

Shine like stars in the world  
Philippians 2:15

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## Holding the rope

### N. Kentucky church recognizes value of CP missions giving

By Karen Willoughby

**Independence**—Pastor Will Langford of Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Independence still has the six-inch length of anchor-line rope he received when he was in seminary.

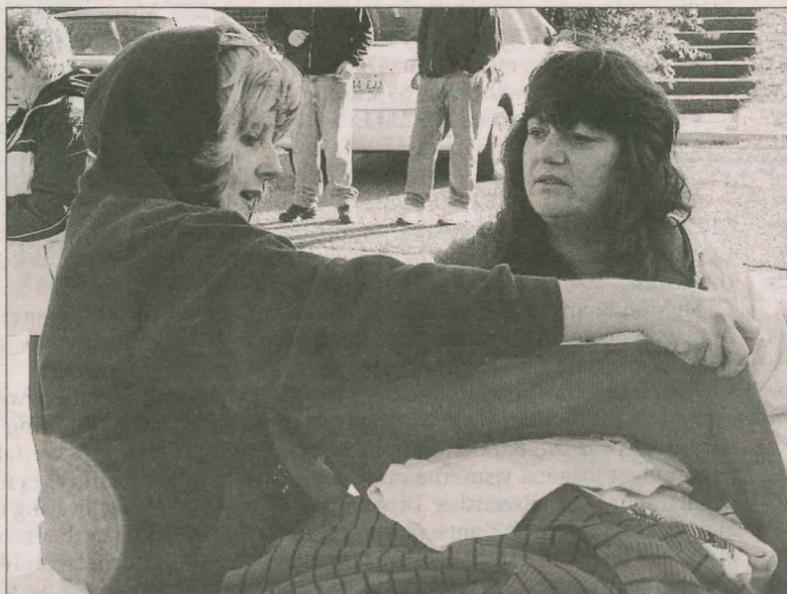
"Hold the rope," Langford said, recalling a missionary leader in the mid-1980s challenging a class at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. "As pastors, you need to hold the rope for our missionaries."

"I'm still holding on," Langford declared.

One of the ways he "holds the rope" is by keeping missions in front of the Northern Kentucky congregation he leads—including personal examples of the Cooperative Program in his Sunday morning messages.

"What we have found is that the Cooperative Program is a very personal way of doing missions—if you take time to make it personal," the pastor said. "We want to put a face on the Cooperative Program. Our desire is to utilize media and print to feature a missionary a month so our people can become familiar with their ministry."

"Talking about the Cooperative Program helps us remember the privilege we have of giving," Langford noted. "Talking about it keeps us involved in supporting missions around the world. Talking about it reminds us we are part of a whole. We are not some island out here by ourselves. We are part of the body of



Members of Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Independence load up trailers to carry food and clothing to low-income neighborhoods in Kenton County in Northern Kentucky. The photo and our ministries is just one of several that allow church members the opportunity to "love on our community," according to Pastor Will Langford. (BP photo)

Christ, and we need to participate in that."

During the seven years he has been at Hickory Grove, Langford has led the church to increase its giving to missions through the Cooperative Program from 6.5 percent to 10 percent.

"I felt strongly that we needed to increase our support," he said. "We need to tithe as a church. What greater message can we share with our church that even in a bad economy you give sacrificially? And, to be honest, it's been a good year. God is providing."

Hickory Grove supports the Cooperative Program because it goes where the church cannot, the pastor explained.

"The Cooperative Program is the most comprehensive way to reach the world that has ever been developed," he said. "It provides support for local, state, national and international ministries. I don't know of anything else quite like it; its longevity speaks to its effectiveness."

"Being Southern Baptist inherently says we're making a commitment to our missionaries, and I'm not going to do anything to water down that commitment," Langford added.

Because Hickory Grove is a healthy church, it can keep its commitment to missions while it also ministers in its local community, throughout Kentucky and across the

See Hickory Grove ... Page 3

## Somerset pastor to be nominated for SBC office

By Todd Deaton  
Editor

**Louisville**—Somerset pastor John Mark Toby will be nominated as first vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention when messengers to the annual meeting convene June 23-24 at the Kentucky Exposition Center in Louisville.



John Mark Toby

Toby, pastor of Beacon Hill Baptist Church in Somerset since 1999, currently is serving as president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention. He will be nominated for the SBC office by Kevin Smith, pastor of Watson Memorial Baptist Church in Louisville and assistant professor of church history at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, also in Louisville.

"I want to nominate Brother Toby because he is a fine representative of a Kentucky Baptist and a Southern Baptist," Smith told the Western Recorder.

"He is obviously supportive of the state convention as demonstrated by his volunteer service in a variety of positions, culminating with his election as president last November," said Smith, who served as the KBC's first vice president in 2007.

Additionally, (Toby's)  
See KBC president ... Page 2

## Barna survey suggests Americans confused about Christianity, God

**Ventura, Calif.**—Americans are trying to make sense of biblical teachings in light of their daily experiences, researcher George Barna said in a recent report that found a number of inconsistencies in people's beliefs.

The Barna Group surveyed nearly 2,000 self-described Christians and found that one-quarter of them identify with descriptions of God that are not consistent with biblical teaching—for instance, everyone is god, god refers to the realization of human potential, and so on.

Nearly 40 percent of the Christians surveyed strongly agreed and 20 percent agreed somewhat that the Holy Spirit is "a symbol of God's power or presence but is not a living entity," Barna noted. Forty percent strongly agreed that Satan "is not a living being but is a symbol of evil."

More than 20 percent of those surveyed strongly agreed that Jesus Christ sinned

when He lived on earth, Barna found, and another 17 percent agreed somewhat.

Even so, a slight majority of Christians, 55 percent, strongly agree that the Bible is accurate in all of the principles it teaches, and 18 percent agree somewhat.

"Most Americans, even those who say they are Christian, have doubts about the intrusion of the supernatural into the natural world," Barna said. "Hollywood has made evil accessible and tame, making Satan and demons less worrisome than the Bible suggests they really are. It's hard for achievement-driven, self-reliant, independent people to believe that their lives can be impacted by unseen forces."

"At the same time, through sheer force of repetition, many Americans intellectually accept some ideas—such as the fact that you either side with God or Satan, there's no in-between—that do not get translated into practice," he said. (BP)

## Restrictions lifted on IMB personnel travel to Mexico

**Richmond, Va.**—The International Mission Board has lifted restrictions on non-emergency travel to and from Mexico by its personnel. The decision, announced May 7, was based on updated information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization.

Though ongoing outbreaks continue to spread in the United States and internationally, reports on the severity of the symptoms indicate that the strain is not as dangerous as public health officials originally thought. Last week, the IMB suspended non-emergency travel in response to the CDC's recommendations that U.S. travelers avoid all non-essential travel to Mexico.

All missionaries who were previously restricted from travel may now return to Mexico. U.S. churches with imminent mission trips to the country are encouraged to continue to stay in touch with local contacts and to monitor CDC recommendations as they make travel plans.

As of May 8, the CDC Web site reported that there were 896 cases of swine flu infections in the U.S., two of those resulting in death. Kentucky has two confirmed cases, one of those patients remains hospitalized in Georgia.

Worldwide, 24 countries had reported 2,384 cases of the swine flu, according to a May 8 update from the WHO Web site. More than 1,100 of those cases are in Mexico where 42 people have died from the infection.

## Budget matters dominate KBC's May Mission Board meeting

By Drew Nichter  
News Director

**Bagdad**—With talk of the economy dominating the national headlines, it is no surprise that plenty of discussion at last week's Kentucky Baptist Convention Mission Board meeting centered on money.

Meeting May 4-5 at Cedarmore Camp and Conference Center in Shelby County, board members approved the details of a \$24.48 million Cooperative Program budget for 2009-10.

The CP budget goal, approved by KBC messengers last November, reflects a 2 percent increase over the current budget. However, Lowell Ashby, KBC's business services team leader, said he expects the budget may fall short of its goal by as much as \$1 million next year.

With the April totals in, the Cooperative Program is more than \$500,000 (3.26 percent) behind budget with only four months remaining in the current fiscal year.

Using projections based on CP gifts through February, Ashby said the KBC expects to receive only about \$23 million for 2008-09, \$1 million short of the \$24 million budget goal.

Estimated totals for the 2009-10 fiscal year are expected to be "very similar" to this year, Ashby noted.

While the upcoming year's budget still reflects the \$24.48 million goal, Ashby reported that about \$500,000 has been "separated out" in the form of expenditure cuts

by KBC Mission Board staff teams. That money will be placed in a contingency fund and remain unallocated unless next year's budget goal is reached.

Ashby said convention leaders opted for the contingency approach rather than revising the Cooperative Program goal for 2009-10. A motion to adopt a revised budget would have to be brought before KBC messengers at the annual meeting.

Five of the six KBC Mission Board staff teams made reductions in their requested CP allocations for 2009-10. They include:

- Church development team: \$168,565.
- Evangelism growth team: \$75,162.
- Missions growth team: \$67,143.
- Leadership development team: \$48,291.

- Executive office: \$29,455 (includes a \$19,100 reduction in convention operation expenses administered by the executive team).

Mission Board staff members are "holding costs down, but not reducing ministries," Ashby said.

Addressing a board member's concern that more than \$100,000 had been trimmed from the Baptist Campus Ministries budget for next year—the most of any department—KBC Executive Director Bill Mackey responded: "It's not a matter of singling out one area. All areas had to make reductions.

"There's no long-term strategy at this point to be expressed in any of these" cuts,

Mackey noted. "As resources are available, we will continue to support those ministries."

The 2009-10 budget also includes a slight increase in percentage allocation to Southern Baptist Convention causes to 37.32 percent. KBC ministries will receive 62.68 percent.

In another cost-saving move, board members approved the formation of a study committee to examine reducing the size of the KBC Mission Board.

Currently, Kentucky has the largest executive board membership among state conventions with 172 representatives, only 16 of whom do not represent state associations, according to KBC Assistant Executive Director Steve Thompson.

The 2009-10 budget includes a line item of \$66,000 for Mission Board expenses, which includes travel, lodging and meals. This year's budgeted amount is \$61,000. In 2007-08, the KBC spent more than \$103,000 on Mission Board expenses.

In other business:

- Board members voted to redefine the KBC's Church Building Loan Fund, a loan assistance program established in 1956 as a way to assist churches in constructing new facilities or renovating existing ones.

According to the recommendation from the KBC's business and finance committee, the ministry will be terminated and the fund will be renamed the Missions Growth Team KBCConnect Extension Fund.

Accordingly, funds from principal and interest payments on seven outstanding loan balances, as well as the account's net interest earnings that have been invested with the Kentucky Baptist Foundation since 2005, will be distributed to this new fund to help the missions growth team achieve ministry goals proposed in the Kentucky Baptist Connect extension, set to begin Sept. 1.

