

Shine like stars in the world
Philippians 2:15

WESTERN Recorder

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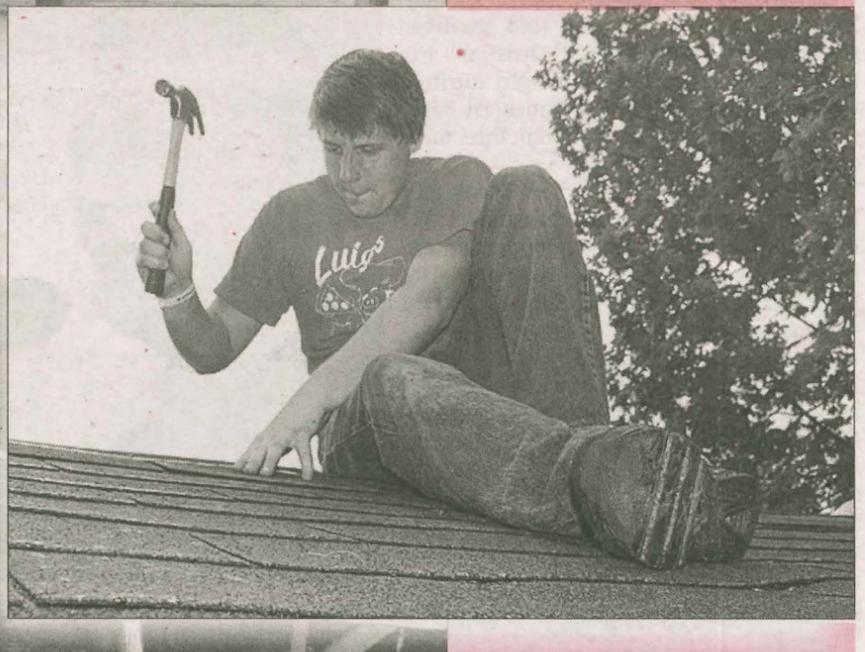
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Students for change

More than 1,000 volunteers—most of them high school and college students—participated in this year's three Kentucky Changers projects statewide. The participants worked on more than 100 renovation jobs helping families in need in Princeton, the Frankfort/Lawrenceburg area and Grant County. The Princeton project drew approximately 450 volunteers, one of the largest groups ever to participate since the program began in 1994. ■ **Left:** Kinsee Hinson from Potter's House Baptist Worship Center in Smithland hauls new shingles onto the roof of the Eldridge family home in Williamstown. (Photo by Drew Nichter) ■ **Below:** Taron Desevers from Coral Hill Baptist Church in Glasgow hammers new shingles down. (Photo by David Buckner) See story and more photos on page 3.



Ethnic ministries continue to grow across Kentucky

By David Winfrey
Kentucky Baptist Convention

Louisville—Carlos De La Barra is something of a missions optometrist. Throughout Kentucky, he helps church leaders see ethnic groups in need of churches and ministries.

"Most of the people cannot see other ethnic groups," said De la Barra, a native of Chile. As the leader for new ethnic work for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, his job includes helping church leaders improve their vision for such ministries.

"Every time I go to a place and ask the leaders to start ... a Hispanic church, 95 percent of the time, the answer is, 'We don't have any Mexicans around here,'" he said.

"My first work was to create

awareness of the existence of these people," he added. "When I take them to Walmart on Saturday evening, they can see that these people are here."

Hispanics are not the only internationals who have come to the Bluegrass State. According to figures from the KBC, there are at least 110 churches and ministries serving at least 15 different people groups. Other ethnic groups in the commonwealth include Korean, Chinese, Filipino, Laotian, Burundi and Haitian.

Baptist ethnic work has grown dramatically since De la Barra came to Kentucky to attend seminary. Outreach to the growing ethnic populations in Louisville was a central part of the 2007 Crossover Louis-

ville initiative, a series of evangelistic events held before the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting last month.

"I can remember very clearly in 1992, when we arrived here, there was only one Hispanic (Baptist) church in Kentucky," he recalled.

Today, "we are having churches with people from Africa, with people from Asia, and with people from almost every country," De la Barra said. "Most of the Americans have no idea that Kentucky is full of people from other nationalities. This is a strategic way we can fulfill the Great Commission right here in our state."

According to 2007 estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau (the most re-

cent available), 94,600 Kentucky residents (2.2 percent) are Hispanic or Latino, and another 50,700 (1.2 percent) are Asian.

De la Barra said he is eager to see the results from the 2010 census because he believes it will reveal an even greater presence of internationals in the commonwealth.

Smaller groups of various ethnicities are locating in the state thanks to the work of Kentucky Refugee Ministries. Since 1990, the agency has placed 4,000 refugees in Kentucky. These have come from 29 nationalities and ethnic groups.

Outreach to ethnic groups takes many forms. In Louisville, for example, Prasad Aghamkar is leading a □ See State leaders eager ... *Page 3*

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, July 15

Cumberlands rescinds invite to ousted church

By Drew Nichter
News Director

Williamsburg—University of the Cumberlands has rescinded an invitation to a youth group from Broadway Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas, following the congregation's dismissal from the Southern Baptist Convention on a vote by messengers to last month's annual meeting in Louisville.

The SBC's vote came on a motion from 2008 declaring Broadway Baptist to be not "in friendly cooperation" with the SBC because of its stance on homosexuality. The convention's Executive Committee recommended the church's removal, which was approved unanimously and without discussion June 23.

On the heels of that decision, Associated Baptist Press reported that University of the Cumberlands officials notified Broadway Baptist youth minister Fran Patterson that the church's youth group, scheduled to begin a choir and missions trip July 3, was no longer welcome at the school. The group was planning to work with Cumberlands' Mountain Outreach program, which rebuilds homes for underprivileged families in Appalachia.

