospel.

■ **Open your heart.** Gaius welcomed itinerant preachers who were total strangers, as 3 John 1:6 describes it. He didn't know them, but he loved them. His doors and heart were open. His love for God extended to those who loved God and whom God loved.

Open your heart to those who claim the name of Christ and give them immediate access to your affections. Pray for them intelligently and regularly and you can figuratively go with them to mission fields. Those who want to hear "well done thou good and faithful servant" may hear it for this kind of service, too.

■ **Open your home.** Gaius used his gift of hospitality and opened his home when needed. His expression of love wasn't just heartfelt or financial. It got practical and personal. He took people right under his own roof, fed them and gave them shelter.

Hospitality is not reserved for those with a special spiritual gift for it. First Peter 4:9 tells us to "be hospitable without grumbling." Romans 12:13 tells us to be "given to hospitality." The need for hospitality is just as important in today's world as it was in the time of Gaius.

■ **Empower yourself.** When we selflessly refuse to look out just for ourselves or our own property, we give God freedom to prosper our souls. When we serve, in whatever capacity we find, not only do we empower others for ministry, we receive the benefit of knowing we have obeyed our loving Father.

Sometimes we hold back on service for fear that we can only take care of ourselves. Our own pressing needs and those of our family force us to try to keep something in reserve.

It actually seems to please God when we feel like we have nothing to offer because He works through us, and we don't get confused about who's doing what. Out of our emptiness, God uses us. (BP)

David Jeremiah is founder of Turning Point for God and senior pastor of Shadow Mountain Community Church in El Cajon, Calif.

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"Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another."

Romans 14:19

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Using life insurance in charitable gift planning

By Laurie Valentine

Using life insurance to fund a gift to your church or other charitable cause provides the opportunity to make a larger ultimate gift than you ever thought possible.

While you may not be able to make a gift of thousands of dollars all at once, you may have the financial resources to make gifts of modest amounts on a regular basis to cover the cost of the premiums for a life insurance policy on your life. Or, you may be in a position to give up ownership of a cash value policy you purchased years earlier for a particular financial need that no longer exists.

The simplest way to set up a charitable gift using life insurance is to designate one or more charities as the beneficiary of a policy on your life. You can use any type of existing or new policy.

This option provides no current tax benefits to you, but sets up a plan to fund a potentially significant gift to the designated causes at your death for which your estate would get an estate tax deduction.

You may designate the proceeds to be paid outright to the charitable beneficiaries or to an endowment fund benefiting one or more charitable causes.

Another option is to make an irrevocable transfer of the ownership of an existing policy to charity or arrange for the charity to purchase a new policy on your life with funds you provide.

The value of your gift of an existing policy is the lesser of the fair market value of the policy (the policy's cash surrender value) or the premiums you have paid prior to making the gift. If you continue to pay the premiums on the policy after the transfer of ownership, you will be making an additional charitable gift each year you pay the premiums directly or give the charity cash to pay the premiums.

At your death, the charity can collect the proceeds immediately; there is no waiting for the settlement of your estate. The charity will usually incur no expense to collect the death benefit.

Best of all, the amount the charity receives is usually far larger than the total premiums paid during your lifetime.

A charitable gift of life insurance provides a simple, but effective way to leave a legacy and make a lasting difference.

Laurie Valentine is trust counsel for the Kentucky Baptist Foundation

A lad's challenging query

While assisting with Royal Ambassadors at a Louisville church during my seminary years, I was challenged to consider my vocational calling by a lad's query.

His lowered eyebrows, tilted forehead and wrinkled nose surveyed my own bewildered expression. The lad had asked me a very probing question, "What do you want to be when you grow up?"

To him I was still in school (seminary)—and therefore, must not be fully grown up. (And, I suppose there are those who are still wondering whether I have ever truly "grown up"!)

Putting that aside, I went into a spiel about being a denominational journalist who attends various Baptist events and church functions, and then writes a story for a newspaper so other Baptists could read about the good things being done in Christ's name.

He pursued his line of questioning one step further, "Why?"

The question was gratifying, since it showed that at least in this young man's eyes, I was a real person with an identity beyond that of his RA counselor on Wednesday nights. But his question was also disconcerting, since it was obvious that my chosen profession, denominational journalism, did not seem appealing.

I began explaining how I felt that God had a special purpose for each of us. For me, I believed that God was preparing me to be a journalist and had led me to seminary.

"Why?" he asked, undaunted by my testimony.

Well, back in high school, an English teacher discovered my interest in writing and encouraged me to develop that skill. Then, while serving as a counselor at an

RA camp in South Carolina, I sensed God was directing my path into a religious vocation.

"Uh, huh ..."

Okay, so the history recitation wasn't enough. What was this kid after? I tried again: After sharing my interest in denominational journalism with others—specifically a campus minister at Furman University—God began to open doors which further defined that interest into a specific calling. Opportunities to serve on the staff of The Baptist Courier, the Home Mission Board, and

The Western Recorder had shaped a calling into denominational journalism.

Again, "Why?"

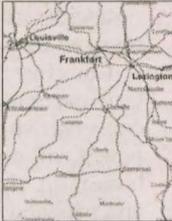
What at first was flattering had now become frustrating. The young man wanted more than the pat answers to life's mysteries. I stammered, not knowing exactly where I should go next.

Seeing my puzzled look, the boy repeated the question, and then elaborated, "Why do you do what you do? Do you like it?"

Now, we're getting somewhere! Yes, I like it very much, I replied. But there was still that difficult part? "If so, why?"

I have since thought about that lad's query a lot. What is it that I like most about my vocation? It's difficult to articulate. But here goes: It's you!

While attending church-related functions, I often meet fascinating people, like you, with inspiring stories about their faith and God's blessings. As I have grown in ministry through the years, I have realized that one of the greatest joys of denominational journalism is sharing the inspiring stories of fellow believers who you meet ... along the Way!



Along the Way

By Todd Deaton

Conflict resolution for couples

By James Stillwell

Q: My fiancé and I are having more and more conflicts. Help! Please share any suggestions that might help us move out of being "stuck" to a new place of peace, love and understanding?

A: Conflict resolution is a hot topic on the international scene. The same principles apply whether you're talking about countries, corporations, or couples. The things you fight about might be different, but the principles for resolution are strikingly the same for all.

First of all, get into couples therapy or some kind of structured marriage education. Do not let the fear of breaking up keep you from the opportunity of learning skills and solving problems that you gain from getting professional help.

After all, as Neil Clark Warren has said, any divorce before a wedding is better than one after.

Still, if you don't get help, your chances of divorce increase and if you do, your chances of a strong marriage increase by gaining new skills and information.

Conflict resolution experts speak of the "four C's of resolving differences."

Compromise. When neither person gets all they want, but everybody gets something. This is an occasional way to go, and succeeds in "part-way" movement toward happiness for both parties.

Capitulation. One party gives and the other receives. It is "one way" happiness. When the issue is very important to one party and not very important to the other party, this is the way to go.

Co-existence. This is a "no way!" resolution. It means will agree to disagree. On certain issues, fine—but if this is the path for every issue, it's not much of a marriage.

Collaboration. This is ideal for most issues. It is a "both ways" resolution. Stephen Covey called it "synergy." This means you work together to make a new solution that would not have been possible otherwise, that is better than anything either of you could have come up with on your own. You want as much collaboration as possible.

New Testament teachings about living in peace with all (Romans 12) and about living in forgiveness and forbearance (Colossians 3) apply to this topic. Living your relationship under the dominion of the Holy Spirit, in mutual submission to one another (Ephesians 5) and in humble example of Christ (Philippians 2) are all good ways of making conflicts into stepping stones to your growth as Christians and as a couple.

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



DiscipleNow fosters unity, community spirit

I had the privilege of leading a DiscipleNow house for Second Baptist Church of Hopkinsville, where Chuck Poe is the youth minister.

Thirteen high school seniors were in my house. We talked about Jesus and about life after youth ministry. It was refreshing that most of the seniors in the house were concerned about staying connected to the church after leaving the youth ministry. The fact that 13 seniors were still willing to participate in a church event was refreshing. Juniors and seniors have all ready checked out of most things that we do in churches.

Here are a couple of observations from the seniors on staying connected: They wanted a pastor who would speak in a manner that was relevant to where they are—not talk down to them like they are children, but speak biblical truth that speaks to their lives. They also wanted to know that they would not be forgotten when they went off to college. In addition, they wanted a relationship with an adult who would walk along side them as a mentor.

Another joy of this DiscipleNow experience was to see it still going on. I was there when we held the first community-wide event in 1994. It is a real blessing to know that it has remained a highlight of the year for the students and still is a viable tool for helping students grow in their relationship with Christ.

The community-wide aspect is what sold me on it years ago. Some of the host families and Bible study leaders this year began their

Youth Ministry Corner



By Joe Ball

DiscipleNow experience as youth participants.

There are some significant benefits that I have noticed through the years:

■ DiscipleNow develops a sense of community. When the students all wear their D-Now shirts to school, they realize they are not alone. There is strength in numbers. Most students will know the other students from their church's youth ministry, but may not know the students in other youth groups in the community. The common t-shirt tied to a community-wide event lets them know there are other believers around them. It is amazing how many students think they are the only Christian in the class.

■ DiscipleNow events maintain church autonomy. It is a wonderful tool to rally around a common theme and a corporate worship experience that also allows for different churches and denominations to come together. Each church can take the theme and teach it to their students, yet maintain their doctrinal purity, while agreeing on the non-negotiable of our faith.

■ Camaraderie develops among youth leaders. The months of planning that go into this

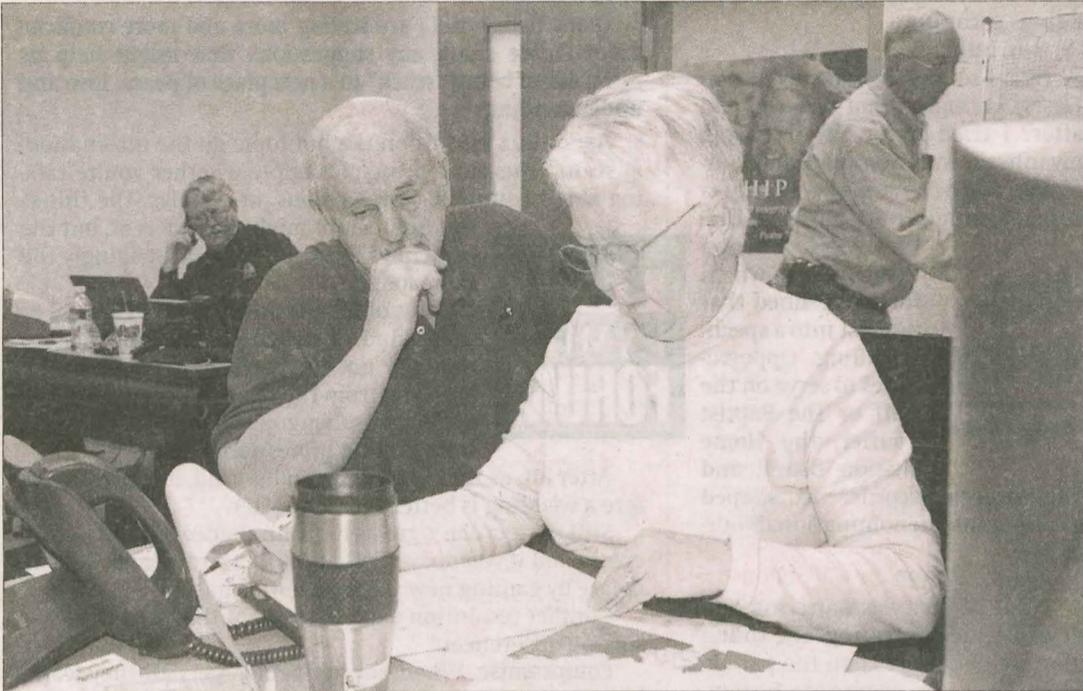
event brings local youth leaders together for an extended period of time. As themes, curriculum, worship and community experiences are planned and prayer sessions are held, you cannot help but grow closer to one another.