- Board members approved a recommendation that would call for all bequests to the KBC of an amount greater than \$100,000 "be invested with the Kentucky Baptist Foundation and earnings be distributed to the respective fund(s)." This would only apply to gifts intended for the Cooperative Program, Restricted Kentucky Only or other designated funds.

All bequests less than \$100,000 would be "distributed accordingly to the then-current fiscal year's budgeted allocations for CP and RKO that year."

- Charles Barnes updated Mission Board members on the status of the Crossover Louisville evangelism event which precedes the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in June. He reported that at least 150 churches and mission groups will participate at more than 60 different sites around the Louisville Metro area.

He also noted that help still is needed with the door-to-door, international festival and Hispanic festival/revival teams, and urged Kentucky Baptists to get involved.

## University of the Cumberlands honors three faculty and staff members at annual dinner

**Williamsburg**—University of the Cumberlands held its annual Faculty-Staff Dinner April 23, honoring individuals for years of service and presenting awards for service and teaching excellence.

Each year, based on nominations from students, faculty and staff members, one Cumberlands' faculty member receives the Excellence in Teaching Award.

Physics Professor Larry Newquist was given this year's honor for his passion for teaching and seeing students succeed not only in the classroom but also in life.

In his 18 years of service at Cumberlands, Newquist has set high standards for students, but has made himself available inside and outside the classroom, often working through problems one on one with students who encountered difficulty with assignments.

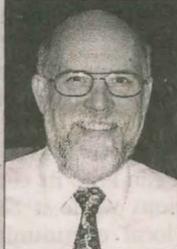
"When I needed help, Dr. Newquist always put aside his own tasks to provide assistance and always showed a true interest in doing so," one of his students wrote.

Another student said, "His task might have been to teach me physics, but he taught me much more. He has been an inspiration as a role model, a friend and especially a teacher."

Convinced that everything in life is related to his subject, Newquist is a passionate recruiter of outstanding mathematics and physics students for UC and also takes his astronomy classes on the road to various school-age groups. Within the community, he works with the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and Rogers' Explorers programs.

Anita Bowman, assistant professor of health, was presented with the 2009 William T. Miles Community Service Award. The award is given each year to a faculty member who has made a significant contribution to the Williamsburg

community in an area consistent with university goals. The individual must be a Christlike servant who: lives the mission of Cumberlands; achieves a bold service focused on physical and spiritual health; provides humble service; and models service to others.



Larry Newquist



Anita Bowman



Susan Felts

Since coming to Cumberlands in 2004, Bowman has organized the breast cancer and heart disease prevention and awareness programs, and each semester works with students in the Dare-to-Compare program. In addition, she takes an active part in Mountain Outreach, Cumberlands' homebuilding program, participating in local projects and spending her spring break working with Mountain Outreach in Eastern Kentucky, where she helped to build wheelchair ramps. She even has incorporated a Mountain Outreach project into the curriculum of her freshman INSIGHTS class, offering her students an opportunity to learn through service.

Bowman cares greatly about the community's physical and spiritual health and lives Cumberlands' mission by serving the underserved. Moreover, her humble service allows her to show weakness and limitations and to ask students for help when necessary.

The university presented its 2009 Service Award for full-time administrators and non-teaching staff members to Assistant Bursar Susan Felts.

Felts is well known on campus for her dedication, and she takes pride in the service she provides to students, faculty and staff. She greets everyone with a smile and a readiness to help, and has been described as a "perfect

fit" for her current position in the school's bursar's office. While working full-time, she completed a bachelor's degree in organizational management and now is pursuing a master's in teaching.

## KBC President John Mark Toby to be nominated for SBC post

Continued from page 1

church has been a regular supporter of the Cooperative Program and other state and national offerings," Smith noted. "He has a good working relationship with a broad cross section of Baptists, and he has a gracious spirit. On top of this, he leads his church on short-term missions trips and serves as a (Kentucky) National Guard chaplain. On many levels, he is a fine Christian leader."

According to the 2008 Kentucky Baptist Annual Church Profile statistics, Beacon Hill has a membership of more than 1,190, averages 465 in weekly Sunday school attendance, and reported 24 baptisms last year. The congregation ranks 33rd among Kentucky Baptist Convention churches in giving to the Cooperative Program, and it recently was recognized for exceeding the \$2 million mark in lifetime CP contributions. Beacon Hill also has a television ministry that reaches into five states with a potential weekly viewing audience of 3 million homes.

Toby, a member of the Kentucky National Guard since 1983, is an endorsed chaplain of the North American Mission Board, supervising four Chaplain Unit Ministry Teams that minister to 1,645 soldiers. He recently served as a Task Force New Orleans Chaplain, providing relief and recovery operations to the victims of Hurricane Katrina. He also serves as a volunteer chaplain at Lake Cumberlands Regional Hospital.

In 2004 and in 2007, Toby served as a member of the SBC's tellers committee when the national convention met in Indianapolis and San Antonio respectively.

On the state level, his denominational service also includes KBC first vice president in 2005-06; mem-

ber of the Mission Board; secretary of the KBC Administrative Committee; secretary of the business and finance committee; chairman of the audit work group, co-chairman of the tellers committee, twice chairman of the Committee of Committees; and member of the Committee on Arrangements. He also was president of the 2006 KBC Pastors' Conference.

Toby has served as evangelism director for Pulaski Baptist Association, and an evangelist and church planter with the KBC's partnerships with Brazil and Kenya.

In affirming the nomination, KBC Executive Director Bill Mackey noted that Toby has been "consistent in strong financial support of missions and ministries through the Cooperative Program and has provided positive leadership for Kentucky Baptists." Emphasizing Toby's extensive leadership experience and knowledge of convention life, Mackey added, "He will provide great support for the convention president."

"If elected," Toby said, "I would consider it an honor to serve the SBC and assist the president in any way possible to communicate Christ clearly through our churches to our communities, culture, country and the world through Southern Baptist endeavors."

Toby is a graduate of Luther Rice Seminary in Lithonia, Ga., Southern Seminary and Eastern Kentucky University. He also is a graduate of the Command and General Staff College of the United States Army. Prior to Beacon Hill, Toby served as pastor of First Baptist Church of Fairdale for five years. He and his wife of 24 years, Cathy, have a 10-year-old son, Daniel.

## Hickory Grove Baptist 'holds the rope' for Cooperative Program missions

Continued from page 1

United States, Langford pointed out.

Through Sunday school, small groups, recreation, Upward sports, local ministry opportunities and North American mission trips, Hickory Grove members draw closer to God and His direction for their lives as they reach out to others.

About 700 people attend Hickory Grove's two Sunday morning services, but about 1,300 were on hand during three Easter services, which revealed to the pastor the potential span of the congregation.

"We have to be careful that the back door is not as wide open as the front door," Langford said. "Life groups are one way we're addressing that issue." Life groups started last September when the church stopped having Sunday evening services.

"We were running 150 (on) Sunday night, on a good night," the pastor recalled. "To me that showed Sunday nights were not effective. We have about 300 who meet in life groups."

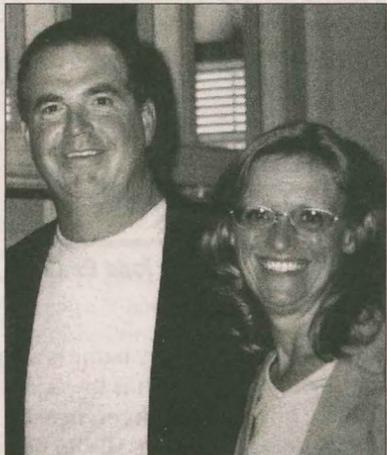
"We have seen not only an immediate impact in the fellowship of the church, but we have seen growth: We baptized 27 people in the last quarter of the year, after we started the life groups."

The Upward sports ministry also has been a spiritual boost to people in the church and the community. About 500 boys and girls are involved in Upward Basketball; 40 girls in cheerleading and 200 boys and girls in co-ed flag football.

"We're living in a day when sports teams are dominating the culture," he added. "We feel we reach a lot of unreached kids and their families every Saturday."

Upward sports involve a biblical, character-building devotional during practices and breaks at halftime during games. A major evangelistic thrust is made during end-of-season events that draw parents, friends and neighbors.

"We have big awards nights at the end of each season, and typically



Will and Mel Langford

we'll see 40 to 60 decisions for Christ at those events," Langford said of what he described as "a Kingdom-building ministry."

Among its other local ministries, Hickory Grove has had a preschool day care for more than 20 years that draws about 100 youngsters, from Section 8 low-income government housing.

"We also bring those families in for awards and graduation and really have a chance to love on our community," the pastor noted.

This "community love" continues through Thanksgiving and Christmas, with church members delivering up to 150 boxes of food and clothing to people in the area each of the past four years.

"I was dumbfounded when I saw how many of our folks got involved with this," Langford said of the outreach, which was suggested by one of Hickory Grove's members.

"We take everything to them, rather than asking them to come here to the church to get it," he explained. "We'll pull up with trailers packed with food ... Then we invite them to come out to the trailers, where clothing has been separated by sizes, so they can choose what they want and need."

In addition to its local ministry,

Hickory Grove is involved in church planting. In the last three years, the church has participated in two new church plants: Heritage Church just across the river in Mason, Ohio, and Journey Church in Florence.

Heritage Church, from its beginning in the fall of 2008, has expressed a commitment to Southern Baptist mission causes by committing 10 percent of its budget to the Cooperative Program. The church even has become strong enough to call its first pastor.

Hickory Grove also wants to be involved in a North American mission trip for families every year.

"What I love about missions is that anybody can do it," Langford said. "We do a family mission trip every year, with backyard Bible clubs, vacation Bible school, church construction projects and the like."

"It's been one thing that's brought us all together in serving our Lord," the pastor continued. "It strengthens fellowship, develops us to be part of the Great Commission."

As part of its North American outreach, Hickory Grove mission trips in recent years have spread out to Buffalo, N.Y., Cleveland and the Appalaches region.

"Our families really enjoy that," Langford said. "We feel like families should be doing missions together. There's no better way for children to learn about missions than to do missions with their families."

"We've been given a commission to reach the world, to take the gospel to the world," he emphasized. "When we go on these family mission trips, it gives our church a better understanding of how our missionaries serve, what they sacrifice."

"Second, going on these mission trips increases their burden and their conviction of the need to be supportive in their giving and their praying. There is no way we'll fulfill the Great Commission without conviction." (BP)

## ONE Student Rally to precede convention

Louisville—The ONE Student Rally, sponsored in part by the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists, will serve as an outreach tool ahead of next month's Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Louisville.

Dean Forrest, the event's chief coordinator, told Baptist Press the rally is meant to attract local unchurched youth.

"This is not just another event for local youth groups, but the goal is that the local youth pastors will bring their students and they'll encourage their students to bring their friends," said Forrest, a COSBE member.

The rally is set for June 21 at 6 p.m., in Rooms South C201-205 at the Kentucky Exposition Center. Admission is free.