According to a story in the Louisville Courier-Journal, Patterson received a phone call and faxed letter June 30 from Mountain Outreach Director Marc Hensley. The letter indicated that the church's invitation was being rescinded "in light of the recent decision of the Southern

Baptist Convention regarding (Broadway Baptist's) status and affiliation with the convention." It referred further questions to Cumberlands President James Taylor.

At press time, university officials had not responded to a request for comment from the Western Recorder, and have declined comment to all other media outlets.

In addition, Main Street Baptist Church in Williamsburg withdrew an invitation to the Broadway Baptist group to perform a choir concert at the church.

ABP also reported that after scrambling to find alternate plans, the youth group worked last week repairing older homes in Nashville through Mission Encounter, an independent ministry once affiliated with the Church of the Nazarene.

Church directory debate

At the heart of the matter is a controversy that swept through the Broadway Baptist congregation in 2007 that centered on how to present homosexual church members in a pictorial family directory. Though divisive, Broadway members reached a compromise on how to publish the directory, but the issue gained wide notice through Internet media reports and bloggers.

Following SBC messengers' vote to oust Broadway Baptist last month, Executive Committee member Stephen Wilson, vice

president of academic affairs at Mid-Continent University in Mayfield and a member of Lone Oak First Baptist Church of Paducah, told Baptist Press that the issue was not simply about homosexuality, but a church allowing homosexual members who are unrepentant.

"If churches are ministering to homosexuals, they are doing nothing more than what our own convention's task force has asked us to do," Wilson said in the BP report. "But in Broadway's case ... the church was in effect saying that it was OK to have members who are open homosexuals."

University of the Cumberlands is no stranger to controversy regarding homosexuality.

In April 2006, the school expelled a gay student who publicized his sexual orientation on a social networking Web site—contrary to the university's guidelines for student conduct. The move prompted a series of protests at the school.

More importantly, the expulsion led to a pair of lawsuits challenging \$12 million in state funding that was earmarked in 2006 to build a pharmacy school at the private university.

A Franklin County judge ruled in March 2008 that Cumberlands should not receive the money because it represented a violation of the state constitution. The ruling did not address critics' charges that the school unconstitutionally discriminated against the gay student.

June CP receipts set record, help narrow shortfall

Louisville—Kentucky Baptists contributed \$2,241,211 through the Cooperative Program in June, which helped narrow the fiscal year deficit to \$610,771 (3.05 percent).

The more than \$2.24 million given last month set a record for the highest amount given through the Cooperative Program in any June month, noted Kentucky Baptist Convention Business Services Team Leader Lowell Ashby.

"Experiencing a record amount invested in Cooperative Program ministries in June is cause for celebration," said Billy Compton, KBC's executive associate for Cooperative Program and resources. "We are very grateful for Kentucky Baptists and their commitment to missions and ministries."

According to Ashby, Kentucky Baptists have given a total of \$19,389,229 through CP during the 2008-09 fiscal year. With two months remaining in the fiscal year, at least \$4,610,771—more than \$2.3 million per month—is needed in order to meet the \$24 million budget.

CP giving remains behind last year's pace by \$133,848 (0.7 percent). Kentucky Baptists gave more than \$19.5 million through CP over the same period in the 2007-08 fiscal year.

Kentucky Baptists lead the way at DOM annual meeting in Louisville

By Keith Hinson

Louisville—Associational leaders should live as servant leaders and find creative strategies for leading other Christians to do the same, speakers challenged during the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Directors of Missions.

Southern Baptist leaders O.S. Hawkins, Ken Hemphill and Thom Rainer addressed DOMs at the Fern Valley Conference Center in Louisville prior to last month's Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting.

Setting the group's theme for the meeting, which was attended by approximately 250 people, SBCADOM President Wesley Pitts, director of missions for Kentucky's Long Run Baptist Association, delivered an address titled "Servant Leaders Are Under Construction." His wife, Diane, a ministry assistant with the Kentucky Baptist Convention, led the wives in a session that featured Kay Dekalb Smith, who entertained and inspired them with humor, music and testimony.

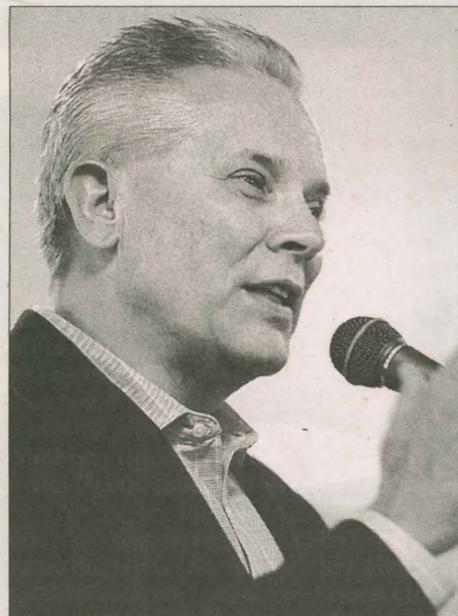
Hawkins, president of GuideStone Financial Resources, pointed DOMs in his message "Servant Leaders Build Relationships" to the New Testament Book of Philemon which he said teaches the servant characteristics of affirmation, accommodation, acceptance, allegiance and accountability.

"We were made to connect with each other," Hawkins said. "Everything in life is about building relationships if we're going to be servant leaders."

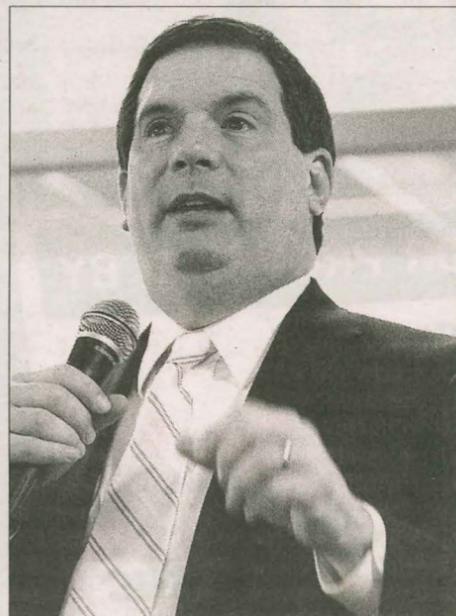
Hemphill, national strategist for the Southern Baptist Convention's Empowering Kingdom Growth emphasis, said Christians should be mindful about the importance of sharing in God's character.