■ DiscipleNow is small-church friendly. One of the blessings through the years has been watch churches of all sizes participate. Larger churches have provided resources, curriculum and Bible study leaders and allowed students from smaller groups to merge with their students. An attitude among the youth ministers has remained to this day: There are enough lost students in the community for all of us, and we do not want your students. A sacred trust exists not to "steal another church's sheep."

■ Corporate worship together is promoted. On this particular Saturday, the worship had more than 1,100 gathered for worship in the sanctuary of Second Baptist Church. The excitement in the room with that many students and their leaders coming together to worship God was amazing. This year the praise band was a blend of students from different churches, who had been practicing for several weeks to prepare their hearts to lead worship. There was a sense of unity among the students, both those leading worship and those being led. There was a sense that for a little while, maybe the Pointer Sisters had it right: "We are family."

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

Southern Baptist disaster relief teams help Kentuckians recover



ASSESSING THE SITUATION Randy Foster (left), director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Baptist Men on Mission, consults with volunteer Elaine Koch about where to dispatch Southern Baptist disaster relief crews throughout the state. Behind them, NAMB national disaster relief coordinator Terry Henderson (left) works the phones. (KBC photo by Larry Brannin)

KBC president serves through Ky. National Guard

By Drew Nichter
News Director

Paducah—Not long after he wrapped up his Sunday sermon Feb. 1 at Beacon Hill Baptist Church in Somerset, Pastor John Mark Toby got the call—"go to Paducah."

Toby had been deployed to serve as chaplain at the Kentucky National Guard's emergency operations center in the far western part of the state. The longtime pastor has been a Lieutenant Colonel Chaplain with the state unit for 25 years now. It's one of many hats Toby wears—he also is Kentucky Baptist Convention president.

Toby is one of the more than 4,000 state National Guard soldiers deployed in the wake of the recent ice storms that crippled much of the Bluegrass State.

Many of those servicemen have been conducting door-to-door welfare checks in communities that still are without power. They also have been distributing water and other supplies to residents who desperately need them.

Toby said he has been working with the deployed soldiers to meet their spiritual needs while on mission.

"I've been giving out Gideon Bibles and praying with soldiers and just checking on them, encouraging them," he explained.

His secondary mission "is working with government officials in trying to be responsive to any needs they might have as well, from the governor on down to county judge executives ... to try and see if there are any kind of needs that we can help with," he said.

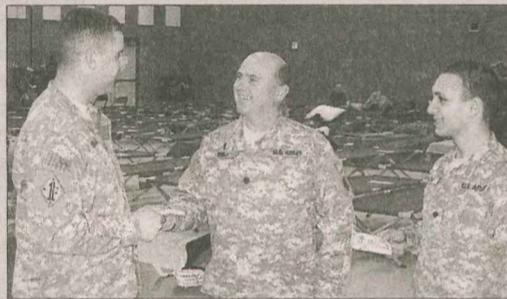
Last week, Toby had the opportunity to speak with Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear, pray with him and give him a Gideon Bible.

Toby said that while it's important to remember the residents who are being helped during this trying time, government officials also need prayer and encouragement in their work.

"They're under a lot of pressure," he pointed out. "They've all been working long hours ... away from their own families."

"They've got a task bigger than themselves right now," Toby said of the elected officials. "God is able to do all things and He can help them even in these tight situations."

Toby, who in his role as chaplain is a Southern Baptist North American Mission Board-endorsed missionary, said that being deployed to areas of the state where natural disasters have struck has become his "specialty" in the last decade.



SPREADING THE WORD Kentucky National Guard Chaplain LTC John Mark Toby hands out Gideon Bibles to soldiers at the Red Cross shelter inside the Paducah Armed Forces Center. Toby, pastor of Beacon Hill Baptist Church and Kentucky Baptist Convention president, was deployed Feb. 1 and will serve for an undetermined period of time.

He has served in similar situations following ice storms in Lexington and Maysville in 2003, and assisted in the National Guard's relief efforts during the Louisville floods of 1997. He also has participated in missions to New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina and has served overseas at times.

Toby said he is unsure exactly how long this latest mission will last. "These kinds of operations, ... they're really fluid as to how long you stay in them," he noted.

Also in his journey through Western Kentucky, Toby has made frequent stops to check in on Kentucky Baptist congregations to see how they're weathering the storm. He was one of several Kentucky Baptist Convention staff members who toured the state last week, assessing the damage and letting pastors and directors of missions know they were not alone in their disaster response efforts.

"I think the response of the churches has been a tremendous witness," said KBC Executive Director Bill Mackey, who toured cities and towns along the Western Kentucky Parkway last week. "I've seen staff people who've gone without sleep and who have been on the job (when) they couldn't even stay in their own homes."

"I am especially grateful to God for the way I've seen the church staff and churches responding to the needs."

But as many across the state begin to get back on their feet, Mackey urged continued prayer for the hundreds of power company crews that are working to restore power to much of the western part of Kentucky.

Continued from page 1

A massive winter storm coated much of the Bluegrass State, from west to east, in a blanket of snow and ice Jan. 26 and 27. The end result: More than 700,000 homes lost power, leaving residents exposed to single-digit temperatures for days at a time. Thousands of residents statewide still have not had power restored to their homes.

Counties in Western Kentucky were particularly hard hit. The most conservative predictions say that power will not be returned to many homes in that area until March—and probably later.

The devastation prompted President Barack Obama last week to declare Kentucky a major disaster area. The announcement means local governments statewide will be eligible for federal government money to help residents recover.

Even before the severity of the storm was fully realized, Baptist relief teams already had sprung into action.

Keith Stinson, a member of First Baptist Church of Richmond and a chainsaw crew coordinator, said he and a team from Tates Creek Baptist Association cut short a disaster relief trip in Mississippi to return home Jan. 27. Along the way, they stocked up on kerosene and groceries to distribute to those who had lost power in Madison County.

Several churches in the association began coordinating chainsaw crews to assist in cleaning up the endless fallen tree limbs. Stinson said it wasn't until he contacted KBC's disaster relief coordinator Coy Webb to get more help that he realized the scope of the storm's damage.

But, he noted, the Tates Creek teams continued on with their work, eventually getting help from crews from Alabama and Mississippi.

Even the Kentucky Baptist Convention, responsible for mobilizing disaster relief teams across the state, needed to call in Webb, who was forced to mobilize crews early on from his cell phone at home, was contacted by Terry Henderson, disaster relief coordinator for the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, who agreed to bring in a number of people to assist in coordinating out-of-state units and to man a phone command center from the Baptist Building in Louisville.

As of last week, disaster relief units from as many as 10 state conventions had traveled to Kentucky. As many as 500-600 volunteers currently are working throughout the state in nearly 20 Baptist association areas. That's not counting the number of volunteers who may be serving but have not contacted the KBC or NAMB.

The bulk of those crews are located in the western counties, which suffered the most severe damage of any region. While power crews from dozens of states work to repair thousands of damaged poles and towers there, Baptist teams are helping those residents clean up their homes and find a warm meal and a place to sleep.

Rick Reeder, director of missions for Caldwell-Lyon Baptist Association, said that the Baptist response there has been swift and ongoing.

A number of churches in the association either have been involved in setting up shelters at their facilities, manning chainsaw crews and feeding teams, or coordinating supply giveaways at local department stores for families in need.

"It's pretty serious down here," Reeder noted. "There's so many issues you don't think about that are impacting people."

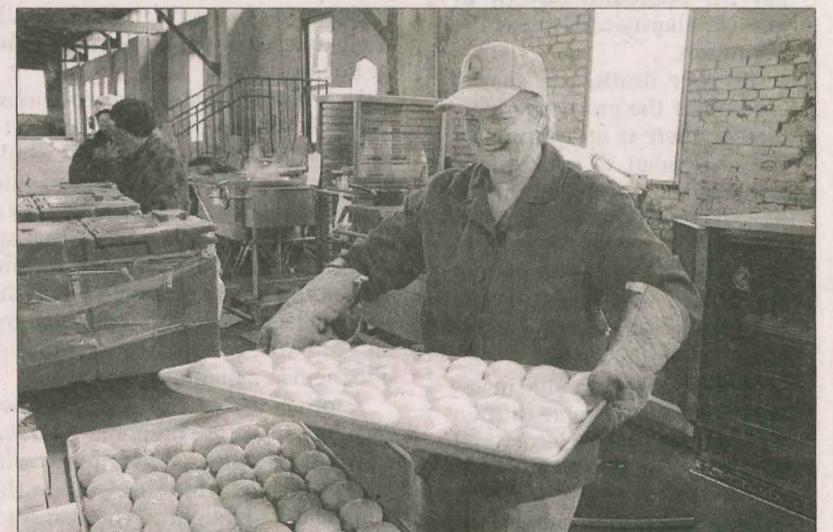
"It's kind of like an emergency room: You stabilize the patient, you diagnose and then you treat them. I think we're kind of in the treatment phase now."

But the most important aspect of the whole ordeal, Reeder said, is experiencing firsthand the type of effect the love shown by Baptist volunteers can have on their fellow neighbors.

The DOM shared a story of a young woman he met at a Princeton Red Cross shelter. She and her husband had moved to town recently, but had lost their jobs and were forced to send their 5-year-old son to live with family out of state. They were staying in the shelter because their home was without power.

Reeder recalled, "She said, 'I am overwhelmed at how much people want to help me. ... I have never had people want to help us without wanting something in return.'

"She was only used to people just out for themselves," Reeder said. "So, when she started experiencing all this love, she couldn't take it. It was just an amazing story to hear her tell that."



HOT MEAL Volunteer Judy Williams, a member of Eubank Baptist Church, pulls a batch of dinner rolls from the oven at a feeding center in Lincoln County.

Legal questions remain as Obama overhauls faith-based effort

By Daniel Burke

Washington—President Barack Obama unveiled a revamped White House Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships Feb. 5, but postponed a decision on whether religious groups can discriminate in hiring, an issue that has bedeviled similar government projects.

"The goal of this office will not be to favor one religious group over another—or even religious groups over secular groups," Obama said at the National Prayer Breakfast, where he announced the new office.

"It will simply be to work on behalf of those organizations that want to work on behalf of our communities, and to do so without blurring the line that our founders wisely drew between church and state."

Obama has said his project will be a new and improved version of former President George W. Bush's Office of Faith-based and Community Initiatives, which was created in 2001. Like Bush, Obama created his faith-based office by executive order.

But Obama's office will be supplemented by new a 25-person advisory council. Leading the White House office will be Josh-

ua DuBois, a 26-year-old Pentecostal pastor who headed religious outreach for Obama's presidential campaign.

"Joshua understands the issues at stake," Obama said in a statement, "knows the people involved, and will be able to bring everyone together—from both the secular and faith-based communities, from academia and politics—around our common goals."

Obama noted the office's top priority will be "making community groups an integral part of our economic recovery" and relieving poverty. The office also will address teenage pregnancy, abortion reduction and "support fathers who stand by their families," especially young men.

"There is a force for good greater than government," Obama said in the statement. "It is an expression of faith, this yearning to give back, this hungering for a purpose greater than our own, that reveals itself not just in places of worship but in senior centers and shelters, schools and hospitals."

In a shift from the Bush administration, the office will play a role in foreign policy, the White House noted, working with the National Security Council to encourage in-

terfaith dialogue.

Last week's announcement fulfills a campaign pledge Obama made in July to expand and upgrade Bush's faith-based office, which Obama had criticized as an under-funded "photo-op."