Dean and Gayna Forrest and their son, Geoffrey, will lead in praise and worship, evangelist Ken Freeman delivers a message to students,

Freeman, a COSBE member from San Antonio, regularly speaks at youth conferences and retreats. Following Freeman, students will be treated to a concert by Dove Award winners Building 429, a contemporary Christian band.

In addition to COSBE, the rally is sponsored by Long Run Baptist Association in Louisville, the Kentucky Baptist Convention and the North American Mission Board.

Joe Ball, a youth strategist with the KBC, said the state convention has helped promote the event by producing and sending flyers to local youth leaders.

"I hope for a full house of lost students. Hopefully some churches will encourage their students to bring their lost friends," Ball told BP. "It's a wonderful opportunity to expose kids to a great speaker that's going to bring the truth of the gospel in a way that's relevant to students."

Forrest said the idea for the rally

stemmed from a need he noticed when he served as COSBE's music director during the past few years.

"Historically, we've always worked with Crossover. There have been Crossover activities in the past that targeted students, but most of them targeted families," he recalled.

"It's something that had been my idea as an outreach to students. Last year in Indianapolis was the first year for the rally," Forrest said. "The current officers of COSBE asked me to produce the program again this year. As an organization we realized we could use the rally to reach students instead of just going to the convention to fellowship."

To encourage youth pastors to bring groups, organizers are offering a drawing for a PlayStation 3 video game system.

Also, students can invite their unchurched friends via a Facebook event page for the rally. (BP)

## Deacon chairman seeks repentance for Christians with 'If My People' service

By Ken Walker  
State Correspondent

Albany—Whether or not his hope of calling Christians to repentance spreads beyond Albany, the Southern Kentucky town of 2,300, Mike Lawson knows it is something God has laid on his heart.

"In these difficult times, talking with people, you sense there's a general unrest," said Lawson, chairman of deacons at First Baptist Church of Albany. "People in general are concerned about the country."

**"As you participate in your church, this will be a witness to others and you will be furthering the effort to see this done in our counties, state and nation. We must also realize that this is only a start and that our turning back to God as a people must be a process that requires lifelong commitment."**

—Mike Lawson

"I think the economic crisis his prompted some of this. You look at the moral decline of our nation—we've been concerned about that for years."

Acting on that unease, Lawson has arranged a special service for Sunday, June 14 with the theme: "If My People."

The title comes from 2 Chronicles 7:14, "If my people, who are called by my name, will humbly themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

Lawson promoted the observance at a recent meeting of Freedom and Wayne Baptist Associations. The memo he distributed at the meeting calls for the Scripture to form the text for a message on such topics as marriage, family unity, morality, children honoring their parents or greed.

It added that a song service can be built around the text and prayer should be observed.

"As you participate in your church, this will be a witness to others and you will be furthering the effort to see this done in our counties, state and nation," the memo said. "We must also realize that this is only a start and that our turning back to God as a people must be a process that requires lifelong commitment."

Though June 14 also is Flag Day, Lawson said there is no connection between that event and the special service.

Lawson's plan puts him in good company.

In recent times the Southern Baptist Convention has used 2 Chronicles 7:14 as its theme verse for annual meetings in 1984, 1996 and 2007, according to Roger "Sing" Oldham, vice president for convention relations.

In the April newsletter of Significant Living—a Christian seniors network based in suburban Chicago—Executive Director Randy Swanson mentioned it in a column about his concerns for the United States government.

"Many are now pointing to 2 Chronicles 7:14 as the mandate for Christians to pray for our beloved country and turn the tide of this economic and emotional devastation," Swanson noted.

While it is not clear how many churches in the two associations will participate, Jim England of Stony Point Baptist Church in Albany said it is likely his congregation will hold such a service.

Noting the calls for national prayer that followed the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, Stony Point's pastor said he does not think changes will come until repentance occurs on a national scale.

"I mean a real change takes place," England insisted. "People turning away from actual sins and getting more serious about God. Not just coming to Christ, but having a change in their life."

Jeff Brown, pastor at First Baptist, Albany, said during a recent Sunday evening Bible discussion, another member who was not aware of Lawson's idea mentioned it might be good for the congregation to seek God.

"When more than one person is saying something and they're not telling each other, the Lord is in it," Brown said. "I'm getting the idea this is something the Lord is leading people toward."

Lawson said he hopes "If My People" also will spread a new awareness of Scripture and how 2 Chronicles 7:14 applies to the church, not just the world.

"There are believers that don't study God's Word as they should," Lawson noted. "Sometimes we take (that) for granted."

## Edgewood Baptist dedication

Edgewood Baptist Church in Hopkinsville recently relocated to a 30-acre site on Cadiz Highway, marking a major step of faith by the church body.

### Partners in the Mission



By Bill Mackey

Pastor Nick Sandefur said the church had felt God's leadership to relocate several years ago, and when the members had the opportunity to sell their building, they did so even though it meant that there would be a time when they were not in their own building. In fact, the church met at Heritage Christian Academy for about two years until April 26, the first Sunday at the new location.

The new facilities (40,000 square feet) are well organized with a 650-seat sanctuary, offices and choir room on one side of the extended entrance corridor. Educational space, a kitchen, a library and a gym are on the other side.

Individual seats fill the sanctuary and the latest furnishings and décor are customized for each age group throughout the facilities. Everything is very appealing and functional. Total costs were about \$4.8 million.

God certainly has blessed the congregation in the transition from its old facilities to the new. Sunday school has grown from 250 in average attendance to 400 in the new facility. On the first Sunday, worship attendance in both morning services exceeded 650, and Sunday school exceeded 500.

Robin Leek, minister of children, said there were 160 preschoolers and children in attendance. Mark Strickland, minister of youth, said more than 100 youth now are enrolled in Sunday school with 60 in average attendance.

During the dedication of the new facilities, Sandefur expressed appreciation to the building committee, architect, builders, Christian County Association Director of Missions Bobby Melton, and to all members for their sacrifice in making the project possible. In his closing remarks and prayer, Bill Whittinghill expressed appreciation for the pastor's leadership over the past eight years.

Sandefur said the hand of God has clearly been on the church and church members.

"We trust the hand of God to be on our church for the future. As long as there is one person who needs hope, help, healing and salvation, we will make room," he said.

It has been exciting to learn about the strong commitment of the church to the support of missions through the Cooperative Program. The church gives 12 percent of its undesignated receipts to CP.

Member Jan Ausenbaugh said the church's commitment to missions through the Cooperative Program is intentional and purposeful.

Edgewood originally got its start in 1958 after about 100 people were sent out by the church they loved, Second Baptist, with a vision for reaching the northwest side of Hopkinsville.

Pastor Sandefur said he looks forward to the time when the church can do for another church plant what Second Baptist did for Edgewood.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

## 'What are you doing here?'

Some will no doubt view last week's paring of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's budget by the state Mission Board as just another sign of the times. With the economic downturn, such business prudence is to be expected.

With Cooperative Program receipts from churches now lagging behind budget by some \$500,000, KBC leaders are anticipating a shortfall of its \$24 million goal by as much as \$1 million. As a result, KBC team leaders already have begun making adjustments in their expenditures for this fiscal year to hold costs down, without reducing ministries. Business manager Lowell Ashby explained to the Mission Board, "That's our challenge: To try to keep ourselves ahead of where our giving is right now and see where the trends are going."

Among the more significant budgetary reductions warranted by the shortfall are in the church development area, which may take the lion's share of the cutbacks: \$168,565. The evangelism growth area could be affected by \$75,162; and the impact on the missions growth area is projected at \$67,143. Of an estimated \$500,000 in savings, KBC team leaders noted that more than half are in "fixed reductions"—mostly in vacant, part-time positions that will not be filled. Yet, approximately \$234,000 still will have to come through program reductions.

Pulling back is a natural human response in times of uncertainty, change, fear and distress. Yet, God's people must always be sure that our ministry effectiveness is never compromised in the process, only enhanced by sharper focusing. When His people find themselves in desperate circumstances, it often is exactly where they learn the most about placing their trust in God to provide for His work.

In discussing the separate, but related, matter of downscaling the state Mission Board from its present size of 172 members, Jerry Oakley of Bowling Green, a former director of missions for Warren Association, aptly cautioned that more than an eagerness in saving money, we should be as concerned about our ministry effectiveness. His words are equally applicable here. As resources are available, KBC Executive Director Bill Mackey reassured board members, we must continue to support those ministries and to trust God for the resources that we need.

Certainly, it is easy to understand: With the plunging stock market, rampant home foreclosures, rising unemployment in many sectors, and banks undergoing "stress tests," many people are becoming more and more worried about what tomorrow may hold. But the

recession of 2008-09 is not the first time God's people have faced uncertain and distressing times.

The world's voices scream that we need to be more self-reliant, self-sufficient. Save more, invest wisely, spend less, financial advisors repeatedly tell us. All of which is sound advice—even in good times. A biblical view, however, also recognizes that even as we prepare wisely, we must be ever mindful that we are dependent on God for all of our true needs.

On the heels of a great victory against 850 prophets of Baal and Asherah at Mount Carmel, Elijah—whose very name is a bold declaration of faith, meaning "Yahweh is my God"—was afraid that Queen Jezebel would seek revenge. He ran! At least he ran in the right direction. His 40 day journey took him back to the mountain of God, Mt. Horeb.

There, he hid in a cave, apparently hunkering down until everything blew over—not a totally unrealistic posture even these days. He felt alone, fearful, abandoned by everyone—including God. Then, in 1 Kings 19, God asks Elijah a poignant question: "What are you doing here?"

Imagine Elijah's reaction: "Am I missing something, God? Your people have rejected the covenant and torn up your altars, and now King Ahab and Jezebel are chasing me. I am running for my life!" Have you ever been there? Where you want to throw up your hands and cry out: "Hey, God, I don't know what to do anymore. Things aren't working out like I had hoped."

Odd things happened next: a gush of wind, a violent earthquake, a searing fire, then a soft whisper. Where was God? Though God has appeared in each of these phenomena at different times, this time His presence was in a whisper. Perhaps this suggests our tendency to look for God to act in mighty, miraculous wonders, but God reminds us that He still is with us—even when His presence isn't always so obvious in the events taking place around us. What He most desires is for us to listen carefully to His word and follow His guidance.

God still had work for Elijah to do. Specifically, his task was to appoint a foreign king, a new king for Israel, and his own successor. It was a clear sign of hope: A new day was dawning! In short, the message for Elijah and us is: God's work continues on, in spite of the present circumstances.

Kentucky Baptists, God has given us a purpose for our lives, and His promise is that He will help us accomplish His will—if we will go forward in faith. As we make these seemingly necessary cutbacks, God perhaps is asking us, too: "What are you doing here?"

## After Thought

By Todd Deaton



## Where is your soul?

In a recent New York Times op-ed piece, Bono, the singer-humanitarian, wrote: "It's 2009; do you know where your soul is?" What an excellent question for us to ponder, both as individuals and as a nation going through difficult economic times. Are we so caught up in the rat-race pursuit of acquiring wealth that we run the risk of losing our souls?

