

Shine like stars in the world
Philippians 2:15

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FOR THE RECORD

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Snapshots of the Cooperative Program

Paducah church's passion for missions leads to Cooperative Program giving

By Erin Roach
Kentucky Baptist Convention

Paducah—Dan Summerlin has led his church to remain a strong supporter of the Cooperative Program despite a major rebuilding project and the struggling economy, and he said the key is a passion for missions.

"If people get involved in missions, then they understand CP giving," noted Summerlin, pastor of Lone Oak First Baptist Church of Paducah. "We encourage our people to do missions not only locally but also to go on mission trips because the moment you have somebody go on a mission trip and see where their money is going, then they understand."

When he arrived as pastor in 2002, Lone Oak already had a foundation that enabled the congregation to be open to giving through the Cooperative Program, Summerlin recalled. He sought to build on that foundation by demonstrating a passion for missions that he developed while studying at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and serving as pastor at a small Mississippi church.

"We were running 12 (people in worship), and yet we gave money to the Cooperative Program," he said of the Mississippi congregation. "Here's a church that could not afford to go on a mission trip, ... but they gave some money through the Cooperative Program, and they became part of that mission outreach."

"It's the strategy of cooperation—all churches coming together, contributing money, and that money is being used for the Kingdom," Summerlin said. "Regardless of the size of the church, it's something every church can do to fulfill the Great Commission."

In five years, Lone Oak has increased weekly giving by nearly \$16,000 under Summerlin's leadership for a total increase of \$820,000. Last year, the church gave \$515,000 to missions causes, including the Cooperative Program and the Annie Armstrong, Eliza Broadus and Lottie Moon missions offerings.

"We've had various mission trips over the last few years," the pastor explained. "People have gone, and when they come back they get very excited about missions and also missions giving."

In 2008, members of Lone Oak traveled to Zambia, Morocco, Mexico, Alaska, Louisiana and Eastern Kentucky, and Summerlin said they always try to get with Southern Baptist missionaries for a firsthand look at what their efforts help support.

"My passion is missions. I talk about it a lot, and other people started talking about it," he said. "Once people start going and coming back, they start talking about it. Once they go to Eastern Kentucky to do a mission trip and come back, they talk in their Sunday school class about what's going on."

□ See Lone Oak's passion ... Page 2



Dan Summerlin

Future generation of Southern Baptist leaders share CP thoughts & concerns

By Karen Willoughby

El Cajon, Calif.—When it was explained, it made sense.

That was the feeling from Southern Baptist seminary students across the nation who recently shared their observations about the Cooperative Program.

"I have increased my personal giving to missions since I was introduced to the Cooperative Program," said Issa Haddad, a Jordanian student at Southern California Seminary, which is affiliated with Shadow Mountain Community Church, a San Diego-area Southern Baptist congregation. "I had no background on the Cooperative Program whatsoever, but when it was explained to me, it made sense."

"At first I thought the SBC received all of this money from churches (and) probably the money is being used in administrative costs," Haddad said. "But learning that only a small amount goes to administrative work, and the rest goes to the different ministries that the (Southern Baptist Convention) supports—missionaries, seminaries, planting churches—I see the impact of the CP. And the extent of the CP reach is far more than we can imagine."

The rolling conversation started with a

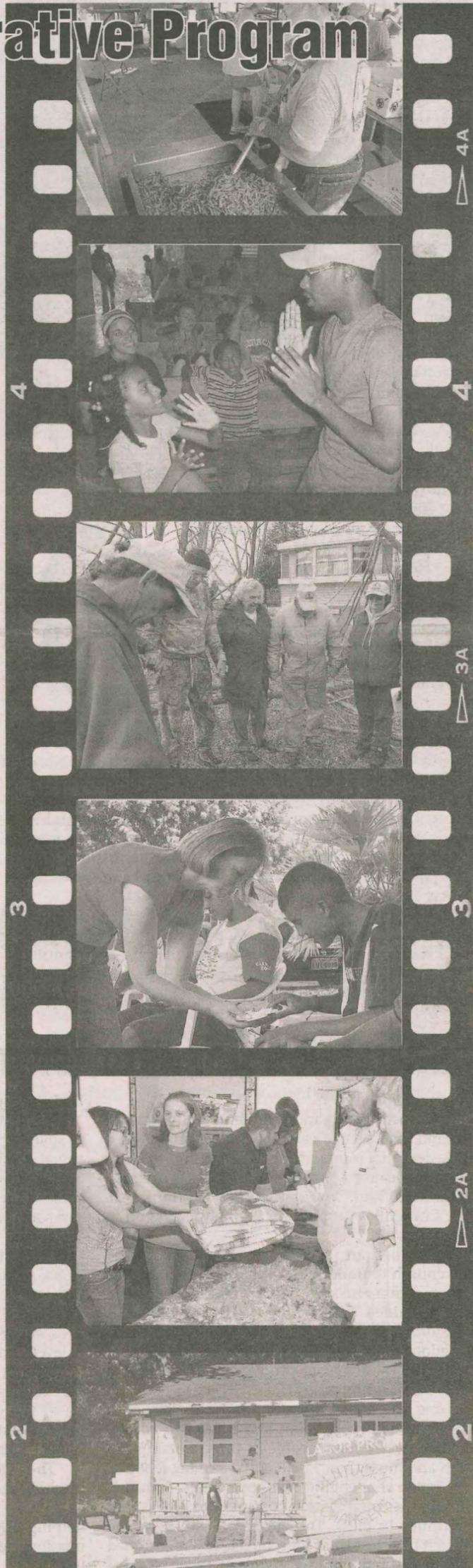
group of students from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Southern California Seminary who, during spring break, toured the offices of the SBC Executive Committee, Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission and LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville, as well as the North American Mission Board in metro Atlanta.

The 10 students who joined Haddad offered similar views about what some of them had known since childhood—and what was brand new to others. The Cooperative Program's reach was displayed for them in the faces of those whom the students talked with, including Executive Committee President Morris Chapman, and in the examples of CP gifts at work.

Haddad and the other students are part of the Unlimited Partnerships program, ministering in a support role at a church in the New Orleans or San Diego areas through a stipend paid by an out-of-area church.

Bobby Wood, a New Orleans Seminary student who grew up as an independent Baptist, joined the Baptist Collegiate Ministries group at his college, serving one summer as a BCM missionary in Burley, Idaho.

□ See Baptist seminary students ... Page 6



Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, Apr. 22.

Host of presenters lined up for four-day church planting conference held in Louisville

Louisville—LifeWay Research President Ed Stetzer will be among the featured speakers at the upcoming Missional Church Planting conference, sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention and Campbellsville University.

Designed for those interested or involved in church planting, as well as churches interested in sponsoring a new church start, Missional Church Planting will be held May 11-14 at Sojourn Community Church in Louisville.

"We're thrilled to be able to offer planters and potential planters the opportunity to hear from a host of speakers who are passionate about this type of ministry," said Larry Baker, KBC's new work and associational missions director, who will lead a conference session on Wednesday.

In addition to Stetzer and Baker, speakers will include Chuck Lawless, dean of Southern Seminary's Billy Graham School of Missions; J.D. Payne, associate professor of church planting and evangelism at Southern Seminary; and Jeff Eaton, pastor of Hope Community Church in Lawrenceburg.

Stetzer will speak on Monday and Tuesday, covering topics such as biblical foundations for church planting; planting models and systems; prospect development; planting teams; casting and maintaining vision; assimilation; and outreach, among other topics.

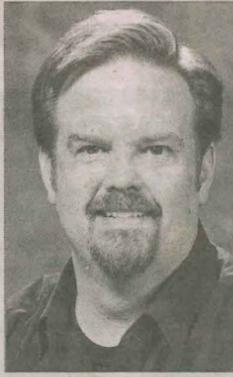
A special dinner and question and answer session with Stetzer will follow the Monday sessions, beginning at 6 p.m.

On Wednesday and Thursday, participants will hear from Lawless, Payne, Baker and Eaton, as well as a variety of Kentucky Baptist church planters from across the state who will lead breakout sessions.

The conference will run May 11-12 from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and May 13-14 from 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Registration is \$85.00 per person. The cost includes all conference lunches and the Monday evening dinner.

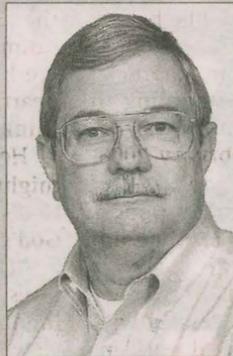
For more information, visit www.KyBaptist.org/Planting, or call (502) 489-3528, or toll free in Kentucky at (866) 489-3528.



Ed Stetzer



J.D. Payne



Larry Baker

Science & Christianity not incompatible, according to scientist Henry Schaefer

By Jeff Wise
State Correspondent

Bowling Green—Science and Christianity are not incompatible. Indeed, science has much to teach us about God, the Creator of the universe—the same God who was made manifest in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. This was the essence of the message presented by Henry Schaefer, featured speaker at a recent Veritas Forum at Western Kentucky University.

Approximately 1,200 students, faculty and guests attended the April 9 event, making it the largest outreach effort ever held at the university, organizers said.

Co-sponsored by 16 Bowling Green-area ministries, the event was the first Veritas Forum offered at WKU. The idea for the event originated with Tommy Johnson, Baptist campus minister at WKU, and Matt Haste, minister to college students and singles at Bowling Green's Living Hope Baptist Church.

Johnson said the WKU event was held to accomplish the following purposes:

- To present the message of Christ (the gospel) through a major outreach event on campus.

- To coordinate a collective outreach of campus and church collegiate ministries to the campus.

- To engage the entire university community—students, faculty, staff and administration—with the claims of Christ.

- To foster a Christ-centered worldview for Christian students by bringing outstanding Christian thinkers to campus.

Schaefer is professor of physical chemistry and director of the Center for Computational Quantum Chemistry at the University of Georgia. He graduated from MIT and has a Ph.D. from Stanford University. As a research scientist, Schaefer has published more than 1,200 technical articles and also has taught at the Uni-

versity of California at Berkeley and the University of Texas at Austin.

At the Veritas Forum, Schaefer spoke on the topic, "The Big Bang, Stephen Hawking and God," which also happens to be the title of a chapter in his book, "Science and Christianity: Conflict or Coherence?"



Henry Schaefer

The Big Bang is a scientific model or theory that the universe originated approximately 13.7 billion years ago from a quantum singularity—a point of infinitesimal density—which expanded, eventually forming the physical universe as we know it today. The Big Bang is considered by many to be

the cosmic event of creation.

Building on the mathematical theories of Albert Einstein and Alexander Friedmann, and the observations of astronomer Edwin Hubble, Belgian physicist Georges Lemaitre developed the original concept in the 1920s of what later became known as the Big Bang Theory. The term, "Big Bang," was coined by British physicist Fred Hoyle, who advocated a competing concept known as the Steady-State Theory. Hoyle intended the name as a point of ridicule, but it stuck and is now used to designate the most widely accepted scientific theory of cosmic origins.

In his Veritas presentation and his book, Schaefer noted that British theoretical physicist Stephen Hawking is "probably the most famous living scientist" in the world. In 1987, Hawking wrote a book, "A Brief History of Time," which subsequently became a best-seller. Schaefer also noted that Hawking's book has a main character: "That main character is God."

Although Hawking does not discuss his personal beliefs about the theological nature of God, he "strenuously denies ... that he is an atheist," Schaefer said. "Hawking has stated, 'I thought I had left the question of the existence of a Supreme Being

completely open. ... It would be perfectly consistent with all we know to say that there is a Being who was responsible for all the laws of physics.' Stephen Hawking is probably an agnostic or a deist (a believer in an impersonal god) He is certainly not an atheist," Schaefer noted.