"We share in His holiness," said Hemphill, preacher for the group's Sunday service. "We share in His character in order to join Him on mission."

Christians should be motivated to worship and service by the knowledge that this pleases God, Hemphill noted. "We don't un-



SERVANT EMPHASIS O.S. Hawkins (left), president of GuideStone Financial Resources, and Thom Rainer (right), president of LifeWay Christian Resources, address the Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Directors of Missions June 21 at the Fern Valley Hotel and Conference Center in Louisville. (Photos by Van Payne and Kent Harville)



derstand how much God loves the efforts and praise of His children," he added.

Worship leaders for the service were Cindy Malfalcone, assistant music minister at Walnut Street Baptist Church in Louisville, and Tammy Etherton, a member of Highland Park First Baptist Church in Louisville.

In his address "Servant Leaders Forgive," LifeWay President Rainer asked if unforgiveness could be hindering progress among Southern Baptists.

"Maybe one of the reasons is that God is talking to many of us and saying, 'I can't use you right now' ... because you've got to leave your gift at the altar and go be reconciled," Rainer suggested.

"When we talk about servant leaders forgiving, we don't look to the left or right," he observed. "We look deep within our own hearts and say, 'Lord, what should I do?'"

Among the breakout sessions were:

■ "Servant Leaders Continue to Grow," led by Hugh Townsend, associational strategies coordinator for the North American Mission Board.

Townsend said associational leaders should grow by developing leadership skills and viewing their ministries in new, more effective ways.

■ "Servant Leaders Pray," led by Greg Frizzell, prayer and spiritual awakening specialist for the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma.

Noting the frequent involvement of DOMs in helping churches seek pastors, Frizzell suggested all adults in a church—not just search committee members—commit themselves to a process of many weeks that will help them deepen their prayer lives, undergo spiritual cleansing and prepare for united relationships and vision.

■ "Servant Leaders Are Equipped," led by Ted Knapp, director of missions for the Los Angeles Extreme Urban Center in West Los Angeles.

"Modeling is probably your strongest tool, if they see an effective organization in the association," Knapp suggested. "Some of them won't go in and check out what other churches are doing, but they have ownership in your association. ... You've got to share some stories of success."

■ "Servant Leaders Visualize the Future," led by Mike Day, executive director of missions for Mid-South Baptist Association in Bartlett, Tenn.

The future, Day said, should be "church-driven," with associations letting churches "tell us what they need. It becomes our business to meet the needs of the churches as they have stated them to us; not as we have stated their needs to them."

Associations should consider divesting themselves of property, Day indicated. "If we're really going to be focused on meeting the needs of the churches, we will try to own as little as possible. We will try our very best not to own anything if we can help it. Anything we own takes away from the resources we can provide to the churches."

■ "Servant Leaders Stay Informed," led by David Meacham, senior strategist for NAMB's associational strategies team.

A key to being informed in the 21st century is to stay in touch with pastors, Meacham said. "In associations, you come alongside a pastor and a church and ask, 'How can we help you fulfill the Great Commission?'"

"In the 21st century, the details may have changed and the methods may have changed, but you associational missionaries still incarnate the Great Commission," he said.

The Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Directors of Mission will celebrate its 50th anniversary at the 2010 SBC annual meeting in Orlando, Fla. (BP)
With additional reporting by Editor Todd Deaton

Kentucky Changers 2009

Group of students minister through hard work to Grant County father and his sons

By Drew Nichter
News Director

Williamstown—Vernon Eldridge had never even heard of Kentucky Changers.

A couple of years earlier Eldridge's wife, Bonnie, had applied to have the family's home repaired during the weeklong youth missions project that would be making much-needed repairs to homes throughout Grant County.

When Kentucky Changers coordinators came by to discuss the project with Vernon, he was caught off guard.

"I was really shocked, surprised and tickled when I found out," he recalled.

Last week, about a dozen volunteers, most of them high school and college students, replaced the roof on the Eldridge home—a roof that, when it rained, would leak "buckets and buckets full in the house," Eldridge said.

Regrettably, it was a project that Bonnie never got to witness.

After battling cancer for four years, Bonnie Eldridge succumbed to the disease in February. She left behind her husband and two sons, Ian, 12, and Dylan, 9.

The past few months have been tough for the Eldridges, to say the least.

Vernon, who had stayed at his dying wife's side for seven months, is not able to work because he struggles with narcolepsy, a chronic sleep disorder that can cause a person to fall asleep at any time. The condition forced him to give up his mobile home servicing business. He now lives on disability benefits.

The narcolepsy has "affected dai-

ly life dramatically," Eldridge said. "I have to watch everything I do."

Returning home also has been difficult for the family.

During his wife's final months and after her death, Eldridge and his sons lived with his mother, who had lost her husband, Vernon's father, in January.

A couple of months ago, Eldridge took his sons back home. They did not stay long. "Everything was good for about a week, then it just got to be too much," Eldridge said.

It was especially hard for the youngest son, Dylan, to return home without his mother. "It took months for him to be able to come in the driveway," Eldridge noted.

Only three weeks ago, the three of them finally came home for good.

But being away for so long caused financial worries to pile up on Eldridge. Chief among them: the leaking roof.

He said he had no idea how he was going to be able to repair the roof, or even if he would ever have the money to do so. He estimated the job would cost several thousand dollars. On top of that, his narcolepsy prevented him from doing the repairs himself.

Enter Kentucky Changers.

The group of 12, which dubbed themselves the "Jesus Freaks," got to work last week, stripping metal off of the old roof, installing sheeting, laying down new shingles, and building up the center of the roof to keep rain water from pooling and leaking into the house.