We pride ourselves on being a nation that promotes "justice for all." How good are we as individuals and as a country at doing justice? Giving to worthwhile causes is admirable, but short-term charity doesn't resolve national governments' long-term systemic injustices that cause global poverty.

Saint Augustine spoke an eternal truth when he said, "Charity is no substitute for justice withheld." According to Old Testament proph-

et Micah, God requires us to "do justice, love kindness, walk humbly with our God."

Paul Whiteley Sr.  
Louisville

## Not the same person

I am writing in regard to the article you ran in the May 5 issue of the Western Recorder. The article is entitled "ADF: Religious freedom at stake in Iowa," but I am actually referring to the picture that accompanied the article.

I am very unhappy that you chose to use a picture of a woman with the name of Beth Moore who was marrying another woman. Surely you know of Beth Moore who writes women's Bible studies and speaks at the Living Proof Live women's conferences. Beth Moore has a wonderful ministry to women and a powerful Christian witness. Many people

who do not know what Beth Moore looks like might get the idea that she has just married another woman.

Not that we need to protect Beth Moore, but the ministry of the Lord that she performs. I feel sure there could have been a different picture or you could have not listed the names. I had a man from our church ask me if this was the lady that we were always taking women to hear. I am thankful that he called and didn't just assume that it was. I am praying that God's work through Beth Moore will not suffer as a result.

Joyce Burdon  
Marion

**Editor's Note:** The photo was supplied to Western Recorder by Baptist Press, our denominational news service, which did not feel the necessity to make this distinction in the caption they provided. Even so, please be assured that we would not want to do anything that might damage the ministry of LifeWay author Beth Moore.

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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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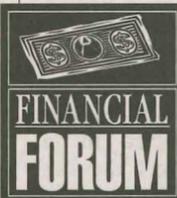
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## Investing is not a competition

By Don Spencer

Whether in a retirement plan or another investment plan designed to meet other goals in life, one concern that people often have is their fear of losing money they have already accumulated. Too many investors, wanting to protect what they have, fail to understand how the market really works.



The media and financial services industry bombards us with information that causes us to see the market as made up of winners and losers—and the winners are constantly taking from the losers. News reports emphasize these winners and losers, followed by a lot of analysis regarding future winners and losers. We are told we should move money to the “sidelines,” or we should “get back in the game.” Thus we feel we are in a competition where there will be a winner who comes out on top and a loser who walks away with nothing.

This message, combined with our own fears, causes investors to feel they must work very hard to avoid being one of the losers. It is no surprise that some people see stocks as a speculative investment that could lead to ruin, thus avoiding them altogether. Instead, they put their money in safer “investments” and often leave an awful lot of money on the table.

Investing is not a competition. To be successful and reach your financial goals does not mean winning at the expense of someone else. The market gives everyone with money to invest the opportunity to win. You will not lose a penny just because your neighbor earned a positive return on their investments.

In a short time period, fear and greed cause the market to be quite volatile, creating a roller-coaster ride of gains and losses for investors. The long-term investor knows that capitalism would not work (and we know that it does) if there was not a positive return on one's investments. Achieving success in investing does not have to be difficult. It is there for the taking. It is human behavior that is the true challenge for anyone investing in stocks, whether for retirement or otherwise. When you invest in stocks, always remember it is a long-term investment. Avoid making short-term-based decisions on a long-term investment.

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

## Signers say 'Great Commission Resurgence' needed

By Mark Kelly

Nashville—The “Great Commission Resurgence” declaration being circulated by Southern Baptist Convention President Johnny Hunt represents a heartfelt effort to deal with the challenges churches face with witness and ministry in today's culture, four men who signed the declaration have told Baptist Press.

“I signed the document because I believe it is a good faith effort to provide direction for Southern Baptists moving to the future,” said Albert Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. “Clearly, we have a generation that is wondering about who Southern Baptists are and what we intend to do as we look to the challenges of reaching the world in this new century.”

Thom Rainer, president of LifeWay Christian Resources, agreed.

“I was delighted to sign the Great Commission Resurgence for one clear purpose,” Rainer said. “It is my prayer that Southern Baptists across the nation, our churches and our institutions seek to bring glory to God by becoming more faithful to the Great Commission mandate of Christ.”

The declaration, which has garnered more than 1,500 signatures at GreatCommissionResurgence.com, “looked like a good attempt to address the concerns we have,” said Jimmy Draper, retired president of LifeWay who also has served at virtually every level of Southern Baptist life. “There are so many concerns: lack of baptisms, lack of real discipleship, still losing 80 percent of our kids when they graduate from high school before they get out of college,

and the same thing with kids coming into the teen years. We need to refocus on things.”

### “Cannot continue pattern”

Terry Harper, executive director of the West Virginia Convention of Southern Baptists, said he is concerned that Southern Baptists must not remain on their current path.

“My reaction to the (declaration) is that we need something to call us back to the task. We as Southern Baptists have lost our way to some extent,” Harper said. “We have had negative growth for the last two years and we cannot continue that pattern.”

Mohler added he does see hopeful signs on several fronts.

“I've had the opportunity to be on the mission field and to see a generation of young Southern Baptists who are giving their all to the task of the Great Commission, going where Southern Baptists have never been before and pioneering new ways of reaching unreached people groups,” Mohler said. “I spend so much time in our Southern Baptist churches, and what I am so thankful to find in virtually every case is a church looking to reach the world.”

Rainer noted: “Much good is already taking place in many of our churches and institutions, but we can do more. It is my prayer that this document truly reflect the hearts of Southern Baptists who desire to see a great move of God to reach our land and all the nations with the gospel of Jesus Christ.”

Passion for the Great Commission, however, does not burn in the hearts of enough Southern Baptist

churches, Draper observed.

“There are some churches that are doing very well and focusing on reaching people ... but by and large, we're not really passionate about reaching the lost,” he said.

Draper added, “Some way, the truth has to become passionate for us, not only for the fulfillment of the Great Commission, but also for our survival as a people of faith.”

### A need for synergy

Draper said the declaration appealed to his belief that Southern Baptists could make better use of the missions dollars given by congregations.

“The big thing that caught my mind was the need for synergy, for maximizing resources between entities, making sure we are not overlapping and that would be true for the SBC, state conventions and associations,” Draper pointed out.

Whatever one thinks about the declaration, the fact is that Southern Baptists need to take a hard look at what it will take to get them moving forward again, he insisted.

“I appreciate the passion to move us off dead center. We're still ... bragging about our membership, yet last year we baptized less than we did in 1954, and only three times since 1954 did we baptize less than we baptized last year,” he said. “We baptized 350-some-odd-thousand in 1954 with 6 million Baptists, now with 16 million, we claim, we couldn't do that good.”

“So obviously, if we take the Great Commission seriously, we need to really look at what needs to be done.” (BP)

## Being a team player with others who are called

By David Jeremiah

God is building His team in reverse fashion compared to professional sports teams. Athletic scouts go out looking for athletes who already have the gifts and talents needed, and recruit them to play. God, on the other hand, calls individuals to join Him and then gives them the gifts they need to be a team player with others who are called.

### FIRST PERSON

Therefore, if you are a Christian, you have been called by God to join His eternal family (team).

When you were called, you were given a spiritual gift(s)—perhaps commensurate with your natural talents and abilities, perhaps not—that makes you part of God's “team” (1 Corinthians 12:18). As a Christian, you have no doubt heard the doctrine of spiritual gifts in the body of Christ (Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4; 1 Peter 4). You may even know what your spiritual gift(s) is and be exercising it in ministry.

### Becoming a team player

There are wonderful benefits to being a member of God's eternal team—no tryouts, no “All-Star” competition, you can't get cut from the team, and there will always be a position for you to fill. So you have built-in job security in a job for which you are perfectly qualified.

All you have to do is discover your spiritual gift(s) and begin to use it in the position for which it is best suited.

When that happens, Paul said, the whole church begins to function like a human body—the body of Christ. Just as the parts of a body working together allow a person to accomplish his or her personal mission, so each member of Christ's body allows Him to accomplish His purpose in the world (1 Corinthians 12:12-31; Ephesians 4:11-16).

“Individual commitment to a group effort—that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work” (Vince Lombardi). I don't think the great coach would have minded if I add that individual commitment to a group effort is what makes the church work as well. Not pure human effort, mind you—the church is different in that regard. It's the supernatural empowerment of the Spirit working in us. When we are cooperating with Him, great things for God's glory will happen.

### Are you eligible?

May I suggest the following for you to consider with regard to your status as a team player in the body of Christ?

First, are you on the team? Have you given your life to Christ and joined God's forever family? You can't be a team player if you're not on the team.

Next, make sure you know the gift(s) God has given you. If you're not sure what gift(s) God has given

you, ask Him; He wants you to know and promises not to criticize you for asking (James 1:5). He's the one who invited you to be part of the team and wants nothing more than for you to be a contributing member.

Finally, look around at all the positions you might fill in the body of Christ. Many positions are available that call for gifts like the ones God has given you—and many of them are outside the venue of your local church. But let me say emphatically that the first place Christian team members should look to serve is in their own local church. But sometimes your gift(s) may need a broader or deeper playing field than your church can provide.

For instance, your gift(s) might be perfectly suited for missionary agency administration or support, audio or video broadcast ministry, open-air or inner-city evangelism, publishing ministry, Internet or multimedia ministry, medical service or administration—the list is as long as the list of needs in our world.

Are you ready to be a team player? You've been given the gifts you need and the rest is up to you. It is what is in your heart that will either accelerate or hinder the advancement of God's Kingdom in the world. So step up and be the team player God called you to be—for the Kingdom's sake and God's glory. (BP)

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

## Hagelin's family bailout plan

By David Garrard

Rebecca Hagelin writes a syndicated column for Town Hall.com. She also serves as senior communications fellow for The Heritage Foundation. Through speeches, writings and television appearances, Hagelin has championed the family in Washington and around the nation for more than 25 years. She and her husband have three children, two of whom are grown.

Hagelin's new book, “30 Ways in 30 Days to Save Your Family,” challenges parents to fight to protect their children's innocence, childhood and character. The idea is not to build a wall around our children, but instead to be intentional about building the strength of their character. Here are Hagelin's five main points:

- Teach your children that they have God-given value. Children need to understand that they have worth because God says it is so. Remind them every day that there is a God who loves them and who knows their name. Such faith will make a difference in how children respond to the impact of culture.

- Battle culture, not your teen. Hagelin emphasizes that we battle, not with our children, but with adults who hold a different worldview than us. Adults are the ones responsible for the shows, songs and Web sites that corrupt our kids.

- Make your house inviting, warm and fun. Create a place that kids will want to be. Stock up on food and games and let your kid's friends know that they are welcome.

- Find allies in battle. Partner with friends in your church and in your neighborhood who share your values and who will help you take a stand.