According to the Big Bang model, the universe as we know it had a beginning—evidence suggests it came into existence approximately 13.7 billion years ago. Hawking writes in "A Brief History of Time": "So long as the universe had a beginning, we would suppose it had a creator." Thus, if Hawking truly does believe the universe had a beginning—and this is not without some doubt—then it follows that he also believes in the possibility of a Creator.

If a scientist as famous as Stephen Hawking can entertain the possibility of a creator-God, it shouldn't be much of a stretch for mere mortals like ourselves to believe that science is not incompatible with Christianity. In fact, many people believe science can help us understand better the God who created this universe, and then gave the most significant evidence of God's nature in the incarnation of Christ.

According to Johnson, Schaefer was specifically invited to address the question of the compatibility of science and faith. This question is especially critical for university students who undoubtedly encounter the assumption and attitude that science makes faith irrelevant. It is important to address this question, Johnson pointed out, to assist Christians in developing a biblical worldview that can engage the greatest questions of the day in our society.

Veritas is a national Christian organization that sponsors and supports events for the discussion of Christian topics in academic communities. The name "Veritas" comes from the Latin for "truth." The Veritas Forum was started in 1991 at Harvard University to present a Christian worldview in the academic community and has since spread to 300 forums on more than 100 campuses.

Lone Oak's passion for missions leads to Cooperative Program giving

Continued from page 1

"We spent two years working in Gulfport after Katrina, and people came back and kept saying, 'Disaster relief is important.' Word of mouth is important because a passion for missions is caught," Summerlin said. "You can teach, but I think really it's caught as people start seeing the passion in others."

And when an increase in attendance caused the church to undertake a building program, the congregation also saw that as a missions opportunity, he added. "Everything we do, we look at as missions and reaching the world for Christ and Kingdom building," the pastor said, adding that he did not recall anyone proposing a CP cutback to fund the building project.

Lone Oak added more Sunday school space, a large multi-purpose room and a foyer to accommodate nearly 1,400 people in three worship services and more than 1,000 in two Sunday schools.

Despite challenging economic times, Summerlin said the congregation continues to give as God continues to bless. Though some people in the church have lost their jobs, no one has mentioned the idea of reducing CP giving in order to meet

budget requirements, he noted.

For pastors of small churches looking for a way to spark a passion for missions giving, Summerlin urged starting with something simple. He recalled a time when he was pastor of a small church and some of the men volunteered to build a wheelchair ramp at a woman's house.

"I said, 'Guys, this is missions,'" Summerlin said. "Anything you do in the name of Jesus is missions, so you don't have to go around the world. Just get the people involved, especially in the local area." Lone Oak tries to minister in the community as well as on the state, national and international levels, he added.

"A lot of churches can't afford that. I totally understand, but I'm sure there's something they can do in the community—maybe just one home. It may be volunteering at the hospital or the nursing home," Summerlin suggested.

"They can get involved in missions, and it's a teaching moment: 'This is what missions is about, and giving through the Cooperative Program is helping other people do that. We're helping our missionaries around the world do what you're doing.'"



FACES OF CP Members from Lone Oak First Baptist Church of Paduach pose with some of the local men during a mission trip to Zambia. Lone Oak has sponsored mission trips to several countries and states over the past several years. Pastor Dan Summerlin said missions is at the heart of church and that, in turn, leads to support of the Cooperative Program. When church members go on a mission trip, he said, they "see where there money is going." (Photo courtesy of Lone Oak First Baptist Church)

Paschall, former SBC president & Ky. pastor, dies

Nashville—H. Franklin Paschall, longtime pastor of First Baptist Church of Nashville and a former Kentucky Baptist pastor who served as Southern Baptist Convention president from 1966-68, died at his home April 10. He was 86.



Franklin Paschall

Paschall was active in the Kentucky Baptist Convention and was a member of the Executive Board (now Mission Board) while serving as pastor at Hazel Baptist Church and First Baptist Church of Bowling Green before moving on to Tennessee in 1956. He served as pastor at First Baptist, Nashville, from that year until his retirement in 1983.

Paschall was born in Hazel in Calloway County along the Tennessee border, and grew up in nearby Puryear, Tenn. He graduated from Union University in Jackson, Tenn., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, where he earned his Ph.D.

"Franklin Paschall was a most influential Baptist leader and faithful preacher for a previous generation of Baptists," said Union University President David Dockery. "Those of us at Union University are certainly grateful for his love for his alma mater. His faithfulness and generosity to this university were demonstrated over and over again. We offer thanks to God for the life and ministry of Franklin Paschall."

In addition to serving as president of the Southern Baptist Convention, Paschall served as a trustee of the Baptist Sunday School Board (now LifeWay Christian Resources), the SBC Executive Committee and the SBC's Committee on Boards.

SBC Executive Committee President Morris Chapman recalled Paschall as a "faithful pastor, trusted denominational leader, and devoted husband and father" who "effectively served Kentucky Baptists, Tennessee Baptists and the broader Southern Baptist family for more than 65 years."

Chapman noted that Paschall served the convention in a variety of roles and "gave specific and strategic guidance to Southern Baptists" during the 1960s.

Paschall was president of the Nashville Baptist Association Pastors Conference and served on the Executive Board of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. He was a former trustee of Baptist Hospital and Belmont University when both were part of the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

He is survived by his two daughters, Sandra Kay Paschall of Nashville and Palma Paschall Freeman of Dallas, Texas. His wife, Olga, died in 1994. Funeral services were held April 14 at First Baptist Church of Nashville. (BP)

Louisville church starts ministry for job seekers

By David Winfrey
State Correspondent

Louisville—A Louisville church is giving job search help to newly unemployed residents in an effort to offer guidance and hope amid uncertain economic times.

Crescent Hill Baptist Church began hosting weekly job search workshops in early March, according to coordinator Jerry Smith. The classes will continue "as long as people keep coming," he said.

"The first set of our classes attracted 13 people, few of whom have ties to the church," noted Chris Conner, who teaches a workshop.

Smith said he has seen the need for these classes for a while. He also leads a divorce recovery workshop at the church, and many people going through divorce often face job transitions as their personal lives affect their work. Unemployment is a big blow psychologically, Smith added. "We get so much of our identity from what we do."

Workshop organizers rotate four classes on resume writing, interviewing, networking and job prospecting, and personal assessment. Resources for the classes came from someone who works professionally with laid-off workers and from the book, "The Very Quick Job Search."

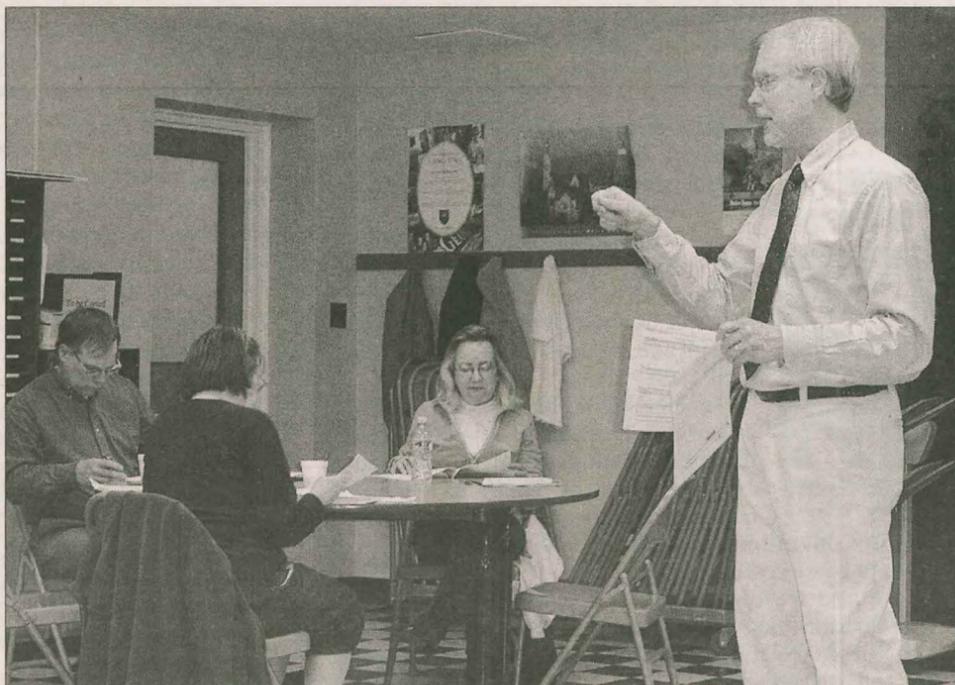
Fellow organizer Sara Hooper said she saw the need for the classes when a relative lost his job. "I was really impressed with how different his (search) process was from any process I had ever been through," she explained.

Ron Vaden learned about the workshops from a neighbor who attends the church.

"It was a helpful learning process for me. I cleaned up my resumé," noted Vaden, a technician who was among 12 people laid off at WAVE TV in December. "It was a two-page resumé, and ... I was able to get the information down to one page and not be so wordy."

Vaden said he also learned the importance of networking among friends, family and others.

"If you're not looking for work, go and volunteer your time and that could get you in the doors," he suggested. "There's some-



JOB SKILLS Chris Conner teaches a job search workshop at Crescent Hill Baptist Church in Louisville. The church began the classes last month to help unemployed members and residents in such areas as resumé writing, interview skills and networking. As of February, Kentucky's unemployment rate was at 9.2 percent, compared to 5.6 percent one year earlier. (Photo by David Winfrey)

one who knows someone who knows someone who could get you a line of work."

Such workshops are especially useful these days, he added. "This could be beneficial for a lot of people."

Statewide, unemployment in Kentucky was 9.2 percent in February, according to the latest figures available from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. In February 2008, that figure was 5.6 percent.

Organizers will provide ongoing support by building an e-mail list to distribute job leads, Smith said.

On a recent Wednesday night, Conner led a class through worksheets to assess individuals' competencies, interests, ideal work environments, values and personality traits. The project left participants with a statement summing up the types of jobs they are most interested in and qualified for.

Conner lost his job once and knows what currently unemployed residents are going

through, he said. "I feel like I need to do something to help others find jobs."

Afterward guiding participants through the assessment, Conner turned the conversation to the spiritual. He told the class they are both in God's hand and close to God's heart. "You're not as alone as you might think you are."

He acknowledged that unemployment might cause someone to question where God's presence is. But Conner emphasized God's faithfulness.

"That we are here at all is because God loves us," he shared. "God is always working in the situation ... but just beyond your view."

Class participants have been both upbeat and anxious, Conner said. "Each of us in our workshops has been saying the same things over and over: Things happen when you beat the bushes. They don't happen when you don't beat the bushes."

Watchdog group opposes state funds for Cumberlands

By Bob Allen

Washington—A church-state watchdog group says the Kentucky Supreme Court should strike down a \$10 million state appropriation to build a pharmacy school at University of the Cumberlands, claiming it uses taxpayer funds to advance a particular religion.

Americans United for Separation of Church and State filed a friend-of-the-court brief late last month urging the commonwealth's high court to uphold a March 2008 ruling by a special judge that the funding constitutes "a direct payment to a non-public religious school for educational purposes" not permitted by the Kentucky constitution.

The AU brief traces the development of the doctrine of church-state separation in the United States in general and Kentucky in particular. It said the Kentucky Constitution is "clear and unambiguous" that government cannot show preference to religious institutions or appropriate public funds for educational purposes at private religious schools.

University of the Cumberlands, a Kentucky Baptist institution, was founded by Baptist ministers in 1889. The school has historically served students primarily from mountain regions of Kentucky, Tennessee, West Virginia, Virginia, Georgia, North Car-

olina, South Carolina, Ohio and Alabama traditionally known as Appalachia.

In 2006, Kentucky's General Assembly appropriated funds to begin a pharmacy school at the Williamsburg school, so students from the area would not have to travel as far to get an education, also making it more likely they would remain close to home to pursue their careers.