For the most part, religious leaders across the theological spectrum applauded the announcement. But the new president already has backed away from one campaign promise, according to some scholars and activists.

Hiring practices questioned

In July, Obama said that religious groups will not be able to use federal grants to proselytize or to hire only members of their own faith. The issue presents a unique challenge for the president, who boasts a background in community organizing and constitutional law. Religious groups say hiring co-religionists is essential to their identity and mission; others argue that federal funds should not be used to discriminate.

The executive order Obama signed last week avoids a clear statement on hiring practices, instead saying that the office may

"seek the opinion of the Attorney General on any constitutional and statutory questions."

"I think it's wise to kick it over to the lawyers," said Mark Silk, an expert on religion and politics at Trinity College in Hartford, Conn. "It's very complicated, but there's no question it's a walking back on his campaign position."

Church-state watchdogs already are howling over the lack of clear hiring guidelines and the new advisory panel.

"President Obama launched his faith-based initiative today by heading into uncharted and dangerous waters," said Caroline Fredrickson, director of the Washington legislative office of the American Civil Liberties Union. "There is no historical precedent for presidential meddling in religion—or religious leaders meddling in federal policy—through a formal government advisory committee made up mostly of the president's chosen religious leaders."

Of the 15 people named to the advisory council last Thursday, several are evangelicals, including former Southern Baptist Convention president Frank Page. (RNS)

Habitat for Humanity founder Fuller dies at 74

Americus, Ga.—Millard Fuller, a millionaire entrepreneur who gave away his fortune to create Habitat for Humanity International in 1976, died Feb. 3 after a brief illness.

Fuller, 74, led the worldwide house-building ministry with his wife, Linda, for 29 years before both were fired in January 2005 following several months of conflict with their board of directors. Afterward, Fuller formed a new organization, the Fuller Center for Housing.

"Millard Fuller was a force of nature who turned a simple idea into an international organization that has helped more than 300,000 families move from deplorable housing into simple, decent homes they

helped build and can afford to buy and live in," Jonathan Reckford, Habitat's chief executive officer, said in a statement. "The entire Habitat family mourns the loss of our founder, a true giant in the affordable-housing movement."

Members of Fuller's family said they were "truly overwhelmed" with expressions of love and support for his work and urged people to honor his legacy by donating to the Fuller Center or volunteering with a local partner of either organization.

Visitation was scheduled Feb. 3 at First Presbyterian Church in Americus, Ga. Burial was held at Koinonia Farm, an interracial Christian farming community the Fullers joined in 1965.

Wealthy at age 29 as an entrepreneur and lawyer but with his marriage in shambles, Fuller and his wife decided to begin anew, selling all they owned and giving it to the poor.

Under the tutelage of Koinonia founder Clarence Jordan, Fuller developed the idea of "partnership housing," building homes with rural neighbors too poor to afford conventional loans. Since then, thousands of people have volunteered with Habitat, the most famous being former President Jimmy Carter.

"Millard Fuller was one of the most extraordinary people I have ever known," Carter said in a statement. "He used his remarkable gifts as an entrepreneur for the benefit of millions of needy people around the world by providing them with decent housing." (ABP)



Millard Fuller

NATIONAL NOTES

Graham grandson tapped as Kennedy successor. A grandson of Billy Graham has been nominated to succeed the late D. James Kennedy as pastor of Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. A pastoral search committee last month gave the congregation its recommendation of Tullian Tchividjian, pastor of nearby New City Church, as Coral Ridge's next senior pastor. Tchividjian is the son of Gigi Graham, the evangelist's eldest daughter. The search committee considered more than 150 candidates to succeed Kennedy, who died in 2007 at the age of 76. Coral Ridge has given Tchividjian 30 days to consider the invitation. Coral Ridge has about 1,800 regular worshippers and is affiliated with the Presbyterian Church in America.

Oral Roberts University names new president. More than a year after Richard Roberts resigned as president of Oral Roberts University amid allegations of lavish spending, the charismatic Christian university in Tulsa, Okla., has hired a new president. Mark Rutland, president of Southeastern University, a Christian liberal arts college in Lakeland, Fla., since 1999, will take the helm of ORU July 1, the university's board of trustees recently announced. Rutland will become the third president in ORU's 46-year history and the first not associated with the Roberts family. In Rutland's 10 years at Southeastern, the university has undergone more than \$50 million in renovations, and enrollment has more than tripled, topping 3,000, ORU officials said.

Trial postponed in faith-healing death. Two Oregon parents who chose spiritual healing over medical care for their 15-month-old daughter will go to trial on manslaughter charges June 23. Carl and Raylene Worthington's trial was originally scheduled to start Jan. 27 but was delayed to accommodate the schedule of a defense witness. The Worthingtons' daughter, Ava, died at home last March of bacterial pneumonia and a blood infection, conditions that could have been treated with antibiotics. The Worthingtons belong to the Followers of Christ Church. The Oregon City, Ore., congregation shuns doctors, hospitals and standard medical care in favor of spiritual healing, such as prayer and the laying on of hands.

Protest ends recitation of prayer in N.J. For nearly 60 years, the town council in Newton, N.J., started its meetings by reciting the Lord's Prayer. That tradition ended recently after the council's attorney advised members they should heed a request by a resident, an avowed atheist, to stop the practice. Doug Radigan told the council at its Dec. 22 meeting the prayer was too Christian and was offensive to him. He asked for a secular replacement. Council members said they were saddened—but not really surprised—they had to end a tradition begun in 1952. While the Lord's Prayer tradition has officially ended in Newton, the council has informally agreed to start reciting secular invocations prior to its meetings. In recent decisions, the Supreme Court has ruled religious prayers recited at government functions are in violation of the U.S. Constitution.

WHERE HAVE ALL THE YOUNG ADULTS GONE?

essential church SEMINAR



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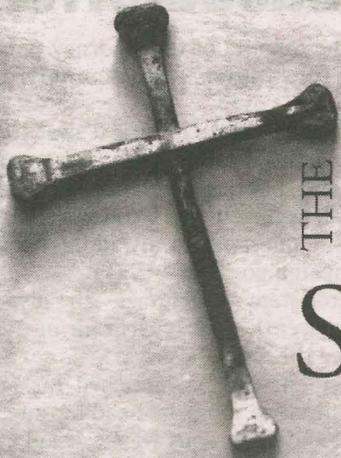
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Poll: God big in Mississippi, but not so much in Vermont

By Adelle Banks

Washington—Want to be almost certain you'll have religious neighbors? Move to Mississippi.

Prefer to be in the least religious state? Venture to Vermont.

A new Gallup Poll, based on more than 350,000 interviews, finds that the Magnolia State is the one where the most people—85 percent—say yes when asked "Is religion an important part of your daily life?"

Less than half of Vermonters, meanwhile—42 percent—answered that same question in the affirmative.

Joining Mississippi in the top "most religious" states are other notches in the Bible Belt: Alabama (82 percent), South Carolina (80 percent), Tennessee (79 percent), Louisiana (78 percent), and Arkansas (78 percent). Kentuckians placed 10th (74 percent).

New England predominates in the top "least religious" states: Following Vermont are New Hampshire (46 percent), Maine (48 percent), Massachusetts (48 percent), Alaska (51 percent) and Washington (52 percent).

"Clearly, states in the South in particular, but also some states in the Southwest and Rocky Mountains ... have very religious residents and New England states in particular, coupled with states like Alaska and others, are irreligious," said Frank Newport, editor-in-chief of The Gallup Poll.

The reasons why, however, are far less clear, observers noted.

For example, some might attribute the religiosity of Mississippi to the high percentage of African-Americans—long known for being comparatively highly religious—who live there.

"Mississippi is still No. 1, even if

we look only at whites," Newport pointed out. "Whites in Mississippi are also very religious."

Overall, Gallup researchers found that 65 percent of all Americans said religion was important in their daily lives.

Newport said he was surprised that one state—Utah—did not make the "most religious" list, given the state's large Mormon population.

"They apparently have two kinds of people in the state," he said. "They have the very religious and devout Mormon population, but it also looks like they have a lot of nonreligious people."

Mark Silk, director of the Greenberg Center for the Study of Religion in Public Life, said Gallup's findings reflect research conclusions from the upcoming American Religious Identification Survey, which he is working on with other scholars.

"New England is now slightly ahead of the Pacific Northwest in terms of the high rate of unchurched people," noted Silk, co-author of "One Nation, Divisible: How Regional Religious Differences Shape American Politics."

Although evangelicalism may be making some inroads in Western states like Washington and Oregon, he attributes the predominance of New England states in the "least religious" category more than other demographic trends in the Northeast.

"What we are finding ... is a considerable drop in New England in the Catholic population," Silk explained.

And it's a matter of them moving away from the church, he said, not the region. "Catholics are holding their own nationwide because of Latino immigration but, relatively speaking, there's little of that in New England." (RNS)

Report shows African-Americans surpass all others in religiosity

Washington—African-Americans surpass others in the U.S. in a range of expressions of faith, from praying more to attending religious services more frequently, a new report shows.

"Compared with other racial and ethnic groups, African-Americans are among the most likely to report a formal religious affiliation, with fully 87 percent of African-Americans describing themselves as belonging to one religious group or another," states "A Religious Portrait of African-Americans," released by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life late last month.

The analysis finds that:

- Nearly 80 percent of blacks say religion is very important in their lives, compared with 56 percent of all U.S. adults.

- More than three-fourths of those polled say they pray at least daily, compared to 58 percent of the total U.S. population.

- Almost 90 percent believe in God with absolute certainty, compared to 71 percent of all U.S. adults.

- Eighty-three percent believe in angels and demons, compared to 68

percent of the total U.S. population.

- More than half of African-Americans (53 percent) report attending religious services at least weekly, compared to 39 percent of Americans overall.

The research, drawn from Pew's 2007 U.S. Religious Landscape Survey, showed that most African-Americans—59 percent—are affiliated with historically black churches. Another 15 percent belong to evangelical churches, 4 percent to mainline Protestant churches and 5 percent to Catholic churches. One percent each are affiliated with Jehovah's Witness and Muslim congregations, and 12 percent are unaffiliated.

Even African-Americans who are not affiliated with congregations demonstrated significant religious interest. Almost three-quarters of those polled who are unaffiliated with a particular faith say religion plays at least a "somewhat important" role in their lives. Almost half—45 percent—of unaffiliated African-Americans say it is "very important" in their lives. In comparison, 16 percent of the overall population of unaffiliated Americans said religion is very important. (RNS)

Religious broadcasters feeling the heat during these uncertain economic times

By G. Jeffrey MacDonald

Nashville—Digital podcasts and streaming video might bring Christian audiences inspirational messages in the future, but they aren't bringing in the cash that broadcast ministries need to weather a painful economy.

To make ends meet, broadcasters are tightening belts and going back to basics. That means sticking with time-tested formulas, postponing innovations and counting on loyal (largely senior) audiences to keep donating even when it hurts.

The hope is that Christian broadcasters might actually enjoy a competitive edge during tight times that comes from serving a clientele with holy zeal for the cause.

"You don't find businesses making sacrifices to make sure advertising dollars are paid to broadcasters. That's not part of their paradigm," said Craig Parshall, senior vice president of the National Religious Broadcasters, a 1,400-member organization that held its annual convention last weekend in Nashville.

"But individual families are willing to be sacrificial because of the mission of Christian broadcasting."

Whether they depend on donors, advertising dollars or a combination of the two, mass media ministries are feeling the recession squeeze.

■ Christian radio giant Salem Communications sold four stations, slashed 10 percent of its workforce and trimmed 5 percent off all salaries. Nonetheless, Salem's stock price has tumbled 74 percent in the past year to less than \$1 per share.