"We've had a lot of prayer," said crew chief Jerry Thomas, a member of Coral Hill Baptist Church in Glasgow. "The Lord's really blessed

us in a lot of different ways."

He said that throughout the project, leaders emphasized having a servant's heart.

"If we come out here with an attitude that the only thing we're going to do is fix that roof and that's it, we're missing the whole picture," Thomas noted.

The group also reached out daily to the Eldridges, inviting Vernon and the boys, who attend Vine Run Baptist Church in Dry Ridge, to pray with them, and also spent time with them while they working at the home.

"He's a godly man and he's hurting down deep inside," Thomas said of Vernon. "But, we want him to pray with us every morning and we want to make sure that (if) there's anything on his heart that we can pray for that day."

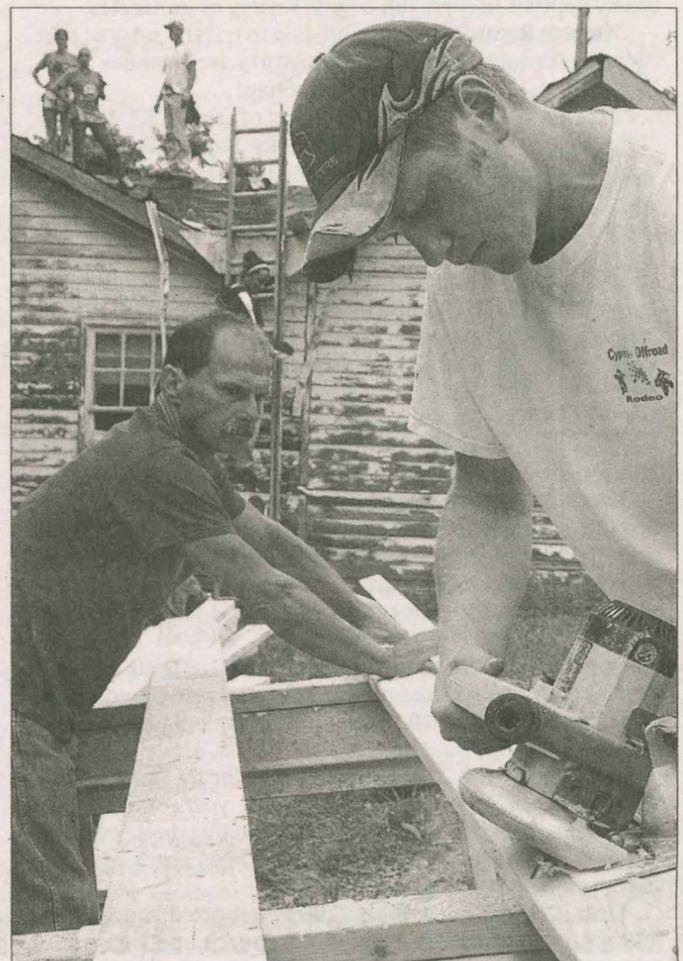
Eldridge praised the crew's work. "It's been an extensive job, but they've done an awesome job on it."

Even though the Kentucky Changers' work was "a blessing all the way around" for the Eldridges, Vernon admitted there still is an emptiness in the home without Bonnie—but he expressed hope for the future.

"She wanted the boys and I to come home and be happy," he said. "The happiness hadn't come yet, but over time I guess it will."

Changers recap

More than 1,000 student and adult volunteers served at this summer's three Kentucky Changers projects in Princeton, the Frankfort/Lawrenceburg area, and Grant County. Kentucky Changers began in 1994 as a ministry of Kentucky Baptist Men on Mission.



'A BLESSING ALL THE WAY AROUND' Vernon Eldridge (left) helps assistant crew chief Seth Mishne saw a piece of lumber that will be used to repair the roof on Eldridge's home which he shares with his two young sons. The three of them recently moved back to the house after several months away as Eldridge's wife, Bonnie, battled cancer. She died in February after four years fighting the disease. She unfortunately never got to see the roof repairs which she had applied for a couple of years earlier through Kentucky Changers. Last week, a group of 12 volunteers made the repairs on the home, which Eldridge called "a blessing all the way around." (Photo by Drew Nichter)

State leaders eager to reach Kentucky's growing international population

Continued from page 1

Bible study for Nepalese refugees who have resettled in Kentucky over the past two years.

"It is very encouraging and God is really doing a marvelous job," Aghamkar said, noting that 10-15 Nepalese attend.

"They have a strong Hindu background, but—very surprising—they are very open for the gospel. I think because they were in refugee camps many years," he noted. "Now everything is new, so they want to hear, they want to test."

Aghamkar's focus is reaching fellow natives from India. He came to America from India two years ago to study at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, but he has visited America for the past five years, performing concerts featuring traditional music from India. The concerts provided an opportunity for Aghamkar to share his Christian faith.

He performed a similar concert in June at Louisville's Hurstbourne Baptist Church for Crossover. Playing a harmonium, an instrument similar to an accordion, and organ, the event attracted 150 Indians, he said.

"When they are in other countries, they miss Indian music, Indian food, Indian fellowship," Aghamkar added. "This is a good, humble but healthy beginning."

Aghamkar recently was ordained by Walnut Street Church in Louis-

ville as a church planter. Soon to be commissioned as an ethnic missionary for the North American Mission Board, he currently is planting a church among the Nepalese and said he desires to start a new church for Indian people.