The idea quickly lost popularity with some lawmakers, however, after the school kicked out a student for moral misconduct after he posted on a social-networking site that he was gay and dating a student at another school.

Sen. Ernesto Scorsone, D-Lexington, an openly homosexual member of the General Assembly, said unless funding for the pharmacy school is stopped, "We will have a state benefit that is only available to heterosexuals."

Cumberlands President Jim Taylor responded with a statement saying students known before they come to the university they are expected to maintain different standards than in society in general.

"University of the Cumberlands isn't for everyone," Taylor said. "We are different by design and are non-apologetic about our Christian beliefs."

Proponents of the funding argue it is constitutional to grant tax dollars to reli-

gious organizations as long as they are intended for the health and welfare of all citizens.

The AU brief, however, contends that the proposed funding would constitute an "educational" benefit going directly to the university and its students, which the constitution forbids, as opposed to a "public health" benefit like a hospital, which is open to anyone.

The University of the Cumberlands describes its mission as to "graduate men and women with Christian values."

Recent guests at University of the Cumberlands include the so-called "Ten Commandments Judge," Roy Moore, former chief justice of the Alabama Supreme Court, who spoke at a "moral leadership" program in 2006, and Sen. Zell Miller, the only person ever to give keynote speeches at both the Democratic and Republican national conventions, for a "patriotic leadership" event in 2007.

The university's non-discrimination policy includes "race, color, nationality, ethnic origin, sex, age or handicap." That could become another issue if a future pharmacy school were to seek accreditation. The Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education amended its standards in 2007 adding sexual orientation to discrimination guidelines. (ABP)

Cooperation

Cooperation is a frequently used word among Kentucky Baptists and Southern Baptists. As we use it, the word expresses a special kind of partnership that focuses on a common mission.

Cooperation is also a great Bible concept expressed in different ways: "... for your fellowship (partnership) in the gospel from the first day until now." (Phil. 1:5).

Partners in the Mission



By Bill Mackey

Cooperation represents more than just new partnerships though; it is a covenant relationship between God and His people: "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13).

As Baptists, we have known the value of working together to support missions through the unified budget plan known as the Cooperative Program. The CP requires the cooperation of the Southern

Baptist Convention, state conventions and local congregations to be successful.

We also see cooperation as the North American Mission Board works with state conventions, associations and churches in reaching North America through church planting and evangelism.

The six Southern Baptist theological seminaries are a part of this cooperation as they provide training for missionaries, pastors, church staff persons and denominational positions of leadership.

Churches also work together through local associations in order to reach people and support each other's work. Inside the local church, cooperation is required as people with diverse spiritual gifts complement one another in building up the body of Christ.

In order for diverse people to work together in close relationships in the local church, spiritual growth is required. Church members must accept people who are different in leadership style, passion, temperament and personal preferences.

There are so many ways in which we cooperate as Kentucky Baptists that space could not permit me to mention all of them. But I do want to describe a recent experience.

KBC staff members have been more unified in planning and preparing for the upcoming "Find It Here" evangelism emphasis for 2010 than anything I have experienced in almost 30 years of denominational work. The Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union has been just as cooperative in prayer, planning and support.

We may have limited financial resources for this emphasis but perhaps the best spirit of cooperation that I have experienced. I want to take this opportunity to say "thanks" to the KBC staff for their outstanding demonstration of unity and cooperation.

This reminds me of the prayer of Jesus for his followers: "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me" (John 17:23).

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

What a wonderful world ...

*"I see skies of blue and clouds of white
The bright blessed day, the dark sacred night
And I think to myself, what a wonderful world"*

American jazz cornet player and singer Louis Armstrong first recorded these hopeful, optimistic lyrics with his distinctive, rich, gravelly voice in 1968. Though he was minus Armstrong's improvisational forte on a horn, Billy Compton's remake of this classic tune is no less enthralling.

At each of the Cooperative Program rallies held in major cities across the state in recent weeks, Kentucky Baptists were challenged by the urgency of helping others to see what a wonderful world this could be, if every Baptist gave generously to the CP.

Compton, executive associate for the Cooperative Program at the Kentucky Baptist Convention, baffled many when he made a bold claim to have "the largest envelope in the world." He confused audiences even more when he held up an ordinary offering envelope. However, when Compton listed all of the missions and ministries all over the world that Kentucky Baptists are supporting, they certainly would have to agree.

Baptists—through their church offering plates—not only support their church's missions and ministry efforts, but they also support the work of more than 5,540 international missionaries, who shared Christ with more than 1,194 people groups and reported nearly 566,000 baptisms last year. Through their church offerings, they also support more than 5,645 North American missionaries and approximately 150,000 short-term volunteers serving here in the United States and in Canada.

For example, some 83,000 persons have been trained as disaster relief volunteers. The 2008 hurricane season was one of the most active on record with eight hurricanes, and volunteers gave more than 61,000 workdays, prepared nearly 5.5 million meals, and recorded 237 professions of faith.

Also consider the significant impact being made by your CP dollars in Kentucky. In 2008 alone:

- Approximately 150 church starts were provided with resources, support and encouragement. Of these new works, 21 were High Impact churches, and 110 were ethnic congregation. In each of these, lives are being reached for Christ.

- Baptist Campus Ministry groups raised more than \$450,000 to support students participating on state, national and international trips, making an impact for Christ in other places. The BCM programs on the 30 campuses where these students attend classes are led by campus ministers and their support staff, whose work is supported through the Cooperative Program. Last year, 433 college students were able to serve as summer/semester missionaries, including those who work on the staffs at Christian camps that were filled with kids from Kentucky churches; 636 students participated in short-term missions experiences; and 931 students participated in local missions projects.



After Thought

By Todd Deaton

- In state-wide youth ministry, a Sports Rally for Christ in Mayfield saw an attendance of more than 2,000 people and recorded 250 decisions, and the Real Encounter Crusade in Hopkinsville drew more than 3,500 people and reported 147 decisions. Projects in Oldham County and in Cynthiana drew a combined total of approximately 1,300, with more than 250 youth receiving Christ.

- More than 2,796 vacation Bible school leaders and workers attended associational clinics in 2008, and another 120 attended one of the two state clinics. More important than these numbers, however, are the numerous kids whose lives were changed by attending one of their vacation Bible schools.

- Seventy-seven persons from 26 churches were involved in the state convention's on-going missions partnerships with Baptists in Tanzania and Brazil.

- More than 950 Kentucky Baptists were involved in disaster relief efforts, serving more than 192,000 meals and working on chainsaw and mudout crews that assisted 724 homes. Their ministry resulted in 101 people coming to know Christ. This year, more than 700 disaster relief volunteers worked in 29 associations after February's ice storm.

- Approximately 700 youth participated in WMU-sponsored camps and overnights at Cedar Crest and Jonathan Creek. WMU scholarships also helped 40 students to attend college and four to attend seminary. In addition, scholarships assisted six students at Oneida Baptist Institute. While these scholarships are mostly provided through endowments, state WMU director Joy Bolton explains, "In so much of our work, the Cooperative Program provides the foundational financial support, such as staff salaries." As with other KBC agencies and institutions, she adds, "CP is the stack pole for everything else that we do to provide support for Baptist work."

- Church development strategists made about 1,500 contacts with pastors and church leaders. Last year, conferences provided training for more than 6,000 people in Sunday school leadership, discipleship and assimilation, youth ministry and preschool/children's ministry. At Super Saturday events, 3,000 people received training in 18 church ministry areas.

With all these impressive numbers, it is far too easy to lose sight of their true significance. As Compton observes, the Cooperative Program is not just about dollars given or ministries provided; it's about the grander vision of changing people's lives through sharing Christ. Perhaps, to help a new generation of Baptists catch a vision of cooperating together for missions and ministry, "CP" should connote "Changing People."

On the facing page, Sharon Mager poses an intriguing question: "What if we didn't have the Cooperative Program?" Her article is disconcerting, yet enlightening. But what I would rather imagine is all of the people who could be reached with the gospel and what a beautiful world it truly would be, if every Baptist gave generously to the CP.

KBC changes 6-months CP report

Louisville—In an effort to reduce costs, the Kentucky Baptist Convention is changing how it will report six-months Cooperative Program giving totals to participating churches.

For years, the KBC has printed the six-months Cooperative Program giving report in the Western Recorder, Kentucky Baptists' state newspaper. According to KBC Assistant Executive Director Steve Thompson, the KBC decided not to print this year's report in the newspaper in order to save CP funds.

"In looking for ways to conserve CP dollars, we have decided to find another way of delivering the six-months report to the churches," said Thompson.

Instead of appearing in the Western Recorder, Thompson said the report will be posted to the KBC's Web site (www.KyBaptist.org). A printed report also will be delivered to each pastor, treasurer and director of missions that shows the report for all the churches in their respective associations.

The report will be posted online and mailed in April each year showing the giving record from September through February, he said.

"We still believe the reporting function is very important and see this as a good solution," said Thompson. "Reporting this information reinforces the strong accountability between churches and the KBC, and also reminds

each church of its giving record for the first six months of the fiscal year."

The annual CP report will continue to be printed in the October issue of the Western Recorder.

In addition to the six-months reporting change, the KBC also is altering the acknowledgement form sent to each church upon the receipt of any gift through the KBC.

Thompson said the KBC's technology systems cannot continue to support the multi-copy form. The new form will be a one-page form with a tear-off portion at the bottom for use in sending the next contribution.

For more information, contact the KBC's Executive Office at (502) 489-3577 or (866) 489-3577 (toll free in KY).

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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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Who gives the most is not determined by dollars & cents

By Doug Strader

Did you ever wonder who gives the most money to the Lord through your local church? That of us have probably thought about that at some point in our church life. The only ones who really know are the Lord and the church treasurer and/or the financial secretary.

If you could see the figures from your church giving records you would probably be surprised at how much some people give—and also about the number of people who gave nothing. You might even think that the people who make or have the most money give the most to the Lord, but that is not necessarily true.

I learned several years ago that 20 percent of the congregation give about 80 percent of the money received by the church. The other 20 percent is given by about 30 percent of the congregation. What those figures mean is that nearly 50 percent of members give nothing to the Lord through the church. In fact, some stewardship people are now saying that only about 15 percent of the people are giving about 85 percent of the money received.

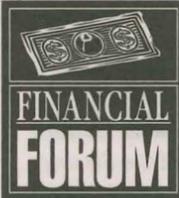
In older churches, most of the money received is given by those members who are 65 years of age and older. We assume that people begin giving regularly and systematically when they become followers of Christ and join the church. But that does not usually happen; most people must be taught the biblical doctrine of tithing. Tithing is the best way for the church to be supported by all of its members.

Tithing is fair to everyone. Jesus said that a widow who gave all she had to the temple treasury actually gave more than all of the wealthy put together. She gave and had nothing left, but they gave and had money left after they gave. So in Jesus' eyes, those who give the most dollars do not necessarily give the most money to the Lord.

Where do you stand in your giving to the Lord through the church? He does not look at the dollar amount but at how much we give in comparison to how much we have left.

Reprinted from Western Recorder, Kentucky, April 29, 2008

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



Tithing amid economic downturns

By Howard Dayton
Crown Financial Ministries

Gainesville, Ga.—The tithe is an indicator of obedience to all of God's laws, and He is looking for the right attitude from believers when it comes to our giving. But, what does God expect us to do during tough economic times?

Well, Psalm 24:1 declares, "The earth and everything in it, the world and its inhabitants, belong to the LORD." And in 1 Corinthians 4:7, Paul asks, "What do you have that you didn't receive?"

Scriptures like that are pretty easy to handle when things are financially good. But, how do Christians respond when critical health issues, job loss or worldwide economics have almost bottomed out? During times when mortgage payments and utility bills become due and food is needed for the table, does God expect us to tithe?

Before responding to that, let's be realistic. Do you tithe? Or maybe, have you ever tithed?