■ Trinity Broadcasting Network, the nation's largest Christian TV network, has laid off workers and scrambled to fill programming holes as T.D. Jakes, Joyce Meyer and other big-name ministries cut costs by producing fewer shows.

"The industry is at a crossroads. The audience is dwindling, and they have to figure out what to do."

—Paul Creasman, associate professor of communications at Southern Wesleyan University in Central, S.C.

■ Focus on the Family, which has produced James Dobson's radio show since 1977, has eliminated about 450 jobs since 2004, including 200 job cuts since November.

The industry shows signs of contraction at a time when its future is fraught with uncertainty. And it's not just the economic downturn that is causing turmoil: Last year, a study found that the percentage of megachurches with a radio ministry dropped from 44 percent in 2000 to 24 percent in 2008. Likewise, television ministries dropped from 38 percent to 23 percent.

For programs that still are on the air, the challenge is attracting younger audiences who will give as consistently as their parents and grandparents. Cracking that puzzle will require experimentation, but few feel they can take significant risks in today's climate marked by razor-thin margins.

"The industry is at a crossroads," noted Paul Creasman, associate professor of communications at Southern Wesleyan University in Central, S.C., and a former Christian radio personality and producer. "The audience is dwindling, and they have to figure out what to do. But the Web is not the answer because older audiences don't use the Internet ... and younger audiences will go to the Web for content, but they'll probably be less likely to donate."

Moving content online may be broadcasting's future, but it's a nerve-wracking endeavor that doesn't necessarily pay the bills.

"Everyone (in religious broadcasting) is doing it," Parshalls said. "And everyone is asking each other: 'Are you making money at it? Because we're not.'"

For now, broadcasters are trying to maintain—and even expand—the support of listeners who see family-friendly airwaves as one way to serve a higher cause, said Kevin Peterson, who covers Christian music stations for the trade publication Radio & Records. "A lot of (stations) are still doing very well" with fundraising, Peterson pointed out. "When stations have done a really good job at becoming a part of the community—being not just entertainment, but a resource and a friend—they find people say, 'I may not be able to give as much or as often, but I'm going to find a way because you're making a difference in people's lives.'"

To chart their way through recessionary waters, broadcasters are refocusing on their core strategies. Often, that means programming changes, though the types of changes vary from one outlet to the next.

Moody Radio, heard on more than 700 stations nationwide, has thoroughly revamped its format to about 80 percent talk. That means more preaching-and-teaching, a favorite genre for senior audiences.

Over time, Moody said it hopes to integrate more interactive talk, which tends to attract younger audiences.

At TBN, viewers are seeing new faces in slots that used to belong to some of televangelism's biggest names. Twelve new ministries have debuted on TBN within the past year, according to spokesperson John Casoria. (RNS)

LifeWay explores connections through social media Web sites

By Kelly ShROUT

LifeWay Christian Resources

Nashville—John Cade, Internet producer in the student ministry area of LifeWay Christian Resources, has a lot of friends—more than 700 of them, to be exact.

Just visit Facebook and search the word "LifeWay" and Cade's profile is the first to pop up. He's known as "John at LifeWay" in his online profile and uses his network of global contacts to strategically connect with student leaders for ministry purposes.

With more than 140 million Facebook and 2.2 million Twitter users worldwide, LifeWay is harnessing the power of online networking to better serve customers.

"When we connect with people online, they see that we are not a corporation with closed walls," said Cade, whose main job is to create an online presence for the student ministry team. "Social networking helps to break down the barriers between us and our customers."

Social networking often is called micromarketing, the new trend that designs marketing strategies for the benefit of a narrow, select group.

Cade targets student ministers and Facebook provides an instant exchange of ideas detailing the latest trends and resources for student workers.

"Our goal in student ministry is to help student ministers do their job better," Cade said. "Social networking is one way we can support ministers. Through Facebook and Twitter, we are able to respond directly to questions, concerns and even negative feedback when appropriate."

Skeptics may question the ability to develop customer relationships over the Internet, but Cade said he believes, "You can lay the groundwork for an authentic relationship through social networking sites," adding that student conference participants often recognize him from his online profiles and are quick to begin a conversation with him.

Promoting prayer

Janell Fadler, who directs LifeWay's leadership training and events, traveled to Rwanda three months ago with a LifeWay mission team and used social networking to organize prayer support.

Fadler, who once was skeptical of social networking sites, distributed prayer requests and updated real-time information through the group she set up on Facebook.

She also learned how fast social networking groups could grow once information is posted.

"There were four other team members who had accounts on Facebook and they sent a note to all their Facebook friends to join in and pray for us," she recalled, adding that more than 80 people joined the online prayer team.

The benefit of real-time updates was invaluable, she noted, especially when immediate prayers were needed.

"A few of us got pretty sick while we were on the trip and we were able to inform our team how to pray specifically," she said. "The next time I go on a mission trip, I will create another prayer group on Facebook for sure."

A click away

No social Web site does real-time updates better than Twitter, the far-reaching microblogging trend.

Pam Case, director of LifeWay Women, stumbled reluctantly into the world of Twitter when her church planter husband encouraged her to give it a try as a way to stay connected with other pastors' wives. She soon discovered that Twittering does what social networking is designed to do—connects individuals who share common interests.

Case saw the business value of connecting with so many like-minded individuals who care deeply about women's ministry that she added an additional Twitter page for LifeWay Women.

Case said she can keep her finger on the pulse of women's ministry around the globe. It is a way for her to communicate with other leaders about the issues that impact women's ministry.

"Twitter is breaking down the walls and reinforcing the idea that we are all real people doing real work for the purpose of making Christ's name known," she said. "It is a way to let the churches know that we at LifeWay are real people who love Jesus like crazy."



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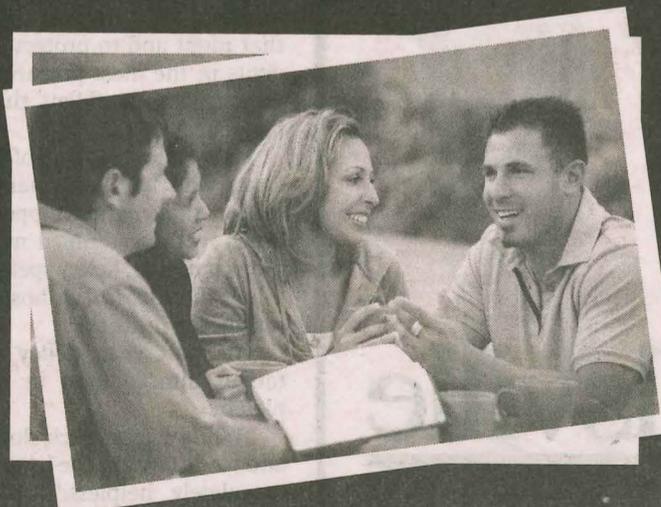
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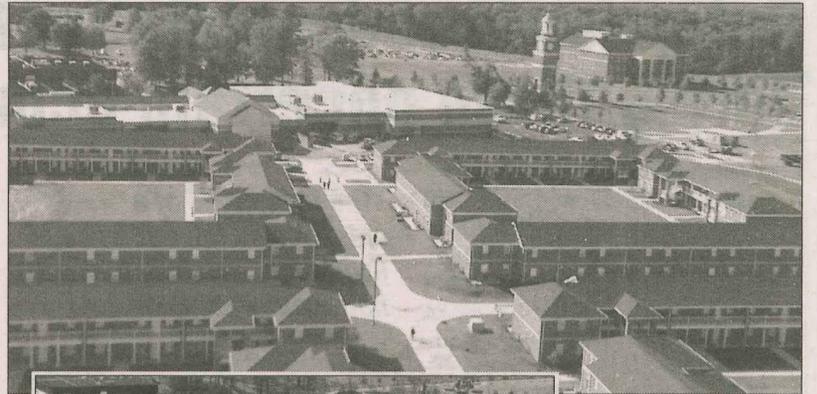
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RECOVERY A year after the Feb. 5, 2008, tornado, Union University's campus has been largely rebuilt. At right: Widespread tornado destruction at Union University was evident the morning after.

1 year after tornado Union sees recovery

By Tim Ellsworth
Union University

Jackson, Tenn.—In the early morning hours of Feb. 6, 2008, Union University President David S. Dockery drifted through the wreckage. Only hours before, an EF-4 tornado had ripped its way through the campus, leaving injured students and piles of rubble in its wake.

The tornado caused about \$40 million in damage to the Baptist-affiliated university in Jackson, Tenn., wiping out 70 percent of student housing and badly damaging six other buildings. Fifty-one students were hospitalized that night, but no lives were lost.

Beyond the extent of the devastation, Dockery sensed that God had been present at Union the night of Feb. 5. Now, a year later, with the campus almost entirely rebuilt, Dockery knows even more fully the extent of God's provision for the university.

"As I looked at the rubble late Tuesday night, and especially when the sun came up on Wednesday morning, I said, 'There's no way we didn't have 200 people die,' the Union president recounted. "I'm convinced—nobody will ever convince me otherwise—that God's angels were unleashed to come as ministering spirits to His people that night and to protect those students in the most precarious of situations. I'm confident that's what happened."

Matt Kelley was one of those students who felt God's hand of protection that night. Trapped for five hours in the crumbled men's commons building, Kelley spent two and a half months in the hospital with serious leg injuries.

The past year, Kelley said, has taught him to trust in God completely.

"While I was stuck down there, and while I was in the hospital, I was completely helpless," Kelley said. "I've come so far through this past year, and I've only come this far because God has guided me and carried me through."

Though his rehabilitation was long and arduous, Kelly has almost completely recovered. He will return to competition with the Union golf

team during the spring semester.

But while the students were alive on the morning of Feb. 6, Dockery wasn't convinced that Union University was. At one point, as he looked at the student housing facilities in ruins, he entertained a thought—not only was the spring semester a lost cause, but that Union as a whole might be as well.

"That was my worst fear—that the devastation was such that we may not be able to recover, at least in a timely fashion," he said. "That was always my prayer, that God would somehow give us wisdom to figure out how to restart the semester. We knew we had to save the semester for the seniors, and then for others as well."

Union did restart the semester two weeks later. But that was just the beginning.

Over the next several months, more than 5,000 volunteers and 8,000 donors from all over the world came to Union's aid. The university regrouped and embarked upon an aggressive rebuilding plan that saw 14 new student housing buildings completed and opened for the fall 2008 semester.

Initial plans called for seven of the 14 buildings in the complex to be complete by the fall, with the final seven buildings to be opened for the 2009 spring semester. But the two contractors working on the project finished the task much earlier than expected.

On Sept. 4, when the new freshman class arrived on campus, all 14 buildings were complete and ready for occupancy.

Enrollment for the fall semester was up a hefty 14 percent, and early indications are favorable for another strong fall enrollment in 2009. Union dedicated the new housing facilities on Sept. 12. Six weeks later, the university opened the new Carl Grant Events Center.

For all practical purposes, Union's restoration is largely complete, with only a commons building for the housing complex yet to be funded.

"I live with an awareness of God's presence, His providence, His abilities to preserve life and to provide for us in ways that I've never experienced before," Dockery said. (BP)

Icy reminder of God's presence

Crippling ice storms remind us that God still is in control

The recent storms that have crippled homes across our state remind us that we are not in control.

While all Christians would more than likely agree with that statement, in practice, we go through life in such a way that shows we think we are.

The western part of Kentucky seems to have taken the brunt of the storm and our ministries have been experiencing the aftereffects. Several of our staff members have been left without power, as well as both campuses at Cedarmore and Jonathan Creek.

By the looks of things, Jonathan Creek may be without power for quite some time.

It is during times like these that we are reminded of how fragile we are. In spite of all the advances in modern technology and communication, we can be rendered practically helpless by a short ice storm.