Leadership vacuum

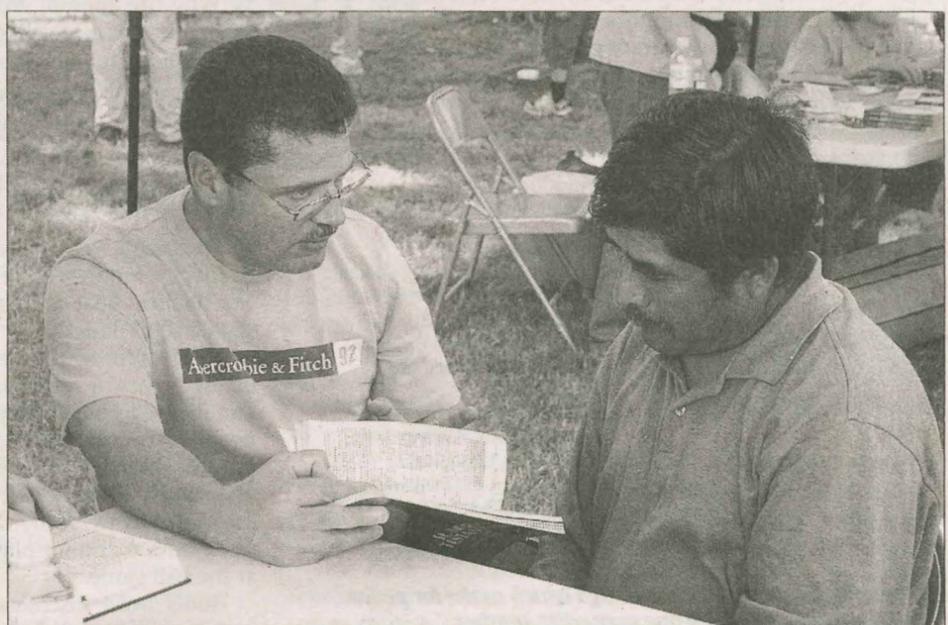
While ethnic work grows in Kentucky, a lack of trained leadership threatens to hinder new work, officials report.

"We are short in pastors," De la Barra said. "The people are here. The people are in distress. The people are learning a new life. The people are open to the gospel. The people are ready to receive the Good News of salvation, and we don't have the persons to do it."

To meet this growing need, leaders started the Hispanic Baptist Bible Institute in 2005.

The three-year program is taught in Spanish by local Hispanic missionaries or IMB missionaries on furlough. "We have students and professors from over 14 countries," Director Twilla Hernandez said. "We have approximately 85 students right now."

As the need has grown, locations have expanded beyond the commonwealth. Current teaching sites are in Louisville, Bowling Green, Mayfield, Cincinnati, Chicago and Southern Illinois. Support comes from the KBC, the Illinois Baptist State Associa-



THINKING GLOBAL Carlos Mendez (left) of New Beginnings Church in Orlando, Fla., shares the gospel with a man from Louisville during the Southern Baptist Crossover event June 20. Outreach to the city's ethnic populations was a central part of the evangelistic initiative. (KBC photo by Mandi Buckner)

tion and local associations and churches. Campbellsville University hosts the institute's offices at its Louisville satellite campus.

Hernandez cited one recent success story: A graduate revived an Elizabethtown church that had dispersed when the town-

ous missionary retired. "He regathered that group and has started growing the church.

"This is the future of Hispanic ministry," she explained. "The Hispanic population is growing so quickly that we need more churches. But we can't have more churches if we don't have trained leaders."

Missions by KBC entities

After Baptist churches in Kentucky who had a heart for missions formed the Kentucky Baptist Convention, they would continue on to form agencies and institutions for specific ministries. Today, those agencies and institutions directly impact international missions, and enable Kentucky Baptists to carry out a wide variety of ministries.

Western Recorder was established to tell the story of missions in Kentucky and around the world. It continues to fulfill that mission today.

Partners in the Mission



By Bill Mackey

Previously part of the KBC Mission Board, the **Kentucky Baptist Foundation** became an agency in 1995. In addition to serving Kentucky Baptists with trust accounts and endowments, the Foundation actually produces more than \$380,000 each year in Cooperative Program funds.

Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union provides outstanding missions education and Cooperative Program promotion, as well as special offerings for missions. Prayer support also is provided for missionaries at home and abroad, and missions involvement is encouraged.

Kentucky Baptist Assemblies are expecting 10,000 campers this summer for Crossings, located at Jonathan Creek and Cedarmore. Professions of faith are expected to exceed last year (around 250) by hundreds. Mission camps in Moldova that are sponsored by camper donations will record over 1,000 professions of faith.

Oneida Baptist Institute reports that 75 of their 350 students come from 17 countries. The pastor at Oneida Baptist Church baptized 10 international students from eight countries.

About 40 of the 350 children cared for by **Sunrise Children's Services** become believers each year. Sunrise has just dedicated a beautiful new facility in Elizabethtown for needy female teenagers, and the Glen Dale Center will also accommodate 20 females.

Clear Creek Baptist Bible College reported more than 450 professions of faith through its church and community ministries last year. All 200 Clear Creek students are committed to vocational ministry, and over 90 percent are in ministry one to five years later.

Campbellsville University had an enrollment of 251 international students last year from 51 different countries. During a Rick Gage Crusade last fall, 121 freshmen responded with professions of faith, and 40 other students made profession of faith in chapel.

University of the Cumberlands has many international students, some of whom participate in Mountain Outreach building projects. Last fall, 22 football players made professions of faith during a revival led by a former NFL player.

Through our agencies and institutions, God is bringing international missions opportunities into our neighborhoods. Kentucky Baptists also send more than 48 percent to SBC mission causes through a combination of designated gifts and Cooperative Program gifts.

May God help us respond more faithfully to connect all people to Jesus Christ.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

The gospel train's a-comin' ... get on board

As calls for the SBC to develop a broader ethnic base rise, the words of an old gospel tune have begun running through my head lately: "The gospel train's a-comin'. I hear it just at hand. I hear the wheels rumblin'. And rollin' through the land."

Since moving to Kentucky, long trains with four or five locomotives and sometimes upwards of 100 boxcars have become frequent sights. About 250 yards from our office runs a very active CSX railway that transports automobiles made at a nearby Ford plant. The same track runs within about 250 yards of the condo where my family now lives.