The tithe is not a law, but tithing is one of the first standards of giving found in the Bible. In fact, Abraham tithed four centuries before the Law was given to Moses. However, the tithe is an indicator of obedience to God's laws, so Christian giving should come from the heart.

The book of Malachi seems to confirm that truth when the prophet confronted the Jews with the sins of disobedience and he used their lack of tithing as an example.

"Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! You ask: 'How do we rob

You?' By not making the payments of 10 percent and the contributions. You are suffering under a curse, yet you—the whole nation—are still robbing Me" (Malachi 3:8-9).

When the Barna Group released results of their tithing poll numbers for 2007, we learned that very few people tithe. In fact, only 5 percent of adult Americans tithed. Among evangelicals, 24 percent tithed.

Now—even if some wishful thinking—even if Southern Baptists were able to double that figure, the percentage that tithes would still be low. In fact, if you doubt that less than 25 percent of those in your church tithe, just ask your leaders.

Since the tithe, meaning "tenth," is the minimum amount mentioned in God's Word, it is logical to assume that it's the minimum amount God wants from a believer. However, does this principle still apply when a person is on a fixed income or is dependent on government entitlements in order to survive?

New Testament believers didn't bring tithes and offerings to a physical storehouse; instead they gave of their increase in tithes, offerings and alms to the church body. In turn, the church leaders used what had been given for spreading the gospel and the support of the church. Alms, other gifts that were given, were used to care for the poor, widows, orphans and other needy persons.

It is important for us to understand that the Bible doesn't make special provisions that exempt those on fixed incomes or government subsidies. It simply says, "Honor the

LORD with your possessions and with the first produce of your entire harvest" (Proverbs 3:9).

So, whatever funds come into your possession, from whatever source, the "first produce of your entire harvest"—welfare, Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, unemployment, disability, alimony, inheritance or regular income—should be considered "first produce." Be a "from the heart joyful giver," and don't spend a lot of time looking for those "few of time."

No one knows just what the economy might do and what we might face during the coming months. Nevertheless, Christians need to remember that the same God who provides for us in the good times provides during the tough times, too.

If we truly believe strongly in honoring God from the increase He provides for us, we need to seriously consider tithing on all of the "first produce of all of your entire harvest," and then trust that He will continue by providing all that is needed for us to live.

Remember that God's desire is for our benefit and good, and He is more interested in our hearts than in any actual amount that we give.

The future economic climate could dictate that sacrificial giving will be necessary for many of us. And, sacrificing in order to give is a way to honor God.

Remember that God is more concerned about the attitude of our hearts in giving than the percentage or the amount we give. So, whether we're in an economic downturn or experiencing abundance and affluence, let's keep our eyes on God.

What if we didn't have the Cooperative Program?

By Sharon Mager
Maryland/Delaware Baptist Life

Columbia, Md.—In the February Baptist Digest, the Leadership News Journal of the Kansas-Nebraska Southern Baptist Convention, Editor Timothy Boyd wrote an intriguing column about the Cooperative Program.

Here is a portion of that article with Boyd's permission:

"Recently, I was wondering what the Southern Baptist Convention would look like in a post Cooperative Program world. The thought was scary. I could imagine two or three of our seminaries going out of business. I could imagine the North American Mission Board and the International Mission Board combining to make the best use of severely decreased resources.

What would a Southern Baptist Convention without the Cooperative Program be? One thing is for sure. It would be much weaker. Some might ask, "How do you know?" I know because that is what the convention was like before the Cooperative Program. All of our agencies struggled. Churches were constantly harassed by agents seeking funds. All in all, it just did not work well.

There are days when I believe that we are heading toward the end of the Cooperative Program. I hope it doesn't happen, but I know that the trends show a continuing decrease of support by churches. It may not happen while I am still active in ministry, but those who are just beginning their ministries may have to face that reality."

Imagine a pastor getting really sleepy at a church business meeting and stepping out for a few minutes to take a walk in the woods behind the church. He falls asleep in a remote area and no one can find him. He does a Rip Van Winkle sleep for 20 years. His congregation has moved on, calling another pastor. When Pastor Rip wakes up, amazingly the church is without a pastor again so he steps back in. The church is so thrilled.

What Rip doesn't realize is that a lot has happened since he fell asleep. While counseling a youth who feels called to the ministry, Rip enthusiastically encourages him to attend Rip's alma mater, a Southern Baptist seminary near and dear to his heart. But when he calls, he finds that it closed many years ago. In fact, he finds there is only one seminary operating and the tuition is very high.

He makes a call to the North American Mission Board (NAMB) to realize it's now NAIMB—that NAMB and the International Mission Board (IMB) joined together to send out a fraction of the missionaries they once did.

Rip frantically seeks information on Centrifuge, disaster relief, and the RA and GA curriculum—it's all gone.

He reads Baptist Press and realizes the reason for the sad shrinking of resources is due to a drastic reduction in CP giving. In fact, the reports say CP is dying. Missionaries have had to leave the mission field; baptisms are at an all time low. The ener-

gy of new church planting has gone. Rip wants to go back to sleep.

Rip realizes we don't know what we have until it's gone.

While looking at all of the incredible resources CP provides, imagine an SBC world without those resources.

The reality is that CP giving is down. Southern Baptist Convention leaders across the country believe that there are many reasons. The economy is certainly one, they concede, but there's more to it. Young pastors and planters aren't always aware of the benefits of CP giving—not just the benefits to the SBC but to the givers. They may not be seeing the faces of those being changed as a result of CP giving. Often, it's just a lack of education on what CP does and how it blesses.

Many churches are taking mission trips and that's wonderful, they affirm, but without CP there may not be a steady missionary presence. How much greater is the impact of someone who is staying in the field making an ongoing impact on a people group?

Because of CP, there are 5,363 missionaries engaging 1,170 people groups in 184 nations; there are 836,898 worldwide baptisms annually; and the SBC has the third largest disaster relief program in the country.

While we can't always go, our CP dollars continue to be used 24 hours a day 365 days a year to reach the lost. And every Southern Baptist can be part of that.

Science: friend or foe of faith?

By David Garrard

Q: How can I teach my children that the Bible is not at odds with science?

A: Writing in the July/August 2008 issue of Children's Ministry magazine, children's pastor, Larry Shallenberger makes an observation that should really grab the attention of Christian parents. "The two most prominent institutions



in a child's life are the public school and the church, and each of these authority figures offers different explanations regarding our origins. Observant children see this apparent conflict between God and science and realize that they must decide who's telling the truth—church or school."

Shallenberger astutely observes that there are two possible conclusions—both of which are destructive. First, children can decide that the Bible is incorrect about creation, and thus cannot be trusted in other ways. Or children can decide that science is wrong and cannot be trusted. Shallenberger argues: "The first leads to anemic faith; the second to anti-intellectualism and a faith that retreats from the mysteries of the world God created."

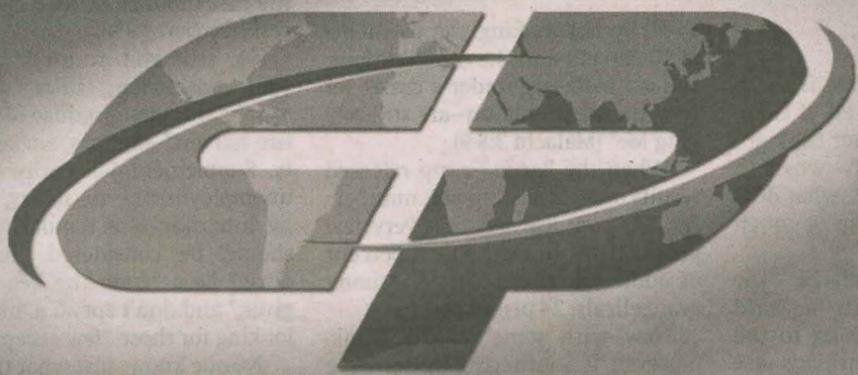
Shallenberger's brilliant insight underscores the problems that result when we create a false, and unnecessary choice between faith and science. Many people dismiss and disconnect from faith for this very reason.

What can parents do? When it comes to creation, help your children see that the most important point of the Bible's account is not how, but who. God created the heavens and the earth, and God created us. Science simply helps us understand how God did it. As such, science is not an enemy of faith. In fact, science can contribute to stronger faith by increasing the wonder and amazement we have for God as we learn more about how He works.

We need the Bible to tell us who and why. We need science to help us understand how. "Both/and" thinking proves a safer, sounder place to be than "either/or" thinking that creates a false dichotomy by unnecessarily separating the sacred from the secular.

(Editor's note: See related story on page 2.)

David Garrard is minister to children at St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville.



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LEARNING SESSION Morris Chapman (sixth from right), president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee, and fellow Executive Committee officers pause for a picture with Unlimited Partnerships students and leaders during a visit to Nashville to learn more about the Cooperative Program. (BP photo)

Baptist seminary students grateful for impact of CP

Continued from page 1

"I didn't pay one cent for that trip, all thanks to the Cooperative Program," Wood recalled. "It was really during that summer that I saw firsthand what the SBC was unified by, and that was taking the truth of God's Word and proclaiming it to all peoples and all nations.

"My respect (for the SBC) grew even more after going to a convention (annual meeting) myself and realizing that everyone has a voice, no matter how big or how small their church is," Wood continued. "I was amazed at how many churches were connected, and also that the one thing that connected each church to the others was the Cooperative Program."

Garrett Wishall, a student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, joined the conversation via e-mail.

"I first heard about the Cooperative Program during my first semester" at Southern in the fall of 2005, Wishall wrote. "Southern requires first semester students to take a course on the Cooperative Program. As I learned about the history of the Southern Baptist Convention's missions funding efforts, I began to see the value of the Cooperative Program. Instead of having various entities coming into local churches and competing for local church funds, the Cooperative Program enables a unity of purpose and effort that releases competitive tension.

"With the Cooperative Program, my seminary education is substantially more affordable," he continued. "Most importantly, with the Cooperative Program, thousands of missionaries can be funded in both North America and across the world, freeing them to focus on the task of making disciples of all nations.

"The Cooperative Program is one excellent way for such local churches to work together for the purpose of training faithful gospel ministers and making disciples of all nations," he said.

The first time Kenneth Seal heard about the Cooperative Program, he was in Royal Ambassadors, a missions education program in many Southern Baptist churches. Today, as an Unlimited Partnerships student at New Orleans Seminary, Seal said he is a strong advocate of the Cooperative Program.

"The CP is a wonderful way for churches to unite in the cause for Christ," he said. "It helps smaller churches take part in worldwide

missions. It also helps churches avoid being isolated or insulated by self-interest.

"The CP ... takes the concept of tithing to the corporate level," Seal continued. "When a church faithfully gives to CP, it relinquishes control of that money and faithfully asks God to do with it what He will. It keeps the focus of the church from solely being about the church or its limited viewpoint."

Aylwin Woleng, a student from India who attends Southern California Seminary, said he was much like several others: He had no knowledge of CP until he participated in the Unlimited Partnerships tour.

"It is amazing to me how CP functions," Woleng said. "I learned that while CP (includes an) emphasis on building future leadership through sponsoring seminaries and (an) education system, CP also strongly supports the existing churches and community for development and in ministry activities. I also learned that CP does not have boundaries. It reaches out to places and people who need help.

"The magnitude of ministry CP is able to accomplish cannot be accomplished by local churches," he added. "A small church is also given a privilege to be a part of big programs through CP."

But for all the good things said about the Cooperative Program, some students expressed concerns.

Emily Harper, a student at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif., said that while she appreciated all Southern Baptists had done for her in providing tuition support and more, she would not limit God's call to work only within an SBC framework.

"My generation seems to be drawn to alternative modes and methods of missional living and church participation," she noted. "I would hope the CP could ... support this cultural shift, and be more open to supporting those who are untraditional ministers."