The cleanup alone from fallen trees will take weeks—perhaps even months—and the effects of the ice on our buildings and plumbing from subfreezing weather still is yet to be fully determined.

All that said, as believers, we can rest knowing that God is in control. Not only is He in control of our ministry, He is in full control of our economy. Times have perhaps never been tougher for many, but times have never been better for us to offer to those around us the hope that is beyond all earthly concerns.

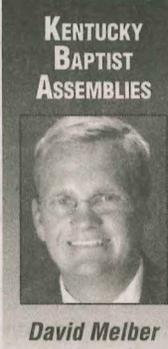
The old saying is that when we get squeezed, the real person is revealed. I don't know about you, but I feel like we are being squeezed in a variety of ways in these present times.

I pray that we are faithful to God's call upon our lives and that we will honor Him by pointing people to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

In case you are wondering how you can help us amid all the challenges from the recent ice storm, we will gladly welcome you. We can use all the volunteer help we can get to clean up the GIANT mess that is left behind.

Please contact our office at (502) 491-7000 for details. Your help will be tremendously appreciated.

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



David Melber

For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



Church of the Covered Dish

Thom Tapp



Bible Crosswords

By Evelyn Boyington

Across

- 1 Collected prose or poetry of a particular time period (abbr.)
- 4 TV newsman Severeid
- 8 Egg ____ soup, Chinese classic
- 12 Epoch
- 13 Beginning of refreshing brand name that "spells" summer
- 14 Land measure
- 15 Ancient musical instrument, mentioned in Isaiah 5:12
- 17 "The Lord God will come ... and his ____ shall rule" (Isaiah 40:10)
- 19 Where Sherman marched (abbr.)
- 20 "There is a ____ here who hath five barley loaves" (John 6:9)
- 21 El ____
- 22 Deface
- 23 "Children, ____ your parents in the Lord" (Ephesians 6:1)
- 25 Sports venue
- 26 Prohibits
- 27 "Cast the ____ on the right side of the ship" (John 21:6)
- 28 Total
- 29 ____ Auerbach, famed NBA coach
- 30 Masculine nickname
- 31 "Praise him with the ____ and dance" (Psalm 150:4)
- 33 Continent (abbr.)
- 35 "Take, ____: this is my body" (1 Corinthians 11:24)
- 36 Fare poorly
- 37 Possessed
- 38 "I will sing a new ____ unto thee, O God" (Psalm 144:9)
- 40 Popular street name
- 41 "All things were ____ by him" (John 1:3)
- 42 "I am too ____ to have an husband" (Ruth 1:12)
- 43 "The word ____ God" (John 1:1)

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50	51			52	53			54		
55				56				57		

- 44 Chum
- 45 Atlantic state (abbr.)
- 46 Broadcast
- 47 "One jot or one ____" (Matthew 5:18)
- 50 At any time
- 52 "For ____ Christ pleased not himself" (Romans 15:3)
- 54 Corn serving
- 55 "We shall all stand before the judgment ____ of Christ" (Romans 14:10)
- 56 Feast fashionably
- 57 Hair to ____ for (salon slogan)

- 23 United
- 24 "Rise, take up thy ____, and walk" (John 5:8)
- 25 Adhesive
- 26 ____ canto, singing style
- 28 Make a lap
- 29 Kin (abbr.)
- 31 Game where someone is "it"
- 32 "Over the ____" (goal of hoopsters)
- 33 "When ye fast, be not ... of a ____ countenance" (Matthew 6:16)
- 34 Fruit drink
- 35 "The ____ of all things is at hand" (1 Peter 4:7)
- 37 Brought to a stop
- 38 "There was a certain beggar ... full of ____" (Luke 16:20)
- 39 Item found in groves
- 40 Dog-____ (like the pages of a book)
- 41 Tatami, commonly
- 43 Midwest state (abbr.)
- 44 Yearn for
- 46 "____ thou the Christ?" (Luke 22:67)
- 47 Perfect score, to some
- 48 "I will both ____ me down in peace, and sleep" (Psalm 4:8)
- 49 Poetic contraction
- 51 Apiece (abbr.)
- 53 Caribbean island group (abbr.)

Down

- 1 Tennis call
- 2 Gershwin
- 3 Pill, perhaps
- 4 Got by, barely, with "out"
- 5 Go bad
- 6 Vowel duo
- 7 ____ check
- 8 Hoover, for one
- 9 Cola brand name
- 10 Liver or lung, for example
- 11 Bosc and Anjou
- 16 Oz scarecrow Bolger
- 18 Byway (abbr.)
- 21 "They lifted up their voice with the trumpets and ____" (2 Chronicles 5:13)
- 22 Insane

Last week's solution

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11					
S	U	P	H	O	L	E	S	O	N						
T	R	A	E	V	E	N	T	T	W	O					
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40	41	T	H	I	E	F		42	G	R	A	Z	I	N	G
45	O	A	R		46	U	R	I	E	L		48	N	E	E
49	P	L	Y		50	L	A	N	D	S		51	G	O	T

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Above: FLAME, the Grammy-nominated Christian rapper, is a Boyce student who is using what he is learning in the classroom to change the world: www.boycecollege.com/flame

British govt. panel approves controversial atheist bus ads

London—Rejecting protests by Christian groups, Britain's advertising watchdog agency has given the go-ahead to a campaign to plaster atheist signs on hundreds of buses and other vehicles across the country.

The Advertising Standards Authority ruled that the campaign, which uses the slogan "There's probably no God," was unlikely to mislead or "cause serious or widespread offense."

The ASA is a powerful regulator set up as a self-governing agency for the nation's advertising industry, with the authority to take its cases to the government's Office of Fair Trading. As such, its decisions are rarely, if ever, challenged.

The \$100,000 ad campaign is sponsored by the British Humanist Association. The signs, in full, say, "There's probably no God. Now stop worrying and enjoy your life." The ads will be placed on some 200 buses in London and on 600 other vehicles in England, Scotland and Wales.

The campaign has prompted one Christian bus driver, Ron Heather of Southampton, England, to walk off the job in protest. When he caught sight of the banner, Heather said, "My first reaction was sheer horror."

He added, "It was the starkness of this advert which implied there was no God" that got to him, and that "I felt that I could not drive the bus."

Most of the 326 complaints that the ASA received were from Christian organizations and individuals who said the slogans denigrated people of faith. Others argued that the advertiser could not substantiate its claim that God "probably" does not exist.

However, the ASA said the ads amounted to an expression of the advertiser's opinion and that its claims were beyond objective substantiation.

Religion divisive in Britain

Meanwhile, a government-sponsored opinion poll in Britain has found that religion has displaced race as the most divisive issue facing the nation.

The survey says 60 percent of respondents believe religious intolerance has become a bigger headache than racial tensions among Britons.

That figure climbs to 66 percent among Muslims who took part in the poll. (RNS)

Baptist food relief effort in Gaza underway

By Mark Kelly

Gaza City, Palestine—Southern Baptist food relief is making its way into the Gaza Strip to help people suffering in the aftermath of a three-week Israeli military offensive earlier this year.

A total of \$92,000 from the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund will deliver food to about 10,000 people during the course of this next year, reported Abraham Shepherd, who directs work in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa for Baptist Global Response, an international relief and development organization. Since Southern Baptist field partners and volunteers are unable to enter the area, the project will be conducted in partnership with local believers in Gaza.

The food distribution is part of a larger cooperative effort involving five Christian groups. The other ministry partners will provide food for the effort as well, but also will distribute clothing, window glass, household goods, blankets and other necessities that are in short supply.

"The Gaza Strip has been experiencing a humanitarian crisis for many years, prior to the war starting in December 2008," said the project's local director, who asked that his name be withheld for security reasons. "Last year, it was reported that the Gaza Strip had the highest unemployment rate in the world. More than a million people have been suffering due to drastic shortages of food, cooking fuel, medical supplies and other essentials. The recent war has only increased the devastation and hardships for the peo-



HOPE AMID DESTRUCTION A Palestinian man prays in the rubble of his house in Beit Lahiya, in the northern Gaza Strip last month. Baptist food relief efforts have begun in the territory through Baptist Global Response following a 22-day Israeli military offensive. A total of \$92,000 will be distributed from the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund to Gaza residents over the next year. (RNS photo by Anja Niedringhaus/Reuters)

ple of Gaza."

Details still are being worked out in regard to logistics, due to the nature of the local conflict there, BGR Executive Director Jeff Palmer said. "However, it looks as if most food can be purchased locally and distributed quickly and efficiently to those in need."

The project's leaders said they hope the relief effort not only will demonstrate the love of Christ for

the hurting Palestinian people, but also provide a springboard for long-term improvements in the quality of life for Gaza residents.

"We do not envision that Gaza will be a self-sustaining area for many years," the local director said. "It is our hope this project will lead to the development of micro-enterprises and community projects that will lead the people of Gaza to be more self-supporting." (BP)

"Calling all frazzled females"

First Baptist Church of Owensboro will host
The Frazzled Female Conference & Lunch
Featuring Cindi Wood Feb. 28, 9:15 a.m.

author of "Frazzled Female" & "Victoriously Frazzled"

Tickets are \$5 and can be purchased at the church or the Owensboro LifeWay Store

Call the church before Feb. 22 to purchase tickets or register

Nursery provided

(270) 683-3505

Waiting on God's plan

Lane learns the importance of waiting on God's calling

Third-year student Frank Lane, from South Carolina, has learned a valuable lesson that most of us likely have experienced at one time or another: the importance of waiting on God's plan.

"I came to know the Lord as my Savior before I met my wife," Frank recalled. "I didn't live for the Lord like I should during the early times of my walk. ... Then I met my wife and started going to church with her. I rededicated my life after we were married and committed my life to follow the Lord.

"I served as (a) youth pastor for six years," he said. "Then God began to place a burden on my heart that there was something more for me to do for Him. I ran from that call for a while, but ... I finally surrendered and God led me to pursue ministry training.

"My pastor introduced me to Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute in North Carolina," Frank said. "We visited the campus but struggled with the call and didn't really think that we would go there. I remember coming to the point where I didn't really know what to do and was ready to just quit, and God told me that if I quit now, the devil had won.

So I surrendered to God's call to go to Fruitland and completed my associate's degree.

"I had always planned to come to Clear Creek right after my time at Fruitland, ... but that was not God's plan for us at the time. He sent me to pastor a church first.

... After my time at the church ended, I began to pray and ask God what He wanted me to do. I told God if it was His will for us to come to Clear Creek to open the door for us.

"I don't know what God has in store for us after Clear Creek," he added. "I'm not going to say I am definitely going on to seminary—I tried that

before and God had other plans. ... If he wants me to pastor a local church, that's exactly what we will do. I have learned that I must be willing to wait and see what the Lord has planned for us."

Clear Creek continues a partnership with Fruitland for those students who feel led to continue their education and complete a bachelor's degree. We accept most Fruitland credits and students can start here in their third year.

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Donnie Fox

Dear Kentucky Baptists,

As Chairman of Oneida Baptist Institute's Board of Trustees, I send you greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I am honored to thank you for your gifts. Your gifts allow Oneida to minister to young people from our state, nation, and around the world. In these difficult economic times every gift is truly appreciated.

The Oneida ministry is a unique one. We, as Kentucky Baptists, can share the Gospel with students and have them go home to carry it to the rest of the world. As you read this column each week you get a glimpse of the great opportunity and responsibility we have.

In order for this ministry to continue to do these great things, it is important that we continue to support Oneida Baptist Institute with your generous gift above and beyond your regular gifts to your church and the Cooperative Program.