After Thought

By Todd Deaton

It isn't so much the rumblin' wheels I mind, or even the never-ending stream of boxcars that snarls traffic. It's those long, shrill whistles that jolt me awake in the wee hours of the night. Still, I have been fascinated with trains ever since I was a boy of 10 or 12. I grew up in a small town that was named Denmark after a railway man. Surrounding towns all picked up on the Scandinavian theme and amusingly elected to call themselves Norway, Sweden and Finland. Yes, they are all real places in South Carolina.

The tracks of three railroad lines crossed in Denmark, and the church parsonage where we lived stood less than 100 yards from one of the busiest. Rumblin' and rollin' wheels were so frequent that after a year or so, we hardly noticed, but the spouses of visiting ministers would cast a wary eye toward the tinkling cups and saucers in Mom's china cabinet as a train rumbled past.

It wasn't so long ago that Southern Baptists took great pride that their membership train was approaching 16 million. Few took notice that our numbers were beginning to wane. But, as of late, denominational leaders are becoming concerned that our train seems to be getting shorter.

In a recent analysis, Baptist Press Executive Editor Will Hall dared to ask the question on everyone's mind: Is the SBC in decline? Hall observed that from 1961 through 1998, SBC churches grew in membership by 59 percent, from 9.9 to 15.8 million, while other mainline denominations—Methodist, Episcopalian, Presbyterian and Christian churches—all reported declines ranging from 27 to 50 percent.

Since 1999, however, church membership has leveled off, posting annual gains of less than three-quarters of a percent and, more recently, drops of about a quarter of a percent.

Why the anemic growth rate? Hall maintains that when one examines Census data, "it is evident that demographic changes in our country have been the major shaping force of our membership numbers, not outdated methodologies nor a generation gap in the

leadership of our churches and institutions." He makes a convincing case that our sagging membership and baptism numbers are in large part due to a declining birthrate among Whites and suburbanization trends. "This is not to say such demographics hold sway over the gospel," Hall clarifies. "It does suggest that if we are to continue to grow, we need to shift our church planting strategy in order to give us the best chance of sharing the gospel with the lost."

Hall observed that a majority of the population lives in metropolitan areas, while nearly half of all Southern Baptist churches are located in rural areas, mostly scattered throughout the South. "This is not to suggest that the churches in rural areas are not vital or viable or vibrant. There are believers in rural America who will need to be disciples and receive ministering," he allowed. "However, if 80 percent of the population now lives in a metropolitan area, the SBC needs to place greater emphasis on an intentional and coordinated plan for church planting in these populated areas."

As more people move to the cities, and as the growth of African-American, Hispanic and Asian populations continues to greatly outpace that of Anglo's, Hall suggested that Baptist congregations will need to adapt their evangelism strategies to start growing again.

This is already happening among Kentucky Baptists. When Carlos De La Barra, who leads ethnic work for the state convention, arrived in 1992, there was only one Hispanic church. Today, there are more than 110 ethnic churches and ministries serving at least 15 different people groups, including Koreans, Chinese, Filipinos, Laotians and Haitians.

Our metropolitan areas are full of people of other nationalities, according to De la Barra. "This is a strategic way we can fulfill the Great Commission right here in our state," he reminds Kentucky Baptists, noting that they often are open to the gospel and ready to receive the good news of salvation.

North American Mission Board officials tell us that from 1998 and 2005, Anglo congregations grew by 1,267, with a gain of 364,367 members. Meanwhile, ethnic congregations surged by more than double that figure, with 2,668 new churches and a gain of 567,524 members.

Just this week, SBC President Johnny Hunt felt a need to expand the newly-created task force for the Great Commission Resurgence. He added an African-American church planter from Atlanta, a Hispanic pastor from Dallas, a women's ministry speaker from Denver, and a pastor from Philadelphia.

The gospel train's a-comin'. Can you hear the whistle blowing, too? Get on board.

Ten thousand steps; ten thousand prayers

My friend wears a pedometer to count the number of steps he takes. His healthy goal is to take 10,000 steps daily.

Let's suppose that each of us wears a pedometer and makes a goal to pray for people in our life's path. We pray silently for neighbors as we pass their house, for associates as we go by their work station and for players at the ball game.

God's word instructs us to "pray constantly," so we pray as we go wherever our 10,000 steps take us.

A church-wide prayer walk is a simple, effective way to inspire members to pray. It can be an hour, day-long or ongoing event. The prayer walk could launch a church plant, revival, or new church ministry. It could target a subdivision or campus. Your city streets will be filled

with church members—some strolling, some jogging, some with a walker or wheelchair or baby stroller—praying as they go, talking to God about people who need to know Him.

Fresh Ideas



Diana Davis

Need a few starter ideas?

"Circle the City" Prayer Walk. On a large city map, make a circle of stick-on paper dots spaced around the parameter of the town or a one-mile radius of your church. Members sign a dot to commit to prayer walk from that dot clockwise to the next dot on the circle, surrounding your city in prayer.

"My Zone" Prayer Walk. Each member selects a specific area to prayer walk, such as their street, neighborhood, apartment complex or office building. My son's church charts prayer walk assignments online or you can use a highlighter and

map to mark your zone.

"To the Heart of Our Town" Prayer Walk. On a large master map, members put a stick-on dot where they plan to begin their walk toward the church. Some walk a block; others walk miles, but all paths lead to the church building where prayer walkers will rally.

Permanent Prayer Walk Path. A North Dakota church built a prayer walkway around their church's acres. Members walk and pray for church ministry and outreach.

A churchwide prayer walk can open members' eyes to ministry and witnessing opportunities. Read Sprinkle's, "Follow Me," ibsaprayers.blogspot.com and nppn.org for prayer-walking instructions. Then make a plan to fit your church.

Ten thousand steps. Ten thousand prayers. It's hard to fathom the potential impact. Maybe it's time to get your pedometer.

Diana Davis' latest book is "Deacon Wives" (B&H Publishing, 2009).

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Marketing & Business Manager

"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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Time to review estate plan

By Laurie Valentine

Estate planning should not be something you do only once in your life.