Paul Rochford, an Unlimited Partnerships student at Southern California Seminary, said pastoral support is needed for the Cooperative Program to flourish in the future.

"Pastors need to be behind the program and continue to support it from the pulpit," he suggested.

Rochford added that his generation "needs to be broken for the lost. The greater one's heart for those perishing, the greater one's support for reaching them." (BP)

A perpetual lifeline

Cooperative Program rallies showcase missions giving

Over the past month, I had the privilege and pleasure of participating in all 10 Cooperative Program celebration dinners around the state conducted by the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Mission Board and led by Billy Compton, who is the executive associate for Cooperative Program and resources for the KBC.

The two-fold purpose of the dinners was (1) to celebrate and give thanks to the Lord for this missions infrastructure we call the Cooperative Program, and (2) to put a face on the ways in which peoples' lives are being impacted and the Kingdom is being advanced through the ministries that are supported by the collective giving of churches through the Cooperative Program.

Compton did an outstanding job in accomplishing this two-fold purpose among those who attended. I came away from each rally with a greater appreciation of the facts that (a) "We are laborers together with God" (1 Corinthians 3:9), and (b) we can accomplish so much more together than we can separately.

April 26 is Cooperative Program Sunday. I encourage you to use this

occasion to celebrate what God has, is and will do through the Cooperative Program ministries. I hope your church also will set aside time on that day to focus on how its ministry is being extended to the ends of the earth by cooperating with other churches through the Cooperative Program. Compton can provide you or your pastor with resources to use on that day. Call him toll free in Kentucky at (866) 489-3365.

Ky. Baptist Foundation



Barry Allen

In 1963, the Kentucky Baptist Foundation established a Cooperative Program endowment fund to receive gifts and bequests designated for the Cooperative Program. In addition, individuals have established separate endowments for which the Cooperative Program is a partial or 100-percent beneficiary. The investment earnings from these endowments are distributed through the KBC for Kingdom advance to the ends of the earth.

Perhaps the Lord is leading you to invest through a CP endowment to help connect people to Jesus Christ every day. Call Laurie Valentine or me toll free to discover how.

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

For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



Preacher's Kids

David Ayers



Bible Crosswords

By Evelyn Boyington

Across

- 1 Director Peckinpah
- 4 Understands
- 8 "Thou liftest me up to the wind; thou causest me to ____ upon it" (Job 30:22)
- 12 Ripen
- 13 Secular person
- 14 SW Ohio city
- 15 "Blessed be the God and ____ of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:3)
- 17 "Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be ____" (Matthew 23:12)
- 19 "I ____ not from thy precepts" (Psalm 119:110)
- 20 "Let us run with patience the ____ that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1)
- 21 "To do" tasks
- 24 Crone
- 27 So much, so great
- 29 New Jersey, to Noelle
- 31 ____ shirt
- 32 Dolly's domain (abbr.)
- 33 "We should be holy and without ____ before him in love" (Ephesians 1:4)
- 34 Administrator of TLC
- 35 Fruity drink
- 37 To be (Fr.)
- 38 University of Michigan's Schembeckler, familiarly
- 40 "He (Judah) couched as a lion ... who shall ____ him up?" (Genesis 49:9)
- 42 Where Saul encountered a witch
- 44 Son of Melchi (Luke 3:27)
- 46 Blot out
- 49 "The Lord said, My ____ shall not always strive with man" (Genesis 6:3)
- 51 Does the hora
- 52 Act or result (suffix)
- 53 "____ was a tiller of the ground" (Genesis 4:2)
- 55 Meadow
- 56 Masculine nickname
- 57 Disapproving sound
- 58 Flightless bird

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		44			45		46		47	48
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52				53	54			55		
		56			57			58		

- 3 ____ system
- 4 Animal not to be eaten (Deuteronomy 14:13)
- 5 It contains a hammer and a stirrup
- 6 Note on diatonic scale
- 7 To mark permanently
- 8 "Then saith he to Thomas, ____ hither thy finger" (John 20:27)
- 9 Place inside
- 10 Stag's mate
- 11 Bitter or dead
- 16 Abraham and Sarah were buried in field purchased from sons of ____ (Genesis 25)
- 18 Tend to a turkey
- 22 "The heart of Egypt shall ____ in the midst of it" (Isaiah 19:1)
- 23 "I may tell all my bones: they look and ____ upon me" (Psalm 22:17)
- 25 Poetic contraction
- 26 Benign tumors
- 27 "There fell a great ____ from heaven" (Revelation 8:10)
- 28 Disentangle
- 30 "Let all the people say, ____" (Psalm 106:48)
- 33 Father of Hosea (Hosea 1:1)
- 36 Mother of Timothy (2 Timothy 1:5)
- 38 "Unto you is ____ this day ... a Saviour" (Luke 2:11)
- 39 Kin to a prophet
- 41 Son of Zebulun (Genesis 46:14)
- 43 College officials
- 45 Restless desire
- 47 Appear likely
- 48 "____ despised his birthright" (Genesis 25:34)
- 49 Game, ____, match
- 50 Like an IOU, only more specific
- 51 Show no respect (colloq.)
- 54 "I have given into thy hand the king of ____, and his people" (Joshua 8:1)

Last week's solution

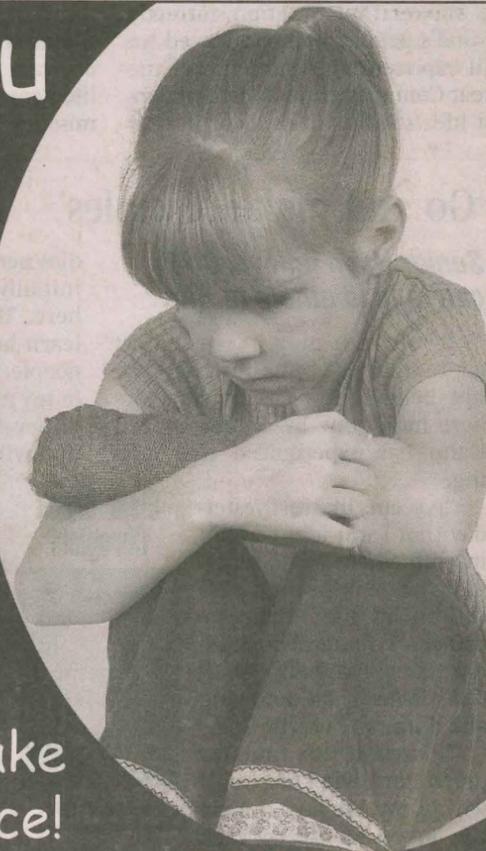
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BAPTIST DIGEST

Centrifuge camp offered during SBC—Students who go to Louisville with their families for the Southern Baptist Convention June 23-24, will have the opportunity to experience Centrifuge on site. Churches from the Louisville area and SBC entity employees are also invited to bring their students and attend Fuge as a day camp. The SBC Camp will feature Kenneth Bruce, student minister at Porter Memorial Baptist Church, Lexington, Ky., and Jeff Pratt, director of LifeWay student training and events. Drew Causey and Hope Community Church, Frankfort, Ky., will lead worship. Night activities will feature American Idol finalist Phil Stacey and Christian comedy duo Bean & Bailey. Students whose parents are attending the SBC may attend all sessions for \$40. Church youth groups in the Louisville area may attend for a prorated fee of either \$40 or \$60 depending on which sessions they wish to attend. Call (877) CAMP-123 for more details and to pre-register.

County judge dismisses second suit—A county judge has dismissed a Missouri Baptist Convention lawsuit against Windermere Baptist Conference Center and several financial institutions and individuals. Camden County, Mo., Circuit Judge Kenneth Hayden handed down the ruling April 9. It ends a suit that convention officials filed in 2006 in an effort to stop all land transactions at Windermere pending the outcome of a separate case that involved Windermere and the other convention-related agencies. Hayden ruled that the issues included in the Camden County case mirror the separate suit filed in Cole County, where the convention's Jefferson City, Mo., headquarters are located. Cole County Judge Richard Callahan ruled March 4, 2008, that Windermere acted legally when it changed its articles of incorporation to allow a self-electing board of trustees.

Alabama pastor found dead at church—A Southern Baptist pastor was found dead April 7 in his Alabama church, apparently after suffering a heart attack. Investigators ruled out foul play in the death of Rodney Bowling, 46, pastor of Grace Point Baptist Church, Somerville. According to the church website, Bowling started Grace Point Baptist Church in the small north Alabama town three years ago with a Bible study held in a family's garage. The church purchased property in 2006 and moved into a new building in 2008. Bowling had been a preacher for more than 25 years.

'What if?'

Pastors' Conference focuses on Great Commission

By Mark Kelly

Mobile, Ala.—Ed Litton believes that in a time of seismic cultural changes and economic uncertainty, Southern Baptists face both danger and opportunity. The danger, he says, is that churches will retreat into a safe place, while the opportunity is to trust God and see Him move powerfully to change people's hearts and transform society.

As president of the SBC's Pastors' Conference, Litton is crafting a program for the annual meeting in Louisville, Ky., that he hopes will spark the latter. And he is challenging pastors to exert unusual effort to help that happen.

"We're in a time of seismic change in our culture. There are huge shifts taking place," said Litton, who is pastor of First Baptist Church, North Mobile, in Saraland, Ala. "And people are feeling a lot of economic pressure today. There's a palpable fear and, I sense, a withdrawing. That's dangerous. The danger is that we're going to kind of lock up and ride this thing out when we have a great opportunity to trust God, to believe God, and to reach out more during this crisis than ever before."

The dramatic political and social changes occurring in America—from the rise of aggressive atheism to the shooting of a pastor in the pulpit—should drive Christians to evaluate their priorities in light of their mission, Litton said.

"I would love to see a passionate

revival to the Great Commission. I think the Great Commission solves a lot of those problems for us because ultimately it's the transformation of people's hearts that matters," he said. "We need to come back to the Great Commission and say, 'This is what we're here to do.'"

"It could help us streamline when we go budget cutting and having to deal with difficult things," Litton added. "What really is mission essential here? What can we afford to get rid of and what can we never afford to get rid of? Those kinds of questions are being dealt with every day by pastors all over this country."

As he consulted with SBC President Johnny Hunt about the need for a "Great Commission resurgence" among Southern Baptists, Litton found himself reminded of Philippians 2:2: "Make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose." (NASB)

He said he found himself wondering how things would be different if all Southern Baptists truly had the mind, love, spirit and purpose of Christ.

"We came up with the idea of asking the simple question, 'What if?'" Litton said. "It's a counter-factual. If we answer that question correctly as God's people, I am convinced we will experience a resurgence of the Great Commission in Southern Baptist life. It will help us focus in very

difficult times in this country and throughout the world."

Organized under the "What if?" theme, the 2009 Pastors' Conference, set for June 21-22 in Louisville, will bring pastors together to seek a transforming revival of passion for the Great Commission.

Litton said the program will feature a widely varied slate of speakers:

- J.D. Greear, Summit Church in Durham, N.C.;
- Mac Brunson, First Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Fla.;
- Chuck Colson, Prison Fellowship;
- Mike Landry, Sarasota (Fla.) Baptist Church;
- Ed Stetzer, LifeWay Research;
- Francis Chan, Cornerstone Church in Simi Valley, Calif.;
- Tom Elliff, International Mission Board;
- Michael Catt, Sherwood Baptist Church in Albany, Ga.;
- Fred Luter Jr., Franklin Avenue Baptist Church in New Orleans, La.;
- Johnny Hunt, First Baptist Church in Woodstock, Ga.;
- David Platt, Church at Brook Hills in Birmingham, Ala.

The program also includes former Southern Baptist pastor and 2008 presidential candidate Mike Huckabee.