- Write a letter to your teen. These deliberate declarations of your love will be treasures they can revisit and will give you the opportunity to reinforce important truths and values.

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



Top

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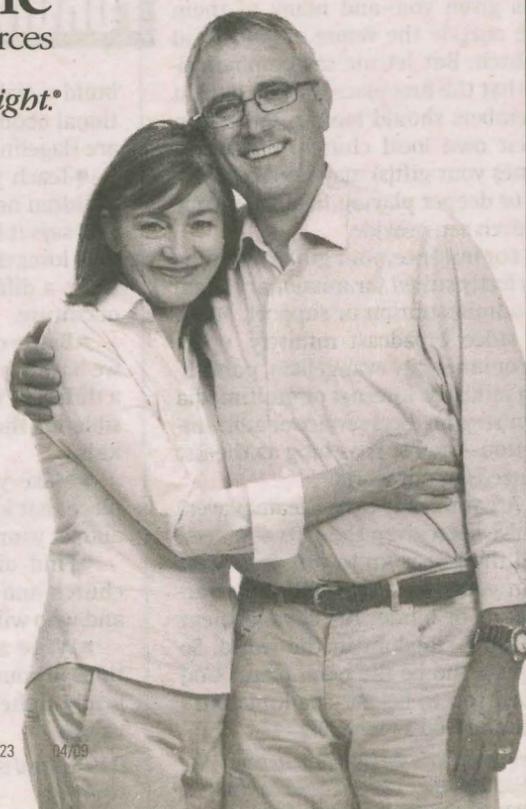
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## Maine becomes fifth state to approve gay marriage

*Bill could potentially be overturned through 'people's veto' process*

By Robert Marus

Augusta, Maine—With its governor's signature May 6, Maine became the fifth state in the nation—and the fourth in New England—to legalize same-sex marriage.

Gov. John Baldacci signed the bill shortly after the Democrat-dominated state Senate followed the House's lead in voting overwhelmingly for a bill that removes heterosexual-specific language from the state's marriage code.

Baldacci, a Catholic, previously had stated his opposition to same-sex marriage. But, in a statement issued after he signed the bill, he said he had reconsidered his position.

"In the past, I opposed gay marriage while supporting the idea of civil unions," he noted. "I have come to believe that this is a question of fairness and of equal protection under the law, and that a civil union is not equal to civil marriage."

Citing equal-protection provisions in the Maine Constitution, he said the bill simply enforced the document's guarantees without endangering the religious freedom of those who oppose the practice.

"This new law does not force any religion to recognize a marriage that falls outside of its beliefs. It does not require the church to perform any ceremony with which it disagrees," he pledged.

Homosexual couples in Maine may have to wait a while to enjoy their newly recognized right. State law allows a "people's veto," or a referendum to ask voters if they would

like to overturn a law passed by legislators.

If opponents of same-sex marriage in Maine get a sufficient number of valid voters' signatures within 90 days of the end of the Legislature's session—expected in late June—then they can get the referendum on a statewide ballot for November at the earliest. The law would not be enforced until after the referendum. Conservatives, led by the Maine Family Policy Council, have vowed to get the measure on the ballot.

Baldacci's move came just a day after the District of Columbia Council voted to recognize same-sex marriages performed elsewhere and weeks after Vermont legislators overrode their governor's veto to become the first state to legalize same-sex marriage through legislative, rather than judicial, means.

Same-sex marriage bills are poised for approval in two other Northeastern states—New Hampshire and New York. Iowa's Supreme Court legalized same-sex marriage there in April.

Massachusetts became the first state in the union to allow same-sex marriage in 2005. Gay-rights activists are pursuing a goal to legalize gay marriage throughout New England, where support for the concept is the nation's most strongly concentrated. Besides Massachusetts and Vermont, it already is legal in Connecticut as well.

If New Hampshire approves same-sex marriage, then Rhode Island will be the region's lone holdout on the issue. While polls show strong support for same-sex marriage there as in the rest of New England, Republican Gov. Donald Carcieri has vowed to veto any gay-marriage bill. (ABP)

## SBC's Land: Waterboarding is torture, never ethical

Nashville—Southern Baptist ethicist Richard Land, a leading Christian conservative who helped advance the Bush administration's agenda on a range of social issues, said last week that the formerly sanctioned practice of waterboarding of suspected terrorists is torture and "violates everything we stand for."

Land, who is president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, repudiated the simulated drowning techniques in an interview last week.

According to recently released memos, federal agents under Bush waterboarded two suspected terrorists 266 times in attempts to extract information.

"I consider waterboarding torture," Land said. "One of the definitions of torture is that it causes permanent physical harm. I can't separate physical from psychological. And I can't imagine that being repeatedly subjected to the feeling of drowning would not ... cause lasting psychological trauma."

But Land also criticized President Obama for publicly releasing Bush-era documents that authorized par-

ticular interrogation techniques.

"To leave open the possibility of prosecuting men for what the Justice Department had declared was legal, I think is a horrific mistake," Land noted.

Land's comments come amid ongoing public debate about what constitutes torture, whether harsh interrogation techniques result in useful information, and what should happen to Bush administration officials who advised that waterboarding was legal, not torture.

Land explained that while he supports capital punishment for convicted killers, he denounces torture in all cases because he is compelled to honor the image of God as reflected in all human beings—even suspected terrorists. To justify waterboarding on the grounds that it helps save lives is to suggest that ends justify means. "That is a very slippery slope that leads to dark and dangerous places.

"If the end justifies the means, then where do you draw the line?" Land asked. "It's a moveable line. It's in pencil, not in ink. I believe there are absolutes. There are some things we must never do." (RNS)

## The 'what' and 'why' of camp

### Crossings staff sets sights on relationships, the gospel

By T. Lusk  
Crossings program director

The challenge I have before me is great. In very few words, need to explain a topic I could write about for days. I have thought a great deal about it, seeking to put the right words to this question: "What is camp and why do we do it?" So, what are the right words? Well, very simply: the gospel. Earth shattering, I know, so allow me to explain.

The gospel is about a relationship. Christ ends the sacrificial laws of the Old Testament by becoming a sacrifice Himself and restoring for those who trust in Him the relationship broken in the garden by sin.

So, how does Crossings Camps fit into that? Simple: What drives everything at Crossings is relationships. For Crossings there is no greater blessing than being a platform for people—students and adults alike—to hear the gospel, understand their need for a Savior to restore the brokenness that is the result of sin, and to respond the gospel's invitation to a relationship.

Crossings goes about being this

platform in a variety of ways, such as large-group and small-group Bible studies, Scripture-driven worship services, crazy fellowships, climbing walls, tubing, mountain bikes and Super Blobs. Even breakfast, lunch and dinner are seen as platforms for the gospel to be shared and relationships to happen.

Nowhere else can this commitment to the gospel relationship be seen than in the staff. Like no other, Crossings views our staff as the single greatest resource to sharing the gospel and building relationships. Every one of the almost 90 college students we hire each year will tell you their single focus 16 hours a day

for nine weeks during the summer is to intentionally seek to build relationships for the purpose of sharing the truth of how the gospel restores relationship between God and man.

At Crossings, the "what" and the "why" of Camp are the same: There is nothing greater for us to set our sights on than the work of the gospel and restoring relationship between Creator and His creation.

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

### Ky. Baptist Assemblies



David Melber

## For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



## Preacher's Kids

David Ayers



## Bible Crosswords

By Evelyn Boyington

### Across

- 1 "Will a man \_\_\_\_ God?" (Malachi 3:8)
- 4 Moon or mast
- 8 German physicist
- 11 Son of Seth (Genesis 4:26)
- 13 Bread spread
- 14 Dramatic feathery wrap
- 15 Israel seaport
- 16 "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth \_\_\_\_" (Isaiah 57:15)
- 18 Time on the religious calendar
- 19 Note on the diatonic scale
- 20 Playwright's direction
- 24 "Is Israel a servant? is he a homeborn \_\_\_\_?" (Jeremiah 2:14)
- 28 Measure of journey
- 30 Small space
- 32 Jellylike substance
- 33 Son of Abijam; king of Judah
- 34 "And supper being \_\_\_\_, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot" (John 13:2)
- 36 "Above the \_\_\_\_" (goal of b'ball players)
- 37 Yes, in Yokohama
- 38 Saline drop
- 39 Golfer Ernie
- 40 Like some egg yolks
- 43 \_\_\_\_ scheme
- 45 Many-tome resource (abbr.)
- 47 Ancient Hebrew dry measure
- 50 "Minister the same one to another, as good \_\_\_\_" (1 Peter 4:10)
- 55 Tractor-trailer, to many (colloq.)

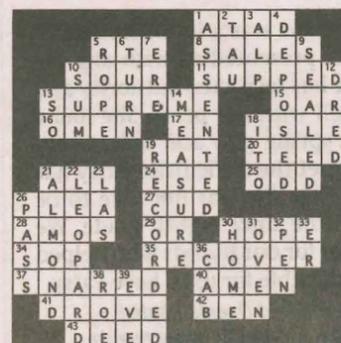
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			45		46				47		48	49
50	51	52				53	54			55		
56				57						58		
59				60							61	

- 56 Person who has to do with (suffix)
- 57 Protest, with "against"
- 58 Cut off
- 59 "He that hath a bountiful \_\_\_\_ shall be blessed" (Proverbs 22:9)
- 60 Hold \_\_\_\_
- 61 Three, in Turin
- 25 "And what \_\_\_\_ hath the temple of God with idols?" (2 Corinthians 6:16)
- 26 "And, behold, the \_\_\_\_ of the temple was rent in twain" (Matthew 27:51)
- 27 Shade trees
- 28 Wizard of Oz actor
- 29 "Jacob have I loved, but \_\_\_\_ have I hated" (Romans 9:13)
- 31 "Tender-eyed" woman of the Old Testament
- 35 Parched
- 41 Partner of then
- 42 "The \_\_\_\_ of the wicked shall be shortened" (Proverbs 10:27)
- 44 Playwright Hart
- 46 "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me \_\_\_\_ him" (John 6:44)
- 48 Arab chieftain
- 49 "The harvest of the earth is \_\_\_\_" (Revelation 14:15)
- 50 "O taste and \_\_\_\_ that the Lord is good" (Psalm 34:8)
- 51 Mystery writer Josephine
- 52 Poetic before
- 53 Throughout; across (prefix)
- 54 Wily; conniving

### Down

- 1 Camino \_\_\_\_
- 2 "God hath spoken \_\_\_\_; twice have I heard this" (Psalm 62:11)
- 3 "Being \_\_\_\_ (2 words), not of corruptible seed" (1 Peter 1:23)
- 4 Tend to the garden
- 5 Mountain measure (abbr.)
- 6 Beloved general of Virginia
- 7 Creates from nothing
- 8 Japanese sash
- 9 Like dog days
- 10 Feminine name
- 12 Complete collections
- 17 Nothing
- 21 "He casteth forth his \_\_\_\_ like morsels" (Psalm 147:17)
- 22 Impression
- 23 Pliny the \_\_\_\_ (Roman writer)

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## LifeWay leaders cut ribbon on new Ridgecrest meeting facility

Ridgecrest, N.C.—LifeWay's Ridgecrest Conference Center unveiled its latest addition May 5 with the ribbon-cutting ceremony at Johnson Spring Convention Center, completing a five-year development plan that has significantly upgraded the facility near Asheville, N.C.