Changes in your family, changes in what you own, and/or changes in the charitable causes you support may require changes in your plan from time to time throughout your life to assure your estate distribution objectives will continue to be accomplished.

Changes in the federal estate tax laws can also necessitate changes in your plan. The recent increase in the federal estate tax exemption equivalent (formerly known as the "unified credit amount") to \$3.5 million is one such example.

In the 1980s and 1990s, many couples with combined estates exceeding the \$600,000 unified credit amount developed estate plans that included a provision directing the creation of a "bypass trust" at the first spouse's death. The bypass trust was to be funded with an amount equal to the estate tax exemption in effect at the death of the spouse and, because the surviving spouse had limited rights in the bypass trust, the value of that trust would not be included in the surviving spouse's estate at his or her subsequent death.

This planning allowed a couple with a combined estate of \$1.2 million to pass its estate tax free.

Now that the estate tax exemption is almost six times what it was, a distribution plan set up years ago to save death taxes may no longer be needed. Failing to review and revise your plan may result in a no-longer-needed-for-tax-savings bypass trust being created at the death of the first spouse. The surviving spouse will have limited rights in the bypass trust assets and earnings, those assets will have to be invested separately and tax returns will have to be filed for the bypass trust.

Avoid unexpected consequences of an out-dated estate plan. Make time to review your plan with your legal and tax advisers.

Laurie Valentine is trust counsel for the Kentucky Baptist Foundation.



Does your pastor seem a little lonely?

By Tom Ehrich

A Facebook group to which I belong held a discussion of loneliness among senior pastors.

People commented that pastors tend to have few friends with whom they can relax and be themselves.

Clergy said they need to be guarded about what they say and wary of being judged on superficials, such as their attire. They said their work is so all-consuming that they rarely have time for friendships outside the congregation.

It isn't just senior pastors, participants said, but all clergy, and indeed most organizational leaders. Hierarchical leadership leaves them cut off from sustaining friendships, even cut off from their families.

My immediate contribution to the discussion was to say this:

- The No. 1 need is to have a life outside church—a life with nonchurch activities and nonchurch friends, where the pastor can be just a person. If the pastor has a family, life outside church should put family first. Children need a parent, not a role model standing in a pulpit.

- Second is to have healthy boundaries, where church work ends and rest-of-life begins. Fuzzy boundaries lead to loneliness.

- Third is to have realistic expectations of church members. To them, the pastor is never out of role. True intimacy with church members tends to be problematic.

Loneliness takes a serious toll. It can lead to sadness and depression. It can lead to boundary problems, acting out and inappropriate behavior. It can sap a pastor's energy and confidence.

Some laity impose isolation as a way

to keep clergy under control, which is also a way to keep God small and non-threatening. One pastor told me, "Many laypeople are unwilling to treat their leaders as human beings who need a compliment or kind comment from time to time."

Most constituents, I think, contribute to the loneliness unwittingly by making comments that treat their pastor as a curiosity and by not including the pastor in certain activities.

Politicians learn to exploit such behavior—although they still get into boundary troubles—and celebrities ride it to the bank. Clergy occupy a strange middle ground: needing to be political but not possessing the politician's thick skin; serving as a local celebrity but not equipped to manage the spotlight.

As church staffs shrink and church institutions provide less collegiality to clergy, the pastor's loneliness seems likely to worsen. Dealing with that loneliness should be a primary task for both congregations and their denominations.

Nervous clergy might be malleable, but the gospel is better served when clergy feel able to preach boldly, to tend to all constituents and not just the powerful, and to lead with godly vision, not paycheck anxiety.

Clergy who have full lives, including friendships, downtime and acceptance (of both their personalities and their flaws), will be more likely to connect with their constituents' lives. Isolated clergy tend to get too institutional, because institution is the one place they feel safe and competent. (RNS)

Tom Ehrich is a writer, church consultant and Episcopal priest based in New York.

FIRST PERSON

Barna study:

Hispanics adopting mainstream faith

The Hispanic population, the largest ethnic group in the United States, rapidly has been adopting the mainstream beliefs and practices of all Americans, according to a study by The Barna Group.

The study, released July 6, compared the faith of Hispanics today to their faith profile of 15 years ago and found 11 faith dimensions on which there had been substantial change.

Barna found Hispanics' alignment with the Catholic Church was down by 25 percentage points, and Hispanics who believe a good person can earn his way into heaven was down 9 percentage points.

Being a born-again Christian by Barna's definition was up 17 percentage points among Hispanics, and having made a personal commitment to Jesus was up 15 percentage points.

Church attendance among Hispanics in an average week had increased 10 percentage points, Barna said, and reading the Bible was up 5 percentage points.

Hispanics who were surveyed also were more likely to claim to have a personal responsibility to share their religious beliefs with others (up 10 percentage points), believe that God is the all-powerful, all-knowing creator of the universe who still rules the world today (up 8 points), and believe that the Bible is accurate in all of the principles it teaches (up 6 points). (BP)

Seven pivotal relationships for vibrant youth ministry

Over the past several months, we have been examining the state of youth ministry in Kentucky. We invited about 20 people involved in youth ministry from every section of our state who are serving in churches of various sizes to be part of an on-line Google community. There we carried on a continuing conversation on what is working in reaching students. We also asked very pointed questions at this spring's Iron Sharpening Iron events. Again, we were trying to get a handle on what is working to reach this generation of students.

In this process, as you can imagine, several things appeared. We know there isn't just one formula for having a successful youth ministry, but the one aspect that appeared over and over had to do with relationships. The overwhelming consensus was that a key to youth ministry involved forming healthy relationships in these areas:

The youth ministers' relationship with God. This is the base upon which healthy youth ministry is built. You would think that this would be a "no brainer," but it is one area in which—when we as youth ministers become transparent and open with each other—we all struggle.