"Some of our lineup is designed to include younger people who have a message and a voice that fits the theme we are presenting, who demonstrate in their ministry and their life a commitment to the Great Commission," Litton said. (BP)



Ed Litton

Meet the class of 2009, part 2

Oneida helped wild child 'Barbara' understand the value of boundaries

One of the greatest attributes of the Oneida faculty and staff is their ability to give our students some much-needed space, and to realize that God created each of us differently. We do not all respond to the same situations in the same way. Most of my staff have learned the art of allowing our students to express their individuality as long as they stay within the basic boundaries that we all have to respect. "Barbara" (not her real name) needed some space while understanding that well-defined boundaries still applied. Here is part of what she had to write in her senior essay:

"I was raised in a small town in Tennessee. I was always a wild child and I was always in some sort of trouble for some ridiculous thing I had done. ... When I was 15, I had a horrible year after the death of my grandmother. Then during my freshman year in high school our house burned down. A little later we went to live with my other grandmother. ... After a fight with my mom one day I was told, 'Barbara, we are moving to Iowa.'"

"In Iowa I started getting angry, skipping school and I hung out with a bad crowd that did drugs and partied every night. I didn't care about my future, my life or my family. ... One day my mom told me about Oneida over a bowl of salsa at a Mexican restaurant. ... I thank the Lord every day for that conversation over that bowl of salsa. If I hadn't had that conversation I wouldn't be the person you see standing before you today! Oneida has changed me so much. I am still me and I still wear crazy clothes, write crazy songs and I still dislike rude people. But a lot of things

This is Oneida



W.F. Underwood

have changed, including who I hang out with, how I act toward my family and how I feel about myself.

"I chose to stay and graduate from OBI because I felt that God put me here for a reason. I love it here and I love the people. I love the mountains and my classes. I have always been a social tornado; butterflies will never be used to describe me. After I leave, the halls in the girls' dorm will be rather quiet and calm. But OBI will always be in my heart.

"I will miss everything about this place—the crazy hours (hours are given as punishment) and essays, the movies on Saturday night when you are grounded, and yes, I will miss talking to the houseparents at 1 a.m. when I can't sleep. I will miss Oneida with my heart and soul, but I will forever keep the memories and a smile, thanking God for everything he has given me."

Barbara is just one of hundreds of young people who come to OBI because of family conflicts. It is normal to want to blame someone when things go wrong. It would be easy to blame Barbara, who admits to being like a "tornado." We could blame it on the loss of her grandmother and her house burning. We could blame it on her parents, though Barbara never blamed them. We believe it is much less important to blame someone.

The important thing is that we are responsible for taking young people and trying to set them on a path of success instead of destruction. We are grateful for the opportunities God gives us to redirect boys and girls who have lost their way.

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

'Go and make disciples'

Senior Hahn follows God's call to lead others to Him

By the time most of our seniors get to their last semester, they cannot believe how fast their years here have gone by. Senior Darrell Hahn has experienced that feeling.

"It seems like just yesterday that I was at a time in my life where I was struggling with fulfilling God's call on my life," Hahn recalled. "I remember reading Henry Blackaby's book that focuses on knowing and doing the will of God."

"I knew it was time for me to start living out God's will in my life and I made the move to Clear Creek four years ago to do just that."

Darrell is thankful for the ways God has helped him grow in different ways while at Clear Creek.

"A couple of memories really stand out to me from my time here," he said. "I am thankful for the discipline that I will take away from here for studying the Bible. Clear Creek has helped me to see the importance of really studying the truths of God's Word."

"I am also thankful for the job that was provided for me in the student workshop program while I was here," Hahn added. "I was able to work as a supervisor over custo-

dial services and security. I was initially an introvert when I came here. The job has helped me to learn how to interact better with people. I know that will help me in my ministry position."

For Hahn, that ministry position will involve making disciples.

"I have already been called to serve as associate pastor (at) Mountain Community Fellowship in Paintsville," he said. "I got involved with the church about three years ago when my wife's uncle, who helped start the church, invited me to visit for the launch of the church."

"My wife and kids are there now. I am commuting to the church on the weekends until I graduate in May. My role as associate pastor will be to focus on discipleship," he noted.

"I feel God has called me to a ministry role of teaching people. I feel that making disciples is of the utmost importance for a Great Commission church."

Clear Creek Chronicle



Donnie Fox

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.cccb.edu; e-mail: dfox@ccb.edu

Winans family patriarch dies

Nashville—David “Pop” Winans, patriarch of the famed gospel-singing Winans family, died April 8 at age 74 with his wife of 55 years, Delores “Mom” Winans, at his side.

David Winans had suffered a heart attack last October and died at a Nashville hospice center, the family said in a statement.

David and Delores Winans met singing gospel in 1950 and were married three years later. David Winans worked as a car salesman, taxi driver, custodian and barber to support his growing family of 10 children, many of whom went on to their own gospel careers.

The elder Winans was nominated for a Grammy in 1999, and the couple was jointly nominated 10 years earlier for their album, “Mom & Pop Winans.”

The couple’s best-known children are BeBe and CeCe Winans; four others—Michael, Marvin, Carvin and Ronald—sang together as The Winans. (RNS)

Will Obama tax proposal hurt churches?

By Erin Roach

Nashville—President Obama’s proposal to reduce the tax deductions that wealthy Americans can claim for their charitable donations should not affect Southern Baptist churches, according to Warren Peek, president of the Southern Baptist Foundation.

“People give for three reasons. They give out of guilt, obligation and as a cheerful giver,” Peek told Baptist Press. “As Christians, we’re supposed to be that cheerful giver and give from our hearts. If that’s the case in our churches, then I don’t see the giving to churches going down.”

Under Obama’s budget proposal, the tax deduction for those with incomes over \$250,000 would be reduced from 35 cents for each dollar donated to 28 cents, returning the rate to where it was during the Reagan administration. The revenue generated from the reduction would help fund the health-care overhaul the president has promised. The proposal was stricken from the Senate’s version of the budget but could be re-inserted during Senate-House negotiations.

Some conservatives, including commentator Dick Morris, have noted that the 1 or 2 percent of Americans who would be affected by the reduction are the same people who give almost half of all donations to charity.

“Churches will be hit most hard,” Morris wrote in a column. “They account for the largest share of charitable donations, but univer-

sities, disease research, hospitals, soup kitchens and cultural institutions will also be hit hard. So will international relief efforts that funnel aid abroad through churches or directly.

“It is totally dishonest for Obama to pretend that his curtailment of these deductions won’t hurt the poor,” Morris wrote. “It will most directly impact them since most of the charities Obama is hurting focus on helping the impoverished.”

“When it comes to actual gifts and donations, I think people are still going to support causes that they believe in.”—Warren Peek

Obama has said there is little evidence to support the fear that the reduction would have a significant impact on charitable giving, but the Center for Philanthropy at Indiana University has calculated that the highest-income households would decrease their giving by an estimated \$3.87 billion.

“The impact of this plan is to starve churches and other nonprofits that actually help the poor and replace them with ineffective (and liberal) government programs,” Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council, wrote in a Washington Update. “It’s an idea so fundamentally un-American that each of us should be raising our voices in opposition.”

In addition to funding health care, Obama said the reduction would help equalize the tax break for those donating to charity.

“When I give \$100, I’d get the same amount of deduction as when some—a bus driver who’s making \$50,000 a year or \$40,000 a year—give that same \$100,” the president said of his proposal.

Peek said churches that rely on the support of tithing believers should not fear the proposed policy because such people understand the principle of stewardship that God owns everything and they are simply giving back a portion—typically 10 percent—of the money they’ve been given.

“When it comes to actual gifts and donations, I think people are still going to support causes that they believe in,” Peek said.

The tax proposal could help promote estate planning, which Peek said could mean more church people will turn to national and state Baptist foundations to help them leave more money to Baptist causes when they die.

Obama’s tax proposal, though, surely will affect charitable giving from those who don’t subscribe to the principle of tithing and simply want a tax break, Peek said.

“I do think it will affect those people, but I’m hoping in our Baptist churches that the principles of stewardship are being taught and that most people give because they want to freely give and they understand that God owns it all,” Peek said. (BP)

Doors open to Tenn., Ark. tornado victims

Mena, Ark.—Southern Baptists in Arkansas and Tennessee reached out to help families whose lives were upended by tornadoes that wreaked havoc in the region April 9 and 10.

In Arkansas, Dallas Avenue Baptist Church of Mena opened its doors to serve as a shelter for storm victims after a funnel cloud with 136 mph winds tore a 14.5-mile path through the city of 5,700 in the Ouachita Mountains on April 9. Three people died, 30 were injured and an estimated 1,000 homes were damaged.

The façade of First Baptist’s sanctuary was torn off and its parsonage

damaged, reported Craig Chambers, director of missions for the Ouachita Baptist Association. The storm also damaged a community college and courthouse.

By early light April 10, disaster relief volunteers were assessing damage in Mena and other areas of Arkansas. Later that day, Arkansas Baptist feeding and chainsaw recovery teams arrived on site. By Monday noon, 5,675 meals had been served.

In Tennessee, Gov. Phil Bredesen and other officials toured Murfreesboro, where at least three tornadoes touched down. The storm destroyed

dozens of homes and businesses as it cut a swath 15 miles long and up to a half-mile wide.

New Vision Baptist Church in Murfreesboro volunteered its facilities as a Red Cross shelter, said Ross Smith, the congregation’s business administrator. Several people stayed the night and about 23 storm victims came to the shelter on Saturday for meals and help. Some members helped house church families who were displaced by the storm, while others helped families clear and pack personal items left at their damaged homes. (BP)



DEADLY WINDS A funnel cloud with 136 mph winds tore a 14.5-mile path through Mena, Ark., on April 9, killing three people and destroying or damaging buildings all over town. (Photo by Bill Howse)

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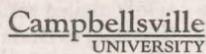
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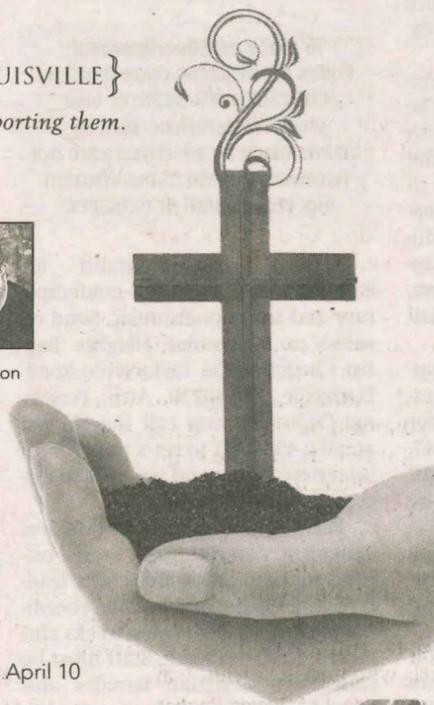
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Baptist World Congress offers early-bird discounts

Honolulu—The Baptist World Alliance has discounted the fee for persons who register early for the 20th Baptist World Congress to be held in Honolulu, Hawaii, in 2010.

All adults who register for the congress by July 31 of this year will pay \$25 less than the advertised registration fee. Persons who live within the United States will pay \$175, down from \$200, while persons from all other countries will have their fee reduced to \$150, down from \$175.

The discount is an attempt by the BWA to assist persons who may be experiencing difficulties during the current economic downturn, which has affected most countries.

To take advantage of the discount, persons may register online or submit their registration form and fee by regular mail, fax, wire transfer, or in person no later than Friday, July 31, 2009. The registration form and fee may also be submitted during the Annual Gathering to be held in Ede, Netherlands, July 27-August 1, this year.

The Baptist World Congress is the largest international gathering of Baptists, and is held every five years. The meetings are to take place at the Hawaii Convention Center from July 28-August 1, 2010.

The congress theme, “Hear the Spirit,” will be explored in worship celebrations, Bible studies, workshop presentations, and through artistic expressions.