"It's been like a new beginning for Ridgecrest," said Director Bill Bowman. "We feel this re-energizes the vision Dr. B.W. Spilman laid out 102 years ago for a Baptist camp and retreat area. The mission has never changed, which is to have a place set aside and dedicated to the Lord where people can come and encounter Him."

Johnson Spring is a 46,250-square-foot facility with meeting space that can be divided to create from five to 24 meeting rooms and can accommodate between 25 and 800 guests. It is named for William Johnson, the 10-year-old boy who discovered a fresh water spring at the location in the early 1920s. A small pond still exists adjacent to the building.

The completion of Johnson Spring caps a Ridgecrest revitalization process that began in 2000. Renovation of several classroom areas started in 2001 and new construction began the following year, which included the completion of the Rutland Prayer Chapel and the 120-room Mountain Laurel Inn.

In 2004, LifeWay trustees agreed to a construction plan to significantly upgrade Ridgecrest's facilities with the addition of the auditorium recreation center (2006), Mountain Laurel West (2007) and Johnson Spring Convention Center. In the past 10 years, 18 old buildings have been torn down and several others renovated.

The construction has financially helped the conference center's ministry. The facility saw a downward trend throughout the 1990s in the number of people attending events. However, incremental growth has occurred during the past few years with more than 60,000 guests coming for training events or retreats.

"We've had a number of larger groups tell us



**NEW ADDITION** The recently opened Johnson Spring Convention Center at Ridgecrest Conference Center near Asheville, N.C., can accommodate as many as 800 guests. (Photo by Kent Harville)

over the years that if we were able to build a convention-type facility they'd gladly come because they love the setting here at Ridgecrest," Bowman noted. "Now that it is finished we've already had several of those (groups) talk to us about scheduling an event here."

Bowman said it is the commitment to the original vision of having a place to encounter God that he believes is the reason Ridgecrest continues to have a vital ministry.

"We receive letters all the time telling us about someone who came to faith in Jesus Christ here. Or someone who was called into ministry, or a marriage that was saved at one of our marriage retreats. Whatever the case may be, we believe God uses this place to His glory."

That is a sentiment echoed by LifeWay President Thom Rainer. In his remarks to the more than 200 guests attending the dedication luncheon, he likened Ridgecrest to the nation of Israel entering the Promised Land in Joshua 1. God directed them to build a 12-stone memorial.

"God was calling them not just to a place but also to a memory," Rainer said. "The memory was not just to all that God had done on their behalf, but to remember how God demonstrated His glory."

## Meet the class of 2009, part 4

### For troubled 'Patsy,' third time around at Oneida turns out to be 'the charm'

You know the old saying, "Three times is a charm." With "Patsy" (not her real name) it took three different times at OBI to finally put her life together. The following is part of what she wrote about her Oneida experience:

"This is my third time at OBI. I'm from a divorced family. ... The first time I came to OBI, I was in the eighth grade. I came because my home life was a nightmare. I always fought with my parents.

"I quickly fell in love with Oneida. I found a sense of independence and responsibility that I didn't have before. However, (during) my freshman year, my family and I found out that my father had cancer again, this time in a very late stage. I returned home to spend more quality time with my father. As usual, I messed things up and became disrespectful and out of control. My father was forced to ask me to leave and go live with my mother.

"I wasn't on the right path ... so my mother suggested that I return to OBI in the middle of my sophomore year. ... During the summer break I went to (my dad's home). ... My father had gotten much worse and I stayed with him instead of returning to summer school. I have never regretted that decision. I lost my father that summer and it was very hard for me.

"The following year ... my mother thought it would be best if I stayed home with my family. I had gotten really depressed and pushed God out of my life. ... I thought how could there be a God who would cause me such pain? ... I was very depressed and I looked for dim-witted things to do.

### This is Oneida



**W.F. Underwood**

... The school counselor told me I wasn't going to be able to graduate so ... I decided I was going to drop out of school and get a GED. ... One day my mother and I started arguing ... and she said I could come back to OBI.

"Being at OBI has made all the difference in my life. Coming back here for the third time made the most change. I found more people cared about me than I realized. I learned we all go through difficult things in our lives. I made some good friendships with people here. I began to allow God back into my life and finally, in November of my senior year, I got saved. I became more involved with things like Baptist Campus Ministries, girls' devotions and drama. I began to feel more at home here than I ever felt at my own home.

"I have grown up here. I am no longer that disrespectful and out-of-control teenager. I am ready for whatever God has in store for me. God has truly blessed me by giving me the opportunity to come to OBI. I will always cherish the lessons I have learned here, especially being able to let go and know God is in control."

Though Patsy says she was a lot of trouble at home, she has never presented us with any unusual problems. She has respected authority and has gotten along well with her peers. She had a leading role in our spring play and did an outstanding job. We regret the difficulties Patsy had and we regret that she was not able to be with us the entire time since eighth grade. We are, however, grateful for our friends who helped make it financially possible for us to have Patsy.

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

## Golden Gate Seminary trustees approve reduced '09-'10 budget

Mill Valley, Calif.—Trustees of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary adopted a reduced 2009-10 budget during their meeting late last month at the seminary's Northern California Campus in Mill Valley.

The \$10,028,000 budget for the coming academic year is 4.7 percent, or nearly a half-million dollars, less the seminary's 2008-09 budget. The budget was developed without resorting to layoffs, although a few vacant positions will be left open.

"While this is a conservative budget, we believe it reflects the current economic climate," President Jeff Iorg said. "We have contingency plans for further reductions if necessary, but we anticipate moving full speed ahead into the next academic year. The

unity and willing sacrifice of our employees is making our positive response to economic uncertainties possible."

### New degree program

Trustees also approved a new master of missiology degree program which will be available to students by the fall of 2010. The degree will have two possible concentrations—urban missions and global missions.

Updates also were given on the seminary's expansion to Las Vegas in the upcoming 2009-10 academic year. Regarding the new regional campus, the seminary released a statement saying the project is in the "planning phase" and that "news regarding the developing of plans will be released as it becomes available." (BP)

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## Back to the future

### Online format enhances Clear Creek's mission

Many years ago, hay was cut by hand and carried to one big haystack centrally located in the field being harvested. These haystacks were very large, so they eventually were left out in the field until used. The outer layer would naturally rot, but it would form a shield for the rest of the hay it covered.

Later, mechanical balers came on the scene. The hay had to be carried to the baler and the resulting square bales were then carried to a barn for storage—no more rotten hay. As technology improved, the balers became mobile. They actually went to the hay with the assistance of a tractor, picking up the cut hay from the ground and spitting out square bales which were loaded on wagons and hauled to the barn.

Then a new innovation came on the farm scene—round bales. These are very large, some six feet in diameter and weighing up to 1,000 pounds. But they are handled by tractors instead of muscles, and often are just left out in the field until used. Of course, the outer layer rots, but it forms a shield for the rest of the hay covered by it.

Why this lesson in hay production? It illustrates the fact that prog-

ress often is more cyclical than linear. Many times we travel the road of progress only to find we have arrived at a better view of our beginning. This is not a bad thing. It gives us a chance to explore, refine and return to our original purpose. It helps us to appreciate the old and incorporate the new.

A student now can earn a bachelor's degree completely online at Clear Creek. Someone recently remarked to me how this really is an enhancement of Dr. L.C. Kelly's earlier vision, which was the training of local, bivocational pastors who would not be afforded formal ministry training from any other source.

As Clear Creek grew, our field of influence grew. Now we train ministers for full-time vocational ministry as well as bivocational service. Through the technology of the Internet, we now can offer a bachelor's degree to bivocational ministers literally all over the world—ministers who would not be afforded formal ministry training from any other source.

### 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.ccbcc.edu; e-mail: dfox@ccbcc.edu

## Great Commission Resurgence

*Tone, focus and clarity of declaration called into question by non-signers*

By Mark Kelly

Nashville—Reaction to the Great Commission Resurgence declaration in various quarters of Southern Baptist life includes questions about its tone, focus and lack of clarity.

Article IX of the document, which was released April 27 at GreatCommissionResurgence.com, asserted that some denominational structures "need to be streamlined for more faithful stewardship of the funds entrusted to them" and called on Southern Baptists to "address with courage and action where there is overlap and duplication of ministries, and where poor stewardship is present."

"We must take steps toward simplifying our denominational structures in an effort to streamline our structure, clarify our institutional identity, and maximize our resources for Great Commission priorities," the document said. "Our denomination must be restructured at every level to facilitate a more effective pursuit of these priorities."

That softened the language of an earlier version, which echoed chapel remarks by Danny Akin, president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, that the Southern Baptist Convention is "bloated and bureaucratic." Akin specifically addressed state conventions, saying that "if folks in the pew knew how much of their giving stayed in their state, they would revolt and call for a revolution."

"There is much in the document with

which I am in agreement," Jimmy Barrentine, executive director for the Baptist Convention of Iowa, told Baptist Press. "I wish it had been cast in positive language—affirming language—that started out with the presupposition that Southern Baptists have been diligent and faithful and we want to be even more diligent and even more faithful in the future."

"I wish the (original version) had not implied that somehow state conventions and maybe even associations are wasting missions money," Barrentine added. "I don't know what's going on everywhere. That simply hasn't been my experience where I have lived and where I have ministered."

John Sullivan, executive director of the Florida Baptist Convention, told the Florida Baptist Witness he appreciated the fact that the language had been toned down. He said he didn't feel such a statement applied to the FBC because it regularly examines its structure.

"I am not going to become defensive on behalf of Florida Baptists," Sullivan said. "We do our work in the sunshine. We constantly evaluate our organization. ... We have no priority that has not been approved by the State Board of Missions."

### Specifics needed

Barrentine said he wished the document had been more specific about where the needs for change exist.

"I do not believe that we see evidence that there needs to be another complete

overhaul, fresh overhaul of all expressions of Southern Baptist life," he noted. "If there had been a statement in there indicating that we need to be open to and even consider changes in order to meet today's needs and future needs, I'd be a lot more comfortable with that. But the call for change before the needs are even disclosed, I'm having a hard time getting there."

One Oklahoma pastor told Baptist Press he also is concerned about vague charges of inefficiency and wastefulness.

"What is particularly broke?" asked Robin Foster, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Perkins, Okla. "I am not saying that everything is running smoothly, but I would like to know what the framers of this (Great Commission Resurgence) document believe is not working and how will a streamline reorganization fix the problem? Will (the North American Mission Board) be absorbed into the (International Mission Board)? Will the Executive Committee be reorganized and mission redefined?"