Sincerely,
O. W. Conrad, Jr.
Chairman, OBI Trustees

OBI web site: www.oneidaschool.org

Retiring Colts coach, Tony Dungy, honored for lifetime of inspiration

'I always knew I wanted to coach a different way and Tony showed us a different picture'

—Chicago Bears coach Lovie Smith

By Art Stricklin

Tampa, Fla.—The 10th annual Super Bowl Gospel Celebration turned into a lively, sustained tribute to recently retired Indianapolis Colts coach Tony Dungy for his faith in Jesus Christ and his mentoring of others.

"We all owe Tony a great debt because he set the bar so high for all of us coaches," said newly hired Tampa Bay head coach Raheem Morris, who was picked by Dungy for his first NFL job.

Several of Dungy's fellow coaches and former players took time out of their busy Super Bowl XLIII activities, to honor Dungy, whom they consider a champion on the field and off.

"I am so glad to honor a great friend, a great coach and a future Hall of Famer in Tony Dungy," said Chicago head coach Lovie Smith, whose Bears lost to Dungy's Colts two years ago at Super Bowl XLI in Miami.

The highlight of the evening, held at the University of South Florida's Sun Dome, came when Dungy was presented with a large framed photo of him coaching the Indianapolis Colts with the words, "2009 Lifetime of Inspiration Award." At the bottom of the picture were the words of Psalm 37:23: "The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD, and He delights in His way."

The surprise gift brought the crowd of more than 6,000 to their feet with a prolonged ovation.

Smith said he would "do anything for Tony because he has done so much for me and my life."

"I always knew I wanted to coach a different way and Tony showed us a different picture. You could coach without cursing, without shouting or losing your faith. He showed a different way and was able to win. That was the main thing," Smith said.

Like many of the tributes he re-

ceived while coaching and since his retirement, Dungy turned the human praise back to Jesus.

"So many players have roots in the Lord," Dungy said, "and to see them here on Friday night, 48 hours before the biggest game of the year, when all you've heard all week is game, game, game, is encouraging."

Many players and coaches have cited Dungy's influence in the growing trend of high-profile players and coaches publicly proclaiming their faith in Christ. Pittsburgh head coach Mike Tomlin, another Dungy protégé, gave his first testimony in the national spotlight at this year's Super Bowl media day.

Dungy said the late Reggie White, a Hall of Fame defensive end, "was really the first to boldly share his faith and make it more acceptable. ... One of my goals was really to share with people about God in a way they would accept it."

"If that's my legacy, then that's one of the things I'm proud of."

Dungy became the winningest coach in Tampa Bay history before moving to Indianapolis and leading

the Colts to a Super Bowl.

The NFL title "changed my life because maybe people saw me in a different light," Dungy said, "but my life and my message will never change."

Since retiring after the 2008 playoffs, Dungy has been traveling much of the time to speak about his new book, "Uncommon: Finding Your Path to Significance," the follow-up to his No. 1 bestseller "Quiet Strength." The new book, released Jan. 27, goes more in depth into training men and women on following God's ways in whatever they do.

"It's really a book from my heart on taking the uncommon road of Christ, which is often the narrow road, instead of the common road so many people choose," Dungy said.

With the release of Uncommon and being out of coaching for the first time in more than three decades, Dungy said he's concentrating on finding what the Lord has for him next.

"I had a platform for 13 years as a head coach and I didn't take it for granted," Dungy said.

"I have some passions for kids and other things and what I'm asking the Lord to do is match that up with what He would want me to do next." (BP)



HONORED Chicago Bears head coach Lovie Smith watches as retired Indianapolis head coach Tony Dungy speaks after being honored at the 10th annual Super Bowl Gospel Celebration Jan. 30. (BP photo by Bob Carey)

Outspoken players lend credibility to evangelism

By Joni Hannigan

Florida Baptist Witness

Tampa, Fla.—With high-profile athletes like the Arizona Cardinals' Kurt Warner and University of Florida's Tim Tebow elevating the gospel among sports fans, believers have come to see the "big game" as opportune time to spread the Good News.

In Tampa for Super Bowl week, Bill Adams, founder of Atlanta-based Sports Fan Outreach, said his evangelistic organization saw the most-ever number of volunteers converge on a city before and during the Super Bowl.

Their mission: To spread the Word of God through tract and literature distribution, striking up conversations and using amplifiers to preach on street corners and sidewalks. "What it gets down to is sowing and watering," Adams said.

In his seventh year of Super Bowl

outreach, Adams, whose organization also is involved in the Final Four and other sporting events, said Christian athletes who are outspoken for their faith have paved the way for others.

"To me, that's a witness to the validity of what we are doing," he said. "When you see the big picture, it's not such an odd thing (that we are here). We are the missing link. We are going out to reach the sports fan."

About 120 volunteers—from as far away from Arizona and Michigan—arrived at the Tampa Bay Baptist Conference Center on the north side of town Jan. 29. From a variety of denominational backgrounds, the group included a team of Messianic Jews from Johnson Ferry Baptist Church in Marietta, Ga.

Up at 7 a.m., those who paid various rates to join the organized effort and bunk at the conference center

sat for three hours of training and encouragement, armed themselves with an assortment of literature and then hit the streets.

Once inside the Super Bowl venue, people weren't quite free from the gospel message. On the stadium field, a few evangelistic groups mingled with other halftime performers.

Four youth and two adults from Conway First Baptist Church of Orlando, Fla., were in one of the groups that traveled to Tampa to be in the halftime show.

Spending two long days as well as Super Bowl Sunday in the stadium rehearsing gave the team a unique opportunity to "develop relationships with halftime show volunteers, do acts of random kindness and also witness to several," said Scott Fleming, the church's minister of youth. (BP)



HELPING OUT NFL Hall of Fame quarterback Bart Starr presents the Bart Starr Award to Tampa Bay Buccaneers running back Warrick Dunn at the Super Bowl Breakfast Jan. 31 at the University of South Florida Sun Dome. (BP photo by Bob Carey)

Tampa Bay running back recognized for aiding single parents

By Art Stricklin

Tampa, Fla.—The best of the NFL, both caught and taught, was evident at the 20th annual Super Bowl Breakfast, where Tampa Bay running back Warrick Dunn was honored as the 2009 Bart Starr Award recipient.

The pre-Super Bowl event, which showcased the character and faith of many former and current players and coaches, is sponsored by Athletes in Action and sanctioned by the NFL.

Starr, the award's namesake, told a record crowd of 6,000 people at the University of South Florida's Sun Dome in Tampa that "we hear too much" about players who bring disrepute to the NFL. Instead, said Starr, a Hall of Fame quarterback for the Green Bay Packers, "We need to hear more about the good ones."

Dunn, a 12-year NFL veteran, was honored for his work with single-parent families. Since 1997, the Warrick Dunn Foundation, through its Homes for the Holidays program, has provided 84 homes for single parents in Florida, Georgia and his home state of Louisiana.

The program not only provides a down payment for the homes to qualified parents, but also furnishes everything a first-time homeowner would need, from food to linens to furniture.

Dunn said it was his late mother's goal to own a home, and he wants to help others less fortunate in the same way.

"I have learned that God is first and foremost," Dunn said, "and I'm thankful that my mom instilled in me that this life is not just about myself."

Dunn, who started his career with the Buccaneers and returned this year after six seasons with the Atlanta Falcons, said he began to undergo a radical change after rededicating his life to Christ in 2005 and, late last year, taking a step he never thought he would.

Dunn visited Louisiana's Angola State Prison to visit the person who was convicted of killing his mother, an off-duty security officer, in a 1993 botched robbery.

"I told him, 'I forgive you.' I was so at peace after being so depressed for so long. God has become the most important thing in my life. When I recommitted my life to Christ, my relationship totally changed.

"I had a tragedy, but so many blessings along the way."

Also honored was high school coach Kris Hogan from the Dallas-area Faith Christian School, who organized his fans and players to reach out to a team from Gainesville State School, a criminal juvenile institution, that Faith played against last November.

A number of Faith Christian fans sat behind the Gainesville bench and cheered for the team, then prayed for them after the game and sent them back to the school with a sack dinner and a Bible.

"Our worldview is Christian and we live outside the box. We want to love our neighbors as ourselves," Hogan said. (BP)

"I have learned that God is first and foremost."

—Dunn

PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following Kentucky Baptist missionaries and ministries:

State disaster relief workers. Volunteers from several states have joined Kentucky Baptists in providing assistance to residents hit hard by the recent ice storm. Shower units, portable feeding units and chainsaw crews are serving in at least 18 associations. Pray for the volunteers' physical strength and safety as they clear debris, prepare and serve meals, and provide for basic needs. Pray too, that those being ministered to will see the witness of Christ in every volunteer's attitude and act of service.

MSC missionary Heidi Freeman of Richmond. Heidi serves as a campus ministry intern at Eastern Kentucky University, where she reaches out to students through acts of service and relationship-building opportunities. She also coordinates Thursday night Bible studies, spring break mission trips and 8:12, a Tuesday night outreach service. Pray for wisdom, discernment and effectiveness as Heidi plans creative ways to introduce students to Christ. Pray that they will be receptive to her efforts and experience His salvation.

If you would like Kentucky Baptists to join in praying for a ministry of your church or association, please send the information to Eric Allen at Eric.Allen@kybaptist.org or call (866) 489-3530.

To subscribe: Send \$12.50 for a one-year, individual subscription. Group subscriptions on the church budget plan are \$10 per year. An additional church newsletter service is available for churches of all sizes. All subscriptions are payable in advance, except church accounts, which require a tax exemption number.

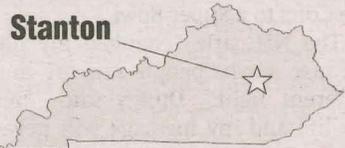
To place an advertisement: Rates are available upon request by calling (502) 489-3428. Institutional columns are paid space. Claims made by advertisers are not necessarily those of the Western Recorder's staff and directors.

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI
COMPILED BY STAFF

- **ARLINGTON**—First Church recently called **Shane O'Guinn** as pastor. Oak Grove Church recently called **Gaylon Bruer** as pastor.
- **IRVINE**—First Church recently called **Chris Winkler** as pastor. He previously was pastor at Faith Church in Beattyville.
- **LOUISVILLE**—**Bill Shoulta** recently resigned as pastor of Melbourne Heights Church.
- **Les Hollon** recently resigned as pastor of St. Matthews Church to become pastor of Trinity Church in San Antonio.
- **MOUNT VERNON**—Freedom Church recently called **David Sargent** as pastor. He previously was pastor at Liberty Church in London.

Spotlight on ...

Stanton



Emmanuel Church will hold winter revival services Feb. 15-18, 7 p.m., with former Southern Baptist Convention president **Frank Page** as evangelist. A pastors' luncheon will be held Feb. 16, 11:30 a.m. For more information and to make reservations for the luncheon, call (606) 663-1300. **Greg Webb** is pastor.

Mid-Continent University celebrates 60th anniversary

Mayfield—Mid-Continent University in Mayfield recently celebrated 60 years of Christian education. The Southern Baptist university's history dates back to 1949 when it was established as West Kentucky Baptist Bible Institute. The first classes were held at First Baptist Church of Clinton, more than 20 miles west of Mayfield. A year later, the school moved to a campus on the northern outskirts of Clinton, where it stayed for another seven years. In 1957, the college, then known simply as Baptist Bible Institute, moved from Clinton to Mayfield. Nearly 20 years later, the Harris family of Graves County donated approximately 100 acres to the school and construction began on what is its current home. At that time, it became known as Mid-Con-

tinental College. With another name change in 2004 to reflect its university status, Mid-Continent maintains the primary principle of teaching the inerrant and infallible Word of God. Led by President Robert Imhoff, the school's enrollment has grown from 169 students to nearly 1,800 students. The school's James W. Cecil Baptist College of the Bible is dedicated to preparing students for Christian ministry and maintains a presence as part of the foundation of the university. While Mid-Continent University is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, it is not directly linked with the Kentucky Baptist Convention and does not receive state Cooperative Program support.