Online registration is available at the congress Web site, www.bwacongress2010.org. A printable version of the registration form to submit by mail or fax also is available on the same Web site.

PRAYER PARTNERS

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

■ Pray for those from Tates Creek Baptist Association who are traveling to Panama for a vision trip April 28 looking at ways the association can be involved in missions there.

■ Pray that God will provide a Southern region prayer coordinator for Operation Bended Knee.

■ Pray that Kentucky Baptist churches would respond to the Acts 1:8 Challenge.

■ Pray for Delaware Baptist Association's search for a new director of missions.

■ Pray for all of the Kentucky Baptist mission teams that are preparing for their summer mission trips at home, across the country and around the world.

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

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **BEAVER DAM**—Beaver Dam Church will honor **John Cashion** for his 25 years as minister of music at the church with a reception April 26, 4 p.m. **Bill Bryan** is pastor.

■ **BOWLING GREEN**—Glendale Church will host **Bill Hancock**, former pastor at Highview Church in Louisville, as guest preacher April 26, 9:30 & 10:50 a.m. **Richard Oldham** is pastor.

■ **CADIZ**—**Billy Hunt** recently resigned as pastor of Rock Front Church.

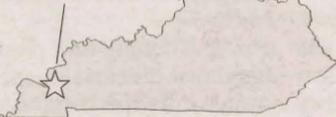
■ **CLINTON**—Second Church will hold revival services April 27-May 1 with **Mark Burnett**, pastor of Mississippi Church in Bardwell, as evangelist. **Larry Fraser** is pastor.

■ **EDDYVILLE**—Lamasco Church will hold revival services April 26, 10 a.m. & 7 p.m.; April 27-29, 7 p.m. with **Rich Gardner**, pastor of Walnut Grove Church in Fredonia, as evangelist. **Dean Ray** is pastor.

■ **HICKMAN**—East Hickman Church recently called **Mark Lambert** as pastor.

Spotlight on ...

Smithland



Revive Prayer Walk and Fellowship of Christian Athletes will host a Revive Kickoff event April 25, 7:30 p.m., at Livingston Central High School featuring live music, student testimonies and free food.

■ **LEBANON**—Woodlawn Church recently called **Beth Albertson** as youth leader. **Greg Haynes** is pastor.

■ **CORRECTION**—**Todd Blevins**, who recently was named pastor at Faith Church in Beattyville, was not previously youth minister at Calvary Church in Irvine.

Unchurched 20-somethings more open than older unchurched

By Tobin Perry

Nashville—Despite recent media reports that young adults are running from churches in droves, the beliefs of many younger unchurched people are more connected to historic Christian beliefs than many suspected.

More 20-somethings than individuals 30 and older believe in the God of the Bible, the resurrection of Christ and the uniqueness of the Christian God, according to a study conducted by LifeWay Research.

The data showed that younger unchurched people are more open than their older unchurched counterparts to hear more about Christianity—though they do tend to hold negative views of the church.

The survey results recently were released in "Lost and Found: The Younger Unchurched and the Churches that Reach Them," a new book by Ed Stetzer, LifeWay

Research director; Richie Stanley, team leader at the North American Mission Board's Center for Missional Research; and Jason Hayes, LifeWay's young adult ministry specialist. According to Hayes, the study confirmed much of what he has seen anecdotally in recent years.

"Despite much of what we've read, heard and even told ourselves, the idea that unchurched young adults are wholly disinterested in Christianity and the church is simply inaccurate," Hayes explained. "They are open to Christianity."

The authors pointed out that church attendance among young adults has not dropped off as much as previously thought. According to surveys conducted between 1972 and 2006 by the General Social Survey, a biennial research project, church attendance among young people is higher than it was in the 1990s and no more than 10 percent



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April

- 23 Iron Sharpening Iron, Crestwood Baptist Church, Crestwood.
- 23 Launch One, Beacon Hill Baptist Church, Somerset.
- 23 Senior Living Celebration, First Baptist Church, Danville.
- 23-24 Quarterly Prayer Meeting for Spiritual Awakening, Caldwell-Lyon Baptist Association Office & Northside Baptist Church, Princeton.
- 24-25 Woman's Missionary Union Resource Team Training, Baptist Building, Louisville.
- 24-26 All-State Children's Choir, East, Cedarmore Conference Center, Bagdad.
- 24-26 All-State Children's Choir, West, Jonathan Creek Conference Center, Hardin.
- 25 Get Small, Living Hope Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

- 25 Kentucky Baptist Literacy Volunteers Conference, Cave City Convention Center.
- 25 High School Bible Drill, Parkway Baptist Church, Bardstown.
- 25 Youth Bible Drill and Speaker's Tournament, Parkway Baptist Church, Bardstown.
- 28 Iron Sharpening Iron, National Corvette Museum Rally Room, Bowling Green.

May

- 1 Children's Bible Drill, First Baptist Church, Somerset, and Reidland Baptist Church, Paducah.
- 1-3 Equestrian Trail Ride, Mammoth Cave National Park.
- 2 Children's Bible Drill, First Baptist Church, Bowling Green, and First Baptist Church, Madisonville.

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

below its peak in the early 1970s.

For the most part, the theological beliefs of unchurched people in their 20s are closer to historic Christianity than the beliefs of living older generations who are unchurched. The research found that more than 4 out of 5 adults in their 20s believe in God. That is 8 percent higher than adults who are 30 and older. Additionally, 57 percent of 20-somethings are more likely to say "there exists only one God, the one described in the Bible." That figure is nearly 10 percent higher than among older adults.

Young people even affirm the central doctrine of Christianity—the resurrection of Christ—at a higher rate. Two out of 3 people in their 20s say they believe Jesus rose from the dead. Only 54 percent of older adults believe this.

"Unchurched young adults are open and believe many of the things that Christians believe, but they

still need to be reached for Christ," Stetzer said. "The challenge today may not be convincing them that there was a resurrection, but convincing them there was only One that brings them new life—and that new life is lived out in a community called 'church.'"

While 20-somethings hold some more historically Christian views than their elders on a variety of core teachings, many also have nagging concerns about the church. Nearly 40 percent of respondents in their 20s believe the church would not approve of their lifestyle choices. Thirty percent of older adults have the same concern.

"The world is watching and young adults are looking to see a real and authentic faith from Christians," Hayes said. "It's not enough for the church to simply believe the right things. Our actions must be connected to these convictions as well."

CLASSIFIED ADS

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FOR SALE: Church buses and vans—new and used. Call American Bus and Accessories, Inc., (800) 582-7118.

FOR SALE: Wurlitzer model 630 theatre organ, chimes. Excellent condition, only used in church. \$1,500. Call (800) 467-8135 and ask for David. dengland@cvilleindustries.com.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Bellevue Baptist Church, a country church with 200-plus average attendance in western Boone County, 20 minutes from Florence. Visit us at www.BellevueBaptist.org. Mail resumé to Pastor Search Committee, Bellevue Baptist Church, 6658 5th St., Burlington, KY 41005. Deadline: June 15.

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

SEEKING: Full-time administrative assistant, Hunsinger Lane Baptist. 12.5–15 hours. Hunsinger.office@hlbc.net. Expected requirements: MS Office, database software.

SEEKING: Part-time military minister. The qualified candidate will be a male Christian, active duty with military experience, demonstrating a sense of calling, and a member in good standing of a Southern Baptist church. Interested individuals may send resumé to First Baptist Church, PO Box 27, Oak Grove, KY 42262. Accepting resúmes until May 31.

SEEKING: Senior pastor for Pleasant View Baptist Church, Waynesburg, Ky. Send resúmes to Pastor Search Team, 13571 Hwy 1247, Waynesburg, KY 40489; or e-mail resúmes to pastorsearch@pvbc.lincoln.org.

SEEKING: Interim children's minister. Responsibilities include coordinating, planning and directing activities related to children in preschool through 5th grade. Position requires approximately 20 hours per week. Send resumé by May 1 to personnelcommittee@highlandbaptistky.com; or mail to HBC, PO Box 104, Shelbyville, KY 40066-0104.

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: Camp staff for Mission Adventure Camp at Cedar Crest. Positions needed: Lifeguard, crafts leader, nature leader and kitchen coordinator. Staff serve for seven weeks and receive \$200 per week. Staff must be college-age Christian females and have a heart for missions and children. Contact Stacy Nall, Kentucky WMU, (502) 489-3454; Stacy.Nall@KyBaptist.org.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of music for Red House Baptist Church, Richmond, Ky. Seminary degree and experience required. Submit resumé to dawn@redhousebc.com.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music for White Sulphur Baptist Church in Georgetown, Ky. For details, please contact Tim Cummins at (502) 695-7160; or e-mail him at Toloco58@aol.com.

SEEKING: Energetic minister to youth and children able to lead a holistic ministry program which includes students and their families. First Baptist, Corbin, is a traditional moderate church, and affirms women's leadership roles. Please mail resúmes to Minister of Youth and Children Search, First Baptist Church, 401 North Laurel Ave., Corbin, KY 40701.

SEEKING: Part-time music director (blended style) for Bellevue 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 are asked to submit a resumé to Alan Walters at alan_walters@adp.com before April 29, 2009.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Petrey Memorial Baptist Church in Hazard, Ky. Send resumé, along with tape or DVD, to Pastor Search Team, 141 Alto St., Hazard, KY 41701. www.petreymemorial.org.

SEEKING: Interim youth minister. Responsibilities include coordinating, planning and directing activities for youth in grades 6 through 12. Position requires approximately 20 hours per week. Send resumé by May 1 to personnelcommittee@highlandbaptistky.com; or mail to HBC, PO Box 104, Shelbyville, KY 40066-0104.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor with the capacity to preach sound biblical doctrine and cast a vision for a 1,000-plus-member church, as well as lead and mentor a highly capable, competent and motivated staff at Parkway Baptist Church, Bardstown, Ky. Please submit resumé to PO Box 755, Bardstown, KY 40004.

SEEKING: Part-time music minister for Audubon Baptist Church. Responsible for blended style congregational worship and choir direction. Only mailed resúmes will be accepted; mail to Linda Owen, 3205 Broeck Pointe Circle, Louisville, KY 40241. All resúmes must be postmarked by May 18, 2009.

S.C. angler Chris Wells

Fishing for men on the professional bass tournament trail

By Mickey Noah
North American Mission Board

Greer, S.C.—The guy in the flashy boat whips his arm forward, casting the sun-glistened lure through the spring air with a whistling sound. The lure splashes among the cattails lining the shallow banks of the lake. As the line is reeled in slowly, there's the unmistakable jerk and a seven-pound bass explodes out of the water, ready for battle.

A seemingly idyllic life on the surface, the professional bass fisherman's life is rife with pressure and temptation.

For every big-name pro like Kevin VanDam, Bill Dance or Roland Martin, plenty of guys finish out of the money or barely make enough to squeak by.