"I understand the size of our convention can use some trimming to cut down on unnecessary costs and inefficient systems, but I would like to know where the inefficiencies are before I sign the document," Foster emphasized. "I would like to know how reorganization would benefit the local churches of the SBC in accomplishing the Great Commission."

One Texas pastor said he did not believe "the redrawing of organizational charts will do anything substantive either to

bring about or to hinder a Great Commission Resurgence," the Florida Baptist Witness reported.

"Some of the ideas being bandied about under this heading have the very real potential to be the most disastrous mistakes that the Southern Baptist Convention has ever made to eviscerate our efforts to fulfill the Great Commission," said Bart Barber, pastor at First Baptist Church of Farmersville, Texas. "Why would one require the affirmation of organizational reshuffling to determine who is or who is not in favor of the SBC growing in faithfulness to the Great Commission?"

### Civil discussion

Dialogue about change in the convention needs to be civil in tone and involve a wide range of voices from Southern Baptist life, Barrentine noted.

"I am open to any change that will help us do the work better. But let's do it in harmony and in fellowship with one another without using pejorative language, without vilifying one another in any way," he added. "I believe we need to include representatives from a broad spectrum of the Southern Baptist Convention in order to effect real and lasting change."

"I just believe that if we can approach this from a positive standpoint, we can tackle anything the Lord puts before us, provided He is with us. But let it be positive. We've had enough of the negative." (BP)

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## Mo. convention's final appeal denied by Supreme Court

Jefferson City, Mo.—The Missouri Supreme Court denied the Missouri Baptist Convention's request to rehear its case against Windermere Baptist Conference Center May 5. The convention now has exhausted its options to overturn Cole County Judge Richard Callahan's March 4, 2008, ruling in favor of the conference center.

The judge ruled that Windermere's trustees acted legally when they amended the conference center's articles of incorporation in 2001 to allow them to elect their own trustees. The convention filed suit against Windermere and four other Missouri Baptist entities in 2002, arguing they had no right to make said changes.

The Western District Court of Appeals in Kansas City, Mo., upheld Callahan's Windermere decision in a unanimous ruling by a three-judge panel Feb. 2. Later, the appeals court turned down a request by MBC attorneys to rehear the case or order it transferred to the state Supreme Court.

Convention attorneys took their appeal directly to the Supreme Court on April 13, only to be turned down last week.

The court cases against the other four entities that amended their articles of incorporation in 2000 and 2001 have not yet been scheduled. Those institutions are the Word&Way newspaper, the Missouri Baptist Foundation, The Baptist Home and Missouri Baptist University. (ABP)

## NAMB trustee chair calls for merger of mission boards into one worldwide agency

Jacksonville, Fla.—The trustee chairman of the North American Mission Board said he believes the Great Commission Resurgence declaration creates an opportunity for dialogue about an issue that needs to be addressed: a merger of the Southern Baptist Convention's two mission boards.

Tim Patterson, pastor of Hillcrest Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Fla., told the Florida Baptist Witness that Southern Baptists should have a "singular world mission agency."

Noting the SBC's declining membership and baptism statistics, Patterson said he has been concerned about the "direction of our denomination for some time." While the society, culture and world have changed in the past five decades, the SBC structure has not, he pointed out.

Patterson said the "greatest" change in the SBC has been the "shift back to a biblical center where we honor and believe in the inerrancy, infallibility and plenary inspiration of the Word of God," but while the SBC's "message is stronger," its "methods remain antiquated. We duplicate properties, personnel and programs and thus are not good stewards," he noted.

Because "North America now is just as much a foreign mission field as any other country or continent" with diverse people groups and cultures, Patterson said, "We need a singular world mission agency that does not lessen its emphasis on missions in North America or any other part of the world, but enhances it."

He added, "The way we structure, fund and administer our work is overly bureaucratic and bloated. If we combine our efforts and funding, we could be much more effective and become better stewards of God's resources."

Patterson signed the GCR statement as NAMB chairman because of his long history in denominational life, which has allowed him to have a "very good, firsthand understanding of how our systems work or don't work," he said.

Noting that he is the longest tenured current NAMB trustee, Patterson said he has seen the organization "at its best and worst." Signing the declaration as chairman is "to make a personal statement that from my personal perspective as the chairman, I see the need for a Great Commission Resurgence." (BP)

## PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following Kentucky Baptist missionaries and ministries:

**Missionary Sandra Williams of Lexington.** Sandra serves as director of church and community ministries for Elkhorn Baptist Association. She offers leadership and involves members of associational churches in ministry to the homeless and low-income families through food and clothing distribution, serving meals and other evangelistic events. Pray that those receiving help from these ministries will come to know Christ's love in a personal way. Pray that there will be enough supplies and food to meet the needs of those whom Sandra ministers to each week.

**The manger ministry of Lawrenceville Baptist Church in Corinth.** The "free store" and food pantry serves more than 60 families each month. Ministry workers share the love of Christ by networking with other churches and groups to provide food, clothing and furniture to families in need. Pray that volunteers will effectively share the gospel while meeting the physical needs of clients. Pray also for a new or better building that would meet the church's needs and allow for more effective ministry.

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

## MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **CADIZ**—Rocky Ridge Church will hold revival services May 17-20 with **Rodney Wallace** as evangelist. **Robert McIntosh** is pastor.

■ **ELKHORN CITY**—Marrowbone Church will hold revival services May 17-20, 7 p.m., with **Bud Culbertson** as evangelist. **Roger Johnson** is pastor.

■ **ELKTON**—Elkton Church recently called **Mark Keith** as pastor. He previously was evangelism, prayer and stewardship consultant with the Utah-Idaho Baptist Convention.

■ **FRANKFORT**—Farmdale Church will host a conference May 16, 9 a.m., titled, "The Holy Spirit and Ourselves," led by **Michael Haykin**, an author and professor of church history at Southern Seminary in Louisville. For more information, call (502) 875-7035. **Steve Weaver** is pastor.

■ **GRAYSON**—First Church recently called **Paul Schmidt** as pastor. He previously was pastor at First Church of Inez.

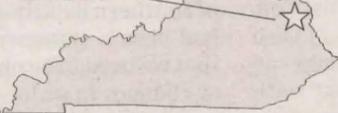
■ **HENDERSON**—Bellfield Church recently called **Phillip Basinger** as pastor. He previously was director of missions for Green Valley Association.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Hunsinger Lane ordained **Will Howlett** and **Brian Nichter** to the gospel ministry April 26. **Charlie Davis** is pastor.

Parkland Church recently called

## Spotlight on ...

## Ashland



Rose Hill Church will hold its 2nd annual Eastern Kentucky Bible Conference May 15-16 with **John Sullivan**, executive director for the Florida Baptist Convention, as guest speaker. For more information, call (606) 329-2821.

**Jason Stewart** as minister of music. He previously was minister of music at Shively Church in Louisville. **Tom Curry** is pastor.

■ **NEWPORT**—First Church recently called **Don Whitis** as minister of music. He previously was minister of music at Bellevue Church in Burlington. **Dick Pitzer** is pastor.

■ **SCIENCE HILL**—Northside Church will host **Ken Coffey** in concert May 17, 6 p.m. **David Muse** is pastor.

■ **SEBREE**—First Church will hold revival services May 15-17 with **Ronnie Sivells**, KBC church development strategist, as evangelist. **Bob Hardison** is pastor.

## Cumberlands athletes honored with top conference sports award

**Williamsburg**—University of the Cumberlands Athletics has captured the Mid-South Conference President's Cup for the sixth time in the last seven years. The honor is presented to the conference's all-sports champion.

The President's Cup is given annually to the school with the highest regular season finish in each of the Mid-South Conference's 17 championship sports, based on a point system for each sport.

The Patriots earned 76 points, edging out Lindsey Wilson College (71 points). Kentucky Baptist institutions Georgetown College and Campbellsville University finished third and fourth respectively.

"This has been another incredible year of competition for the Mid-South Conference," MSC Commissioner Mike Pollio said. "The President's Cup is a comprehensive competition of the finest institutions in the NAIA. We congratulate the University of the Cumberlands, their administration, coaches and student-athletes for their outstanding performance throughout the year."

Patriot teams earned the maximum number of points for either winning or tying for the regular-season championship in women's basketball, men's cross country, football, men's golf and men's soccer. Cumberlands received the maximum number of points in men and women's outdoor track and field after placing tops among the conference's full member institutions.

"Winning the Presidents' Cup is a goal our athletic department sets each year and to achieve that goal again this year is very gratifying," noted Cumberlands Athletic Director Randy Vernon. "Congratu-

lations to all of our coaches and athletes for a great job again this year. They are to be commended for their dedication and commitment to excellence in athletic competition."

## Men's golf in national tourney

The University of the Cumberlands men's golf team has earned the right to play at next week's NAIA National Championships. The Patriots earned an automatic bid with an eight-stroke victory in the recent Mid-South Conference Tournament.

The team, led by MSC Coach of the Year Chris Kraftick and MSC Golfer of the Year Michael Burgan, currently is ranked 23rd in the latest Golf World/NIKE Golf NAIA Coaches' Poll. The team also features Mid-South Freshman Golfer of the Year Pierre Carlsson.

"We are excited about representing our school in the national tournament," Kraftick said. "The men have worked very hard for this opportunity and we expect to go and play at a high level. The fact that we have played such a quality schedule this spring will help when we get there. We have seen most of these teams already and know we can play with them."

The men's golf team has a record of 79-35-2 on the season, but has suffered only one loss against 36 wins in its last three tournaments. This is the men's team's first appearance in the NAIA tournament since 2002. That squad finished 12th nationally.

The tournament tees off May 19 in Silvas, Ill.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## May

- 16 WMU SALT, Baptist Building, Louisville.  
18 Women of Worth Lifestyle Evangelism Conference, First Baptist Church, Somerset.  
18-19 Youth Minister's Spring Retreat, Georgetown College.  
19 Women of Worth Lifestyle Evangelism Conference, First Baptist Church, Shelbyville.

## June

- 6 Church Weekday Education Seminar, Crestwood Baptist Church, Crestwood.  
13-20 Kentucky Changers, Princeton.  
14-21 All-State Youth Choir/Orchestra Retreat & Tour, Campbellsville University.  
15-19 Mission Adventure Camp for Girls, CedarCrest Camp, Bagdad.  
19-20 Mother/Daughter Overnight, CedarCrest Camp, Bagdad.  
22-26 Mission Adventure Camp for Girls, CedarCrest Camp, Bagdad.