KBC KENTUCKY BAPTIST CONVENTION **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

February

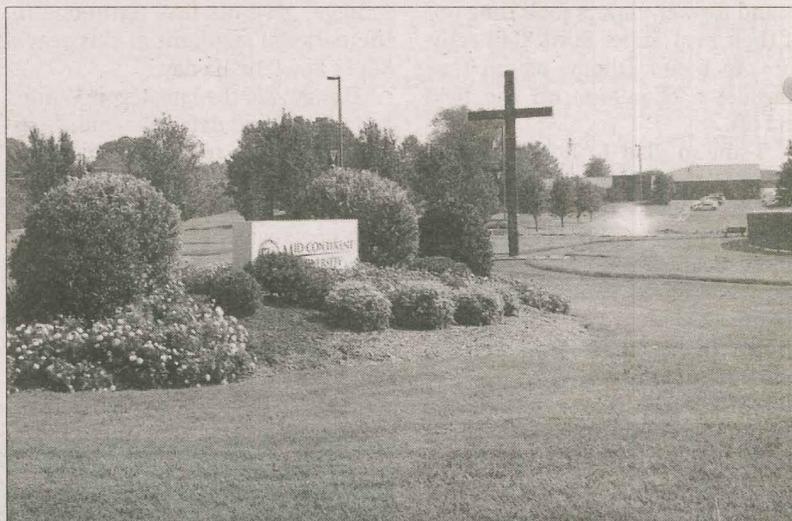
- 16** Church Retirement Plan "Reality Check" Conference, Lone Oak First Baptist Church, Paducah; Lexington Avenue Baptist Church, Danville; Eagle Heights Baptist Church, Somerset.
- 17** Church Retirement Plan "Reality Check" Conference, Second Baptist Church, Hopkinsville; First Baptist Church, Hindman; First Baptist Church, Madisonville.
- 18** Church Retirement Plan "Reality Check" Conference, First Baptist Church, Bowling Green; First Baptist Church, Pikeville.

- 20** Church Retirement Plan "Reality Check" Conference, Ninth & O Baptist Church, Louisville.
- 23-24** Kentucky Baptist Evangelism Conference, Porter Memorial Baptist Church, Lexington.
- 26** Church Retirement Plan "Reality Check" Conference, First Baptist Church, Mount Sterling.

March

- 4-18** College Blitz, Habitat for Humanity, Morehead.
- 6-7** Creative Ministries Festival, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.
- 7** RA Congress Region 1, Bellview Baptist Church, Paducah.

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



ANNIVERSARY The main entrance to the Mid-Continent University campus in Mayfield. The school recently celebrated its 60th anniversary in January. (Photo courtesy of Mid-Continent University)

CLASSIFIED ADS

- FREE:** Oneida Baptist Institute has three nice organs in working condition when donated. They are free, but you must pick them up. Contact Missy Nichols, donations coordinator, (606) 847-4111, ext. 248. Leave voicemail.
- SEEKING:** Minister of music for Crab Orchard Baptist Church. For details, contact Casey Horton, (606) 282-3776.
- SEEKING:** Pianist for Central Baptist Church, Paris, Ky. Responsible for three Sunday services, Wednesday evening prayer meeting and worship choir rehearsal. Pay based on experience. Send resumé to Central Baptist Church, 829 High Street, Paris, KY 40361, Attn: Rev. Matthew Crook; or e-mail to mattcbc@bellsouth.net. For more information, call (859) 987-3951.
- SEEKING:** Pastor for Siloam Baptist Church in Glasgow, Ky. Parsonage furnished (four bedrooms, two baths) located across the road from the church. Church has 300-plus members, with 100-plus in Sunday school. Interested pastors please send resumé and non-returnable tape or CD to Siloam Baptist Church, 517 Siloam Road, Glasgow, KY 42141. For questions, call (270) 646-8128 or 646-0079.
- SEEKING:** Director of missions for Lawrence County Baptist Association. Please send resumé, doctrinal commitments, references and an audio/video sermon to: Chad Moore, Lawrence County Baptist Association, 2427 Hwy 43 South, Leoma, TN 38468; or e-mail resumé to: lawcobaptist@lorettotel.net.

- SEEKING:** Instrumentalist for east end congregation—contemporary and traditional music. Send resumé to Melbourne Heights Baptist Church, 3728 Taylorsville Road, Louisville, KY 40220, Attn: Personnel Dept. You may call the church at (502) 454-4681 to set a time for an interview; hours and pay will be discussed at the interview.
- SEEKING:** Energetic, part-time worship minister to plan, organize and lead a growing worship ministry toward a dynamic, blended worship style that will cultivate genuine worship experience. Responsibilities: weekly leadership of worship choir, praise team, instrumentalists and seasonal events. Qualifications: college degree with seminary-level training, preferably in music. Submit resumé to Ballardville Baptist Church, 4300 S. Hwy 53, Crestwood, KY 40014; or e-mail Darlene@BBCLife.org. Deadline is March 15.
- SEEKING:** First Baptist Church, New Tazewell, Tenn., is prayerfully seeking and accepting resúmes for a full-time worship leader/director of music. Responsibilities include directing adult and youth choirs, assisting children's choir, planning and leading worship services and special programs. Experience in other areas such as education, member ministries or missions a plus. Mail resúmes 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 March 1, 2009.

- SEEKING:** Interim youth minister for east end church. Approximately 20 hours per week; \$200 per week. May lead to continuing ministry. Experience and degree preferred; will consider someone who is working toward these goals. Send resumé to Melbourne Heights Baptist Church, 3728 Taylorsville Road, Louisville, KY 40220, Attn: Personnel Dept. For any questions, call the church at (502) 454-4681.
- SEEKING:** Southern Baptist pastor for Corinth Baptist, Winchester, Ky. Must be spiritually led. Please send resumé and non-returnable DVD/VHS by March 1, 2009, to Pastor Search Committee, CBC, PO Box 4524, Winchester, KY 40392.
- SEEKING:** Senior pastor that is capable of strongly preaching God's Word, recognizing and casting God's vision for our church, leading our congregation and staff to His purposes and grow His Kingdom. Great Bridge Baptist Church of Chesapeake, Va., desires a pastor who has completed his Southern Baptist education (MDiv. minimum) from an accredited seminary and has at least 5 years experience as a senior pastor of a medium-to-large congregation. We are blessed with a wonderful facility, great staff and loving congregation. Now, as our pastor has retired, we seek God's leader for our flock. Please send resumé and CD/DVD sermon to Pastor Search Committee, PO Box 16432 Chesapeake, VA 23328; or pastorsearch@greatbridgebaptist.org. Please submit by April 30.

- SEEKING:** Interim worship leader for Lancaster Baptist Church, Lancaster, Ky. Must be capable of leading a blended service/praise band. For more information, e-mail pastorbrad@gmail.com, or call (859) 792-2781.
- SEEKING:** Full-time minister to youth/recreation/media. Salary range: \$35k-\$42k. Submit questions or resúmes to Dale.Morris@ky.gov; or Dale Morris, PO Box 322, Hodgenville, KY 42748. Resumé deadline is Feb. 28.
- SEEKING:** Part-time music director (blended style) for Belleview Baptist Church in Burlington, Ky. Applicants should have the desire and skill to honor and serve God in worship, and grow, develop and maintain a comprehensive worship ministry that includes all ages. Interested applicants should submit resúmes to Alan Walters at alan_walters@adp.com before March 30, 2009.
- SEEKING:** Full-time minister to students to minister alongside four other full-time pastors at First Baptist Church of Tullahoma, Tenn. The minister will focus on middle school, high school and college students. First Baptist seeks to be conservative in its theology and progressive in its methodology. Send resúmes to Dr. Herb Hester, pastor, 108 E Grundy St., Tullahoma, TN 37388. (931) 455-5461.
- SERVICES:** Experienced tax practitioner seeks to help ministers with tax returns, housing allowance and basic record-keeping. Contact Bro. Grant Mathes at (502) 859-0359.

Spread the gospel by 'adopting' people groups

Nashville—A people group shares a basic identity and view of the world. Individuals within a people group frequently have the same language, culture, history, customs and family/clan identities.

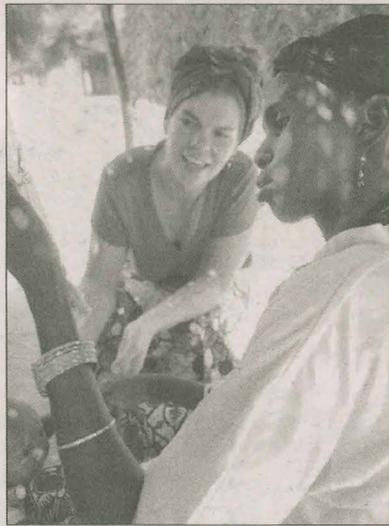
According to the Southern Baptist International Mission Board, a people group is the largest group through which the gospel can flow without encountering significant barriers of understanding and acceptance.

The IMB says a people group is considered unreached by the gospel if less than 2 percent of its population is comprised of evangelical Christians. By "adopting" a people group from another country, Southern Baptist congregations can have a direct influence in taking the gospel to a specific part of the world.

Consider the impact of Wickland Baptist Church in Bardstown which "adopted" the Sokoto Fulani people group of West Africa.

The congregation, which draws about 85 people each week to worship services, began praying that the Sokoto Fulani would hear the gospel, even though there was no IMB missionary dedicated to their people group.

A short time after Wickland "ad-



PIONEER Danielle Koepke was the first Southern Baptist missionary to serve among the Sokoto Fulani people group of West Africa. She was appointed after a small congregation "adopted" the people group with guidance from the International Mission Board.

opted" the group, a young woman was called to live among the community as a missionary.

There are many aspects to "adoption" in addition to intercession. The mission board offers the following tips for getting started:

Pray for guidance. The search for an unreached people group to adopt must begin with prayer. A list can be found at www.peoplegroups.org. This site also will allow churches to know what people groups are represented in their own communities.

Discover your church's natural affinity (DNA). Do you already have a connection to an IMB missionary? Has a team been on a mission trip where they felt a connection to the people group(s)? What people groups live near your church?

Determine your church's expectations. Is your church ready to pray and connect with a missionary on the mission field by going on multiple volunteer trips? Is your church ready to pray and become the "missionary" to an unreached people group that has no missionary working among them? Are you ready to study the culture, develop the strategy and take ownership to reach a people group that may never hear about Christ unless you go?

Identify a missions champion. Who in the church will be the point person to communicate with those on the field? Can this person help influence the congregation to focus prayer for your unreached people group? Are they willing to lead

teams and work with church and IMB field leaders?

Investigate opportunities. Do you feel led to reach a mega-city, a rural area or something in between? Has your state convention or local association adopted an unreached people group?

If you feel led to a specific area but have not yet selected a people group, contact an IMB mobilization specialist assigned to your state at (800) 999-3113, ext. 1667, or visit the "Lead Your Church" section at imb.org, and select "Church Services."

Celebrate God's direction. When you have determined your adopted people group, follow God's leadership; find ways to bring the whole church into the process and meet with church leaders to plan a celebration time.

Communicate. Building trust among missionaries, local believers and other ministry partners is vital. Follow-through will lead to more opportunities.

Evaluate your role every year. If God leads you in another direction, communicate this to the field and to other churches that have joined in this effort; develop a strategic exit plan. (BP)

Security expert produces DVD on safety overseas

By Norm Miller

Boise, Idaho—A sharp increase in crimes against Westerners traveling abroad prompted a personal security specialist to produce a DVD-based curriculum on the subject. Southern Baptists planning mission trips abroad this year may find the tool helpful.