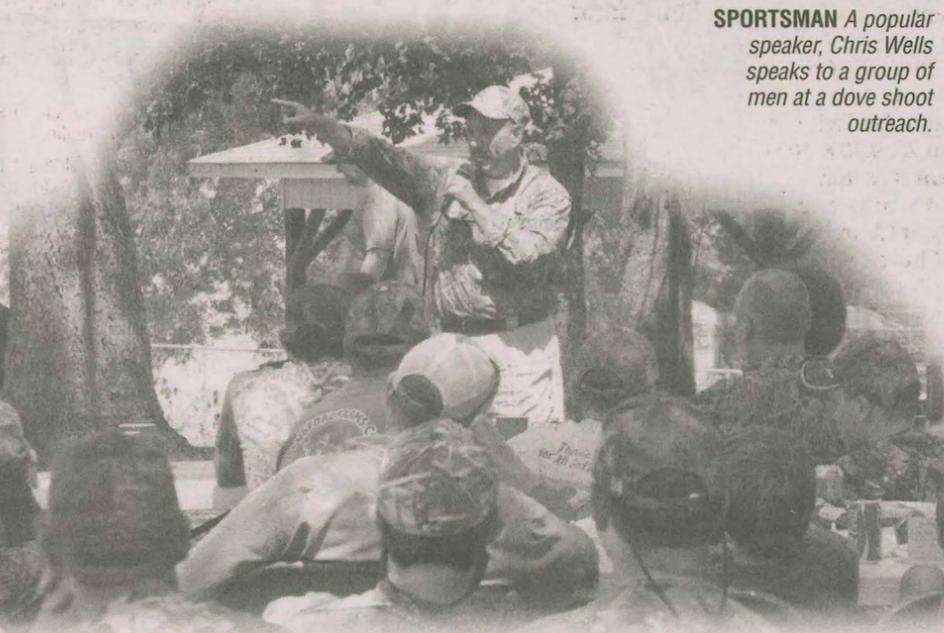
Addictions and issues with families and lonely lives also are common for an angler on the road. Chris Wells sees it all.

Wells, 42, grew up in Summerton, S.C., near the Santee Cooper Reservoir, about an hour from Columbia. With a dad and brother who loved fishing, he had a bait-casting reel at age 6. His boyhood heroes were bass pros, not pro baseball or football players. Young Chris fine-tuned his fishing skills reading Bassmaster magazine and watching the Saturday fishing shows on TV.

As a student at Francis Marion College in Florence, S.C., Wells gave his life to Christ one night under a pecan tree. Today, he is a popular speaker, evangelist and chaplain on the Bassmaster Elite Series tournament trail for the Fellowship of Christian Anglers Society. The Bassmaster tour is owned by ESPN, the sports television network.

"I've never fished professionally and don't now," Wells said. "Bassmaster wanted a chaplain who knew competitive fishing but was not a competitor. The Bassmaster tour guys didn't think the pros would open up to another competitor. Say a pro needed counseling or encouraging because he's not catching fish, he wouldn't admit that to a competitor and ask him to pray for him."

Being a Bassmaster chaplain is just like pastoring a church, said Wells, who has studied toward an M.Div. degree first at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Texas and now at Liberty University in Virginia.



SPORTSMAN A popular speaker, Chris Wells speaks to a group of men at a dove shoot outreach.

"They come to me with some tough problems. At a recent tournament at Lake Amistad in Del Rio, Texas, one of the pros got a call that his dad had just died. He didn't know what to do. If he chose to go home right then, he wouldn't get any points for the tournament and wouldn't make any money for his family. It was a tough call."

And just like the pastor of a church, Wells has to minister to all kinds of guys—some wildly successful, rich and famous, others not so much. Some of the anglers need counseling for addictions to alcohol or pornography or for a struggling marriage.

"Some of the guys are millionaires," Wells said. "When you go into Wal-Marts, you see their faces on packages of fishing lures.... Then you have the guys who are eating peanut butter, sleeping in tents in campgrounds, trying to earn enough just to cover expenses and get to the next event."

Professional anglers earn everything they get and laugh when they hear of the pressures on pros in other sports, such as NASCAR or golf, Wells said.

"A lot of people think bass fishing is all about luck," Wells said. "It's all about giftedness, not just luck. I could practice my golf swing 14 hours a day but would never be a Tiger Woods. Kevin VanDam [four-time BASS Angler of the Year] is the Tiger

Woods of bass fishing. He's the most gifted fisherman on the planet. He can catch fish when no one else can. But he's gifted, not just lucky."

As a self-funded Mission Service Corps missionary with the North American Mission Board, Wells (www.chriswells.org) raises his own support for Wellspoken Ministries, a ministry he founded in 2004. When he's not at Bassmaster tournaments, he's much in demand—especially from January through October—on the church wild game dinner circuit.



MISSIONARY Chris Wells, a North American Mission Board Mission Service Corps missionary, serves as chaplain for the Bassmaster Elite Series, traveling to tournaments in his colorful pickup.

"I arrive early on tournament days," Wells said. "I don't do hard-sell evangelism. I try to catch the guys in casual situations when they're going out on the lake or coming off. I do servant evangelism and try to build relationships with them."

As chaplain for the Fellowship of Christian Anglers Society, Wells also leads "FO-CAS" meetings (Bible studies) the Wednesday night before a bass tournament begins.

At the first 2009 tournament at Lake Amistad in March, he spoke not only to the pros but to tournament marshals as well. Nine prayed to receive Christ, Wells said.

"I always tell stories to get the guys hooked. Faith comes by hearing. I just don't preach to them," he said, adding that he typically works in the sinner's prayer.

This coming summer, the North American Mission Board has signed Wells to speak at four World Changers events and one Power Plant event. Both aimed at students, Power Plant is a church-planting initiative for young people, while World Changer participants gather in cities across North America to repair and renovate housing in low-income neighborhoods.

Wells is one of more than 5,600 North American Mission Board missionaries. To learn more about how NAMB missionaries share Christ through outdoor ministries, visit www.omxtv.com and click on the episode titled "Outdoor Sportsmen."

'Faith Stimulus Package' makes eternal impact in Memphis

By Mark Kelly

Bartlett, Tenn.—While the rest of America was in an uproar over an economic "stimulus package" from Washington, leaders of Faith Baptist Church in Bartlett, Tenn., were planning a stimulus package of their own: a faith stimulus package.

The 3,600-member congregation on the eastern outskirts of Memphis rolled out a 16-page plan designed to stimulate businesses run by church members and help members of the congregation get needed services at more affordable prices. The Faith Stimulus Package was part of a broader initiative to minister to the community.

"We hear so much about the economy. A lot of people are struggling," said Todd Pendergrass, the church's executive pastor. "For us, it's about not turning a deaf ear to what's happening. There are things we can do for each other, take care of each other through difficult times."

Besides providing a directory of businesses willing to discount services for

church members, the congregation also planned to offer "Recession Ready Workshops" to help members strengthen their financial positions and a "Recession Ready Saturday" that offered free services to the community—everything from haircuts and car washes to medical screenings and automobile oil changes.

"It's not going to solve the world's problems but it will help them to see each other as family that can support each other," Pendergrass said. "It says to the community that we care about you, we want to do something to help."

A time of economic downturn presents God's people with tremendous opportunity, senior pastor Danny Sinquefield said as he signed the stimulus package in a ceremony modeled after the White House event formalizing the federal plan.

"Believing that God is the ultimate source and solution to this current economic crisis, and that the church is the body of Christ commanded to love our

neighbor as our own lives, and that we as the local expression of His church are responsible for one another in Christian love, we hereby sign this commitment to be 'recession ready' as the people of God in this community," Sinquefield said.

"We recognize that this current season of financial uncertainty has the potential to create fresh dependence on the hand of God in each of our lives. We hereby commit ourselves to prayer for our nation to be brought to a place of humility, repentance and spiritual awakening and we acknowledge this as a wonderful opportunity for the church to be salt and light in a dark time," he said.

The congregation was primed for a ministry like this because they had just completed a churchwide study of "Eternal Impact: The Passion of Kingdom-Centered Communities," the newest component of the Empowering Kingdom Growth emphasis in the Southern Baptist Convention.

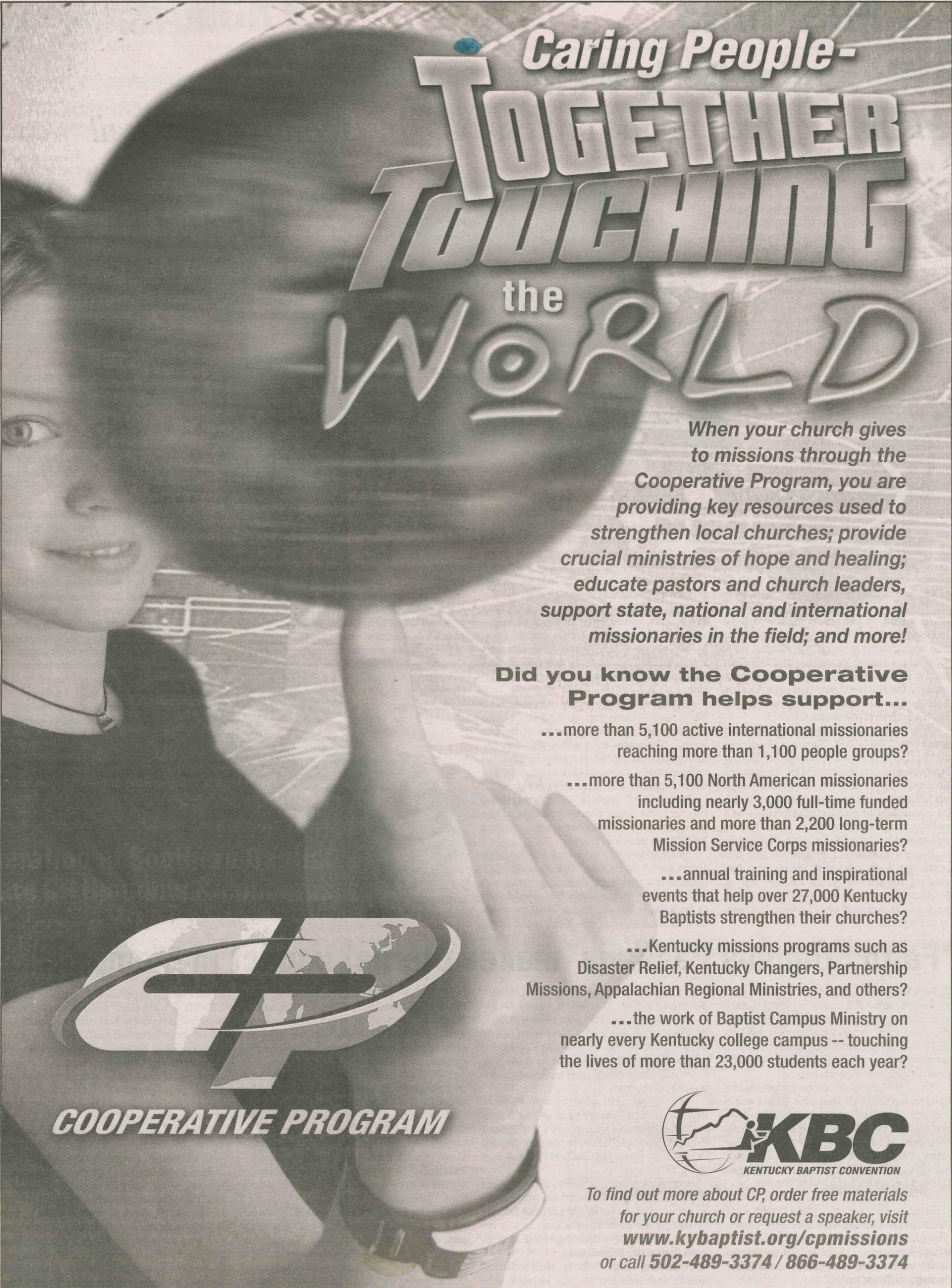
Eternal Impact can help Kingdom-cen-

tered congregations like Faith Baptist Church get all their people on the same page about witness and ministry, associate pastor Ryan Johnston said.

"The Faith Stimulus Package was a response to the Kingdom mindset put on the forefront for us by the Eternal Impact study," Johnston said. "We are a church that has already embraced Kingdom principles. We have an outward focus."

"But we also understand that not every individual has personalized that truth. We can have all the programs we want, but unless every member grabs it personally, we will never truly be a Kingdom-focused church," Johnston added.

"Eternal Impact gave us a great opportunity to unveil everything we do for people who are new or haven't grasped that yet. Hopefully, it helps start an epidemic in people's hearts that the Kingdom of God isn't on Sunday or Wednesday but it's happening all the time, whether it's at home in your family or in your business." (BP)



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