For more information, call (800) 266-6477 or visit [www.kybaptist.org](http://www.kybaptist.org)

## Building completed



Sand Spring Baptist Church in Lawrenceburg opened its new sanctuary and educational facility April 26. Pastor Mike Hamrick said the church plans to hold a formal dedication service for the new building next month. (Photo courtesy of Sand Spring Baptist Church)

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**SEEKING:** Pianist or organist for Central Baptist Church, Paris, Ky. Responsible for three Sunday services, Wednesday evening prayer meeting and worship choir rehearsal. Pay based on experience. Send resumé to: Central Baptist Church, 829 High Street, Paris, KY 40361, Attn: Rev. Matthew Crook; or e-mail to: [mattcbc@bellsouth.net](mailto:mattcbc@bellsouth.net). For more information, call (859) 987-3951, ext. 23.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for Glens Creek Baptist Church in Versailles (bivocational pastor also would be considered). Please send resumé to Search Committee, Glens Creek Baptist Church, 4678 Steele Road, Versailles, KY 40383.

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister of youth (7th-12th grades) for conservative SBC church. Ministry experience needed. Please e-mail your resumé to [fbchr@brick.net](mailto:fbchr@brick.net); or mail to 2735 High Ridge Blvd., High Ridge, MO 63049. [www.fellowshipbaptisthr.org](http://www.fellowshipbaptisthr.org).

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister of youth and children for First Baptist Church, Prestonsburg, Ky. Send resumé to: Search Committee, First Baptist Church, PO Box 756, Prestonsburg, KY 41653. E-mail: [jcw8855@bellsouth.net](mailto:jcw8855@bellsouth.net).

**SEEKING:** Senior pastor for Steubenville Baptist Church, Monticello, Ky. Send resumé to Pastor Search Committee, PO Box 1553, Monticello, KY 42633; or e-mail resumé to [sbcpastorsearch@hotmail.com](mailto:sbcpastorsearch@hotmail.com).

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**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.

**TOURS:** Israel Pilgrimage plus Egypt. Nov. 9. For a brochure, contact Pastor Jack Studie: (270) 889-7604; or [jstudie@aol.com](mailto:jstudie@aol.com). Experience you can trust.

## Remember Nargis? Myanmar does, even if Americans do not

By Tracy Simmons

Yangon, Myanmar—Nargis is a word the Burmese will never forget. Many Americans, however, would probably have to Google it.

More than a year after Cyclone Nargis struck Myanmar (formerly known as Burma), faith-based humanitarian groups still are working to repair the damage, long after the storm faded from U.S. headlines.

Humanitarian groups say they are not surprised—even if they remain frustrated—with Americans' short attention spans when it comes to global natural disasters. The problem, they say, is that the need does not go away, even if the media does.

Nargis killed more than 140,000 people, orphaned 60,000 children and caused about \$10 billion in damages when it hit May 2, 2008. But Richard Chio, who has family in Myanmar, said Americans have forgotten about the devastation of his homeland—where his mother and brother still reside.

"People there are homeless, jobless and have nowhere to go," he said. "They need help right now pretty bad."

### Media to blame?

Jeff Wright, emergency response manager for World Vision, partly blames the media. "Americans are headline driven," he noted, adding that disasters like Cyclone Nargis linger in U.S. news until the next big news event happens.

"The media is also headline driven," he said. "We're so bombarded with media information all the time that it's easy to get distracted."

In many ways, it was the media that first fixed the world's attention on Nargis after Myanmar's military junta declined to accept outside aid. After intense media attention, the government finally relented.

Yet even though his organization's efforts do not make the papers anymore when it comes to Myanmar, World Vision continues to keep staff in the field. And the need has not gone away.

Currently World Vision is trying to help the Burmese get their agricultural system up and running again. The Christian aid group also continues to send basic supplies and is trying to protect orphans.

"As with most tragedies, children

are at a high risk," Wright said, explaining that people try to kidnap orphans in order to traffic in them.

He acknowledged relief efforts in Myanmar are challenging but rewarding, and he tries to keep donors engaged in the region's ongoing phenomenon. Education, he said, is key.

But those working in the field need attention too, he said. Working in disheartening conditions can take its toll—physically, emotionally and spiritually.

"We require people to take some downtime, it's so high pressure," Wright said, explaining that staffers are provided with counseling.

### "Emotional scars" remain

Pastor Wes Flint also is staying active in Myanmar relief efforts—although his Montana town might not know it. The pastor sits on the board of Vision Beyond Borders, a global Christian relief agency.

He has visited Myanmar three times since the cyclone hit, cleaning up debris, repairing roofs and when possible, mending souls.

"People were really devastated from the cyclone, especially in the Delta region ... some people's entire extended family was washed out to sea," Flint recalled. "There are a lot of emotional scars."

He said what Americans saw on TV after the cyclone was not an accurate representation of the situation anyway. "A lot of it was staged," he said.

Patrick Klein, the founder and director of VBB, has been to Myanmar four times since the cyclone, and said he is energized by the locals. His organization has hand-delivered 140 duffel bags filled with supplies to the Burmese. They have purchased enough rice seedlings to replant 3,500 acres and have developed a micro-enterprise loan program to help women start small businesses.

Michael Wies, who oversees charitable giving and awareness for Baltimore-based Catholic Relief Services, said his agency still has Myanmar on its radar, but his office has shifted focus to other areas in need, including Sudan's troubled Darfur region. He explained that they, too, often follow the headlines because that is where the immediate needs are.

However, they do not forget about



**DEVASTATION** Cyclone Nargis claimed more than 140,000 lives when it hit Myanmar on May 2, 2008. Even though the disaster has faded from the headlines, Christian relief groups like World Vision and Vision Beyond Borders remain active in the area. The cyclone also orphaned 60,000 children and caused about \$10 billion in damages. (RNS photo courtesy of Vision Beyond Borders)

the areas they have helped and try to continue to serve them. Spokeswoman Liz O'Neill said efforts now have shifted from providing everyday basic necessities to helping rebuild lives.

"Our partners are helping farmers, fishermen and tradespeople as they try to earn a living again," she noted. "They're rebuilding roads, dikes and paddy fields. The goal is for families to fully recover from the devastation and become self-reliant again, as they were before Nargis struck."

Since the cyclone roared ashore, the U.S. has provided \$75 million in aid. The secular group Refugees International is hoping for the U.S. to send another \$30 million in 2010. The group's vice president, Joel Charny, reminded Americans not to forget about aging disasters, like Myanmar.

"Even though it isn't in the headlines, we need to put it in front of donors," he urged. "More needs to be done." (RNS)

## Panel adds Nigeria to list of world's worst violators

Washington—The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom added Nigeria to its list of the world's worst violators of religious freedom in an annual report released earlier this month.

Citing sectarian violence, attempts to expand Sharia law and complaints by Christians in the north of discrimination at the hands of Muslim-controlled governments, the advisory panel for the first time designated Nigeria a "Country of Particular Concern."

The African nation joins 12 other countries identified as the world's worst violators. They include China, Eritrea, Iran, Myanmar, North Korea, Sudan and Uzbekistan—countries all on a separate list of CPCs managed by the U.S. State Department.

The panel, an independent gov-

ernment commission, urged the State Department to also add Iraq, Pakistan, Turkmenistan and Vietnam to the list, along with Saudi Arabia, which the State Department lists as a CPC but has indefinitely waived any policy response to violations of religious freedom.

Commission Chairwoman Felice Gaer said in the past the government sometimes has followed the panel's recommendation to add countries to the list, though not immediately, due to disagreement about the seriousness of the violations or for reasons of diplomacy.

This year's report adds Russia, Somalia and Venezuela to a "watch list." They join Afghanistan, Belarus, Cuba, Egypt, Indonesia, Laos, Tajikistan and Turkey. Laos rejoined the list after being removed in 2005.

This year the commission dropped Bangladesh from the list, citing improved conditions, but will continue to monitor the situation there.

Commissioner Michael Cromartie described North Korea as the "worst violator of religious freedom of any country in the world."

Chairwoman Gaer said it was "not a good year for religious freedom" in China, citing crackdowns on protestors during the Summer Olympics in Beijing and conditions in Tibet she said are "now worse than any time since the commission was formed." She also said more unregistered Protestants were arrested in China than the year before.

The commission said it also is monitoring religious liberty concerns in Kazakhstan, Sri Lanka and India. (ABP)

## Correction

Last week, the Western Recorder published a list of the more than 140 students who recently participated in the 2009 Kentucky Baptist All-State Children's Choir. Unfortunately, more than 30 children from the East Choir were inadvertently omitted from that list. Those children are:

- Nathan Baine, First Baptist Church of Lawrenceburg.
- Rachel Been, Fern Creek Baptist Church in Louisville.
- Michaela Bowman, First Baptist Church of London.
- Niki Clayton, Highland Baptist Church in Louisville.
- Loren Collins, First Baptist Church of Richmond.
- Emily Crowe, First Baptist Church of Frankfort.
- Taeyah Deskins, Versailles Baptist Church.
- Bryce Elliott, First Baptist Church of Richmond.
- Kaylei Ernst, Eminence Baptist Church.
- Alyssa Goodson, Valley View Church in Louisville.
- Savannah Guzman, First Baptist Church of London.
- Christopher Hughes, First Baptist Church of Frankfort.
- Sydney Humphress, Campbellsville Baptist Church.
- Sydney Jessee, First Baptist Church of Lawrenceburg.
- Paige Kinman, Versailles Baptist Church.
- Drew Layman, Highland Baptist Church in Louisville.
- Tyler Masters, First Baptist Church of Richmond.
- Paige McClellan, Highland Baptist Church in Louisville.
- Rachel McDonald, First Baptist Church of London.
- Lydia Murphy, Millville Baptist Church in Frankfort.
- Hadley Neal, First Baptist Church of Richmond.
- Kleine Powell, First Baptist Church of Richmond.
- Rebecca Ridge, Highland Baptist Church in Louisville.
- Molly Robbins, First Baptist Church of Richmond.
- Andrés Salazar, Ballardsville Baptist Church in Crestwood.
- Rebecca Sams, Millville Baptist Church in Frankfort.
- Anna Shelby, Versailles Baptist Church.
- Alyssa Shippey, Highland Baptist Church in Louisville.
- Joshua Simpson, First Baptist Church of Frankfort.
- Joshua Spaulding, Greenup Fort Baptist Church in Owenton.
- Joslyn Taylor, Highland Baptist Church in Louisville.
- Elissa Warner, Cornerstone Baptist Church in Lexington.
- Jacob Whitt, First Baptist Church of Richmond.
- Margaret Whitworth, First Baptist Church of Frankfort.
- Connor Wilkerson, First Baptist Church of London.
- Aubrie Ann Wilkinson, Highland Baptist Church in Louisville.
- Madeline Yankey, Harrodsburg Baptist Church.

*Celebrating open arms  
and open homes*



## **May is Foster Care Awareness Month**

Love makes a house a home and for many children in Kentucky, that place is found in a Sunrise Children's Services foster home.

May is Foster Care Awareness Month. We'd like to thank the many wonderful families across the Commonwealth who have opened their hearts and homes to a child in need of both.

If you'd like to learn more about becoming a foster parent or just would like to learn more about how you can assist Sunrise in its ministry of helping abused and neglected children, contact us by phone or our website.



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