David Dose, through Fort Sherman Academy in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, provides hostage survival and antiterrorism training for civilian and faith-based audiences. He has trained more than 12,000 people from government, commercial and church organizations.

"This training we offer is faith-based," he said. "We don't study international travel risks to come up with excuses for not going to where God has called us. We study the risks to develop strategies that enable us to keep going and to do the things

we need to do."

According to the U.S. Department of State, Americans traveling overseas should maintain a high level of vigilance because of continued threats of violence against U.S. citizens abroad.

Despite increased security risks, Christian organizations show a consistent annual increase in short-term volunteers traveling abroad. In 2005 and '06, for example, the number of volunteers traveling abroad increased 66 percent. Unfortunately, a 300 percent increase in the number of incidents was reported in the same time period; several posed serious threats to individuals' safety.

"People equipped to make good choices do come out of these situations with less harm and damage," Dose noted.

"God is in charge but we are called to be wise and shrewd in do-

ing our part," he added.

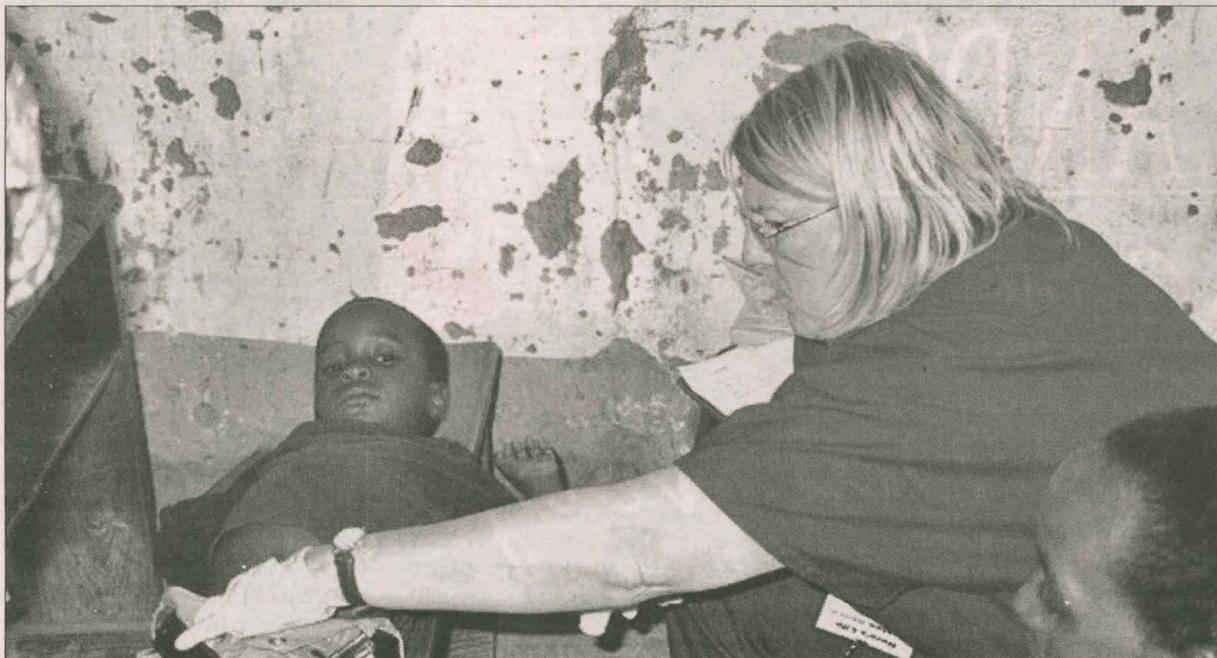
Sam Porter, partnership specialist for the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, said he is encouraging every BGCO church planning an international volunteer trip to train team members in personal safety and security.

"The post-9/11 world in which we live requires church leaders to be aware of their surroundings and environment more than any other time in history," he explained.

Porter, who has led more than 60 overseas mission trips, said Dose's training "would have been most helpful prior to many of them."

Titled "Safe Travel Solutions," the two-disk DVD set is divided into six sessions hosted by Dose.

To find out more about Dose's ministry or to order the DVD set, visit www.SafeTravelSolutions.org, or call (866) 295-5505.



A CHILD IN NEED Susan Ashbee, a doctor and member of First Baptist Church of North Mobile, Ala., examines a Tanzanian boy as she serves on a medical mission trip to Africa in 2008. In 2007, the church sponsored 17 overseas mission trips.

Tips for planning mission trips

Editor's note: Deborah Avery previously was mobilization associate for the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board's "Cleveland Hope" initiative. Recently, through Baptist Press, she shared eight tips for churches and church groups planning mission trips.

Get an early start. The earlier you set your date and location, the better chance you have to find affordable lodging. Churches tend to fill up quickly if a lot of mission teams are coming to an area.

Pre-trip advantages. A pre-trip allows you to connect with the local church or missionary you'll be serving and get familiar with the area. Take time to scope out possible accommodations, the mission site and free-time opportunities.

Train your team. We suggest requiring a couple of training sessions to ensure that people are committed to serving and to build community within the group. Make sure instruction includes how to share the gospel with the culture you're ministering to. Don't forget to include training on your specific mission tasks.

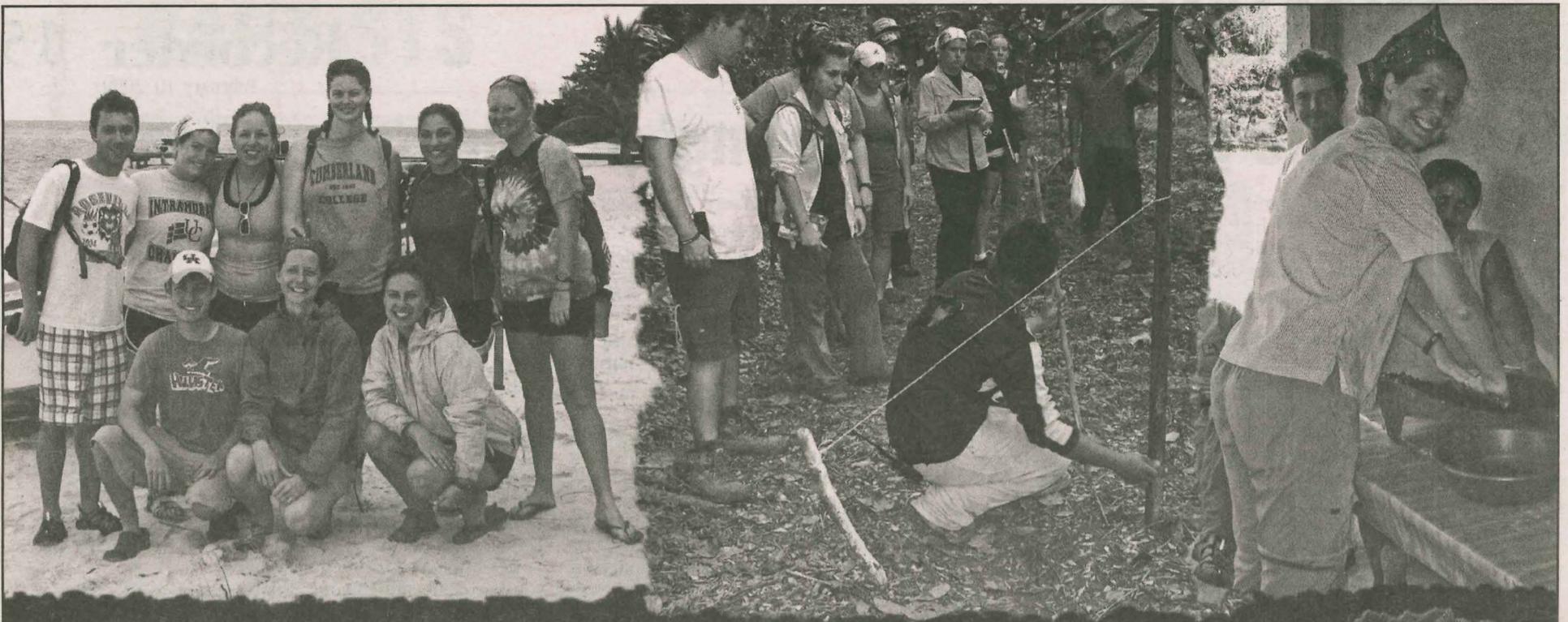
Find the right housing. Take advantage of housing opportunities offered by local churches. Save money by doing some of your own cooking. Find hotels with kitchens in some or all of the rooms. Some may offer grocery service or meeting rooms in which to serve meals or have devotional time; others even may have laundry service at minimal cost. Don't forget, many hotels offer discounts with local restaurants.

Be flexible. Enter your area of ministry with a teachable heart and a listening ear. Listen to the ministry leaders you're coming alongside to serve. Remember, they know their mission field best. Set aside your own agendas and serve alongside the local church's purpose. Be flexible—you may train for block parties and then it rains. Don't get discouraged. God has you there for a reason; look for unexpected opportunities to serve.

Ask about follow-up. Ask ministry leaders about their plan for follow-up with people your team connects with. Ask about follow-up in advance so the church can have a strategy in place by the time you arrive.

Budget extra. Extra costs tend to come up. Budget with a minimum cushion of \$20 per person. If the extra money goes unused, refund team members or give a special gift to the ministry you came to serve. Make sure you wait until you're home before doing this. You never know what unexpected things can happen on the way home.

Tax-exempt savings. Make sure to take advantage of your tax-exempt status when paying for restaurants and hotels. (BP)

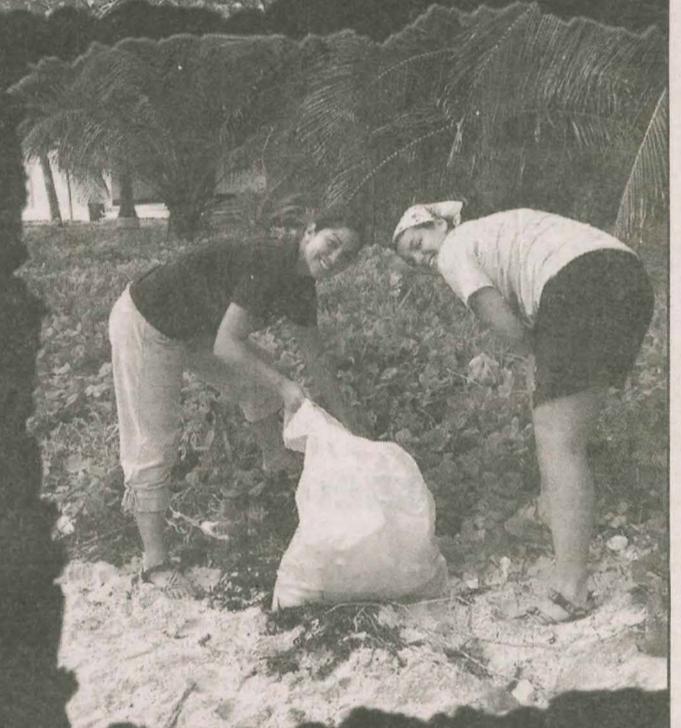


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One example of this is Dr. Sara Ash's fall '08 class in tropical ecology. Dr. Ash and eight UC biology students, along with another class from Lees-McCrae College in North Carolina, traveled to Belize during Christmas break. There, they hiked into the jungle to a research station operated by the Belize Foundation for Research and Environmental Education (BFREE); learned how local biologists study tropical birds; and visited a banana farm, where they not only learned how bananas are grown, harvested and shipped but also about the environmental impacts of the process. The class spent two days on an island, where they snorkeled, fished, studied the coral reef and picked up trash on the beach. Students also gained insight into the Mayan culture by staying with host families, learning to make chocolate and visiting Mayan ruins.

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