It is not uncommon that, in being about the busyness of ministry we forget to take time to work on our personal relationships with God. The times we spend in the word preparing for the next Bible study or retreat are not a substitute for our alone time with the Creator.

Relationships with family. A line from a classic song by Waylon and Willie goes, "They'll never stay home and they're always alone, even with someone they love." While they were talking about cowboys, I think it applies to many youth ministers, especially in the summer time. Let us not be so busy relating to other peoples' kids that we forget to relate to our own, and don't forget to date your spouse.

Relationships with church staff and youth workers.

Those fellow ministers that God has assembled to be part of the team with whom you are blessed to do ministry can be your greatest asset or your greatest source of consternation. I have seen mediocre youth ministries made great because of the youth minister's ability to recruit and unleash a host of volunteers to be part of a vital team. I also have seen a ton of talented youth ministers crash and burn because they couldn't figure out how to involve others.

Relationships with the students. You would think this would be higher on the list, and for most youth ministers/workers it is. While a passion for teenagers is why most of us got into youth work, we cannot ignore the other relationships around us. They should feel safe around us and know that we are there for them, but within the confines of a healthy teen-adult relationship.

Relationships with local schools and community organizations. One of the realizations that kept reoccurring in our discussion was that the days of opening the doors of the church and seeing the students clamoring to get in are for the most part over. If we are going to have a vital youth ministry, then we need to get involved where students are. Building relationships with schools and community groups, such as Boy Scouts, dance teams, community theatre and ball teams, are central to being involved in the lives of this generation of students.

Relationships with other youth ministers. The old adage that "no man is an island" is as true in youth ministry as elsewhere. For years I have said it this way: "No one understands youth ministry like another youth minister." Being involved in a local network of other youth ministers and workers is vital to a vibrant youth ministry.

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

Youth Ministry Corner



Joe Ball

Obsession with beauty affects kids

By David Garrard

They were called "glamour photos," and they could make a 9 year old look 17. A new hairstyle, make up, perfect lighting and voila! Almost anyone came out looking like a million dollars. Whether or not they really looked like themselves was another question.

Glamour shots were pretty much just for fun, but times are changing as our culture becomes more and more obsessed with looks—and the obsession has worked its way down to our children. TLC has a reality show called "Toddlers and Tiaras" that chronicles beauty pageants for children as young as two. Spas are targeting the 0-12 age group. Facials, manicures, pedicures ... for children! According to one study, 8-12 year olds are spending \$40 million a month on beauty products.

"Obsession (with physical appearance) at an early age fosters a belief that these are essential components of who we are," says Susie Orbach, author and former therapist to Princess Di. And therein lies the rub. Children need to know that God made them, God loves them, and that is what makes them special—not how they look.

Taking care of yourself and wanting to look your best are worthy goals as long as they don't become all-consuming and the basis of a child's identity and sense of self-worth. Encourage good grooming. In particular, teach your daughters to appreciate their natural beauty. When the time comes, teach them how to use make up and other beauty aids with restraint. Frame all of this within a context of biblical teaching about self-worth, free from the pressure of standards that quickly become as unrealistic as they are meaningless.

The writer of Proverbs tells us that "charm is deceptive and beauty is fleeting" (Proverbs 31:30). Paul reminds Timothy that physical training has some value, but godliness has value for all things (1 Timothy 4:8). Both passages challenge our culture's obsession with how we look. Teach your children these truths.

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



BAPTIST DIGEST

Wife of Ohio executive director dies—Kay Kwok, wife of Jack Kwok, executive director of the State Convention of Baptists in Ohio, died June 27 in Owensboro. The family was preparing for the ordination of their eldest son J.P. at Bellevue Baptist Church where he serves as worship pastor. A native of Memphis, Tenn., Kwok was a registered nurse and musician. After illnesses prevented her from singing and playing, she focused on other ministries: public speaking, writing and intercessory prayer. She served alongside her husband as a pastor's wife for 18 years, a Southern Baptist home missionary for eight years and an executive director's wife for 13 years. Kwok is survived by her husband, two sons and a grandson. Funeral services were held July 3 and 7 in Ohio.

Former Missouri exec Nelson dies at 96—Longtime Missouri Baptist leader Tom Nelson died June 9 at The Baptist Home in Ozark, Mo. He was 96. He retired in 1978 after 16 years as executive director of the Missouri Baptist Foundation. On two separate occasions, Nelson served as interim executive director of the Missouri Baptist Convention. Nelson also served three churches as pastor. He is survived by three children, two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Funeral services were held June 13 at First Baptist Church of Jefferson City, Mo.

Texas pastor Graham diagnosed with cancer—Jack Graham, pastor of the Dallas-area Prestonwood Baptist Church and a former Southern Baptist Convention president, recently announced that he was diagnosed with prostate cancer and is taking a two-month sabbatical. Graham underwent successful surgery May 14 after consulting with doctors. He said physicians have assured him that his "prognosis is outstanding." On June 6-7, Prestonwood celebrated Graham's 20th anniversary as pastor of the church, which has more than tripled in membership since he arrived. On that weekend, a member of the church's personnel committee announced that Graham would receive a two-month sabbatical in recognition of his milestone anniversary. Executive Pastor Mike Buster said that over the next two months the preaching schedule will include ministers from the Prestonwood preaching team, along with guest speakers.

Task Force chair calls for prayer volunteers—The chairman of the Great Commission Task Force has asked for 5,000 volunteers who will pray regularly on behalf of the committee. Ronnie Floyd, senior pastor of First Baptist Church of Springdale, Ark., and The Church at Pinnacle Hills in Rogers, Ark., will chair the 19-member committee, which was appointed June 24 by Southern Baptist Convention President Johnny Hunt. Messengers to the SBC annual meeting in Louisville overwhelmingly adopted a motion to authorize the move June 23. A Web site soon will launch where volunteers can register their commitment to pray, Floyd said. Prayer points will be sent to those who register. The vote authorizing the task force charges them with studying how Southern Baptists can work "more faithfully and effectively together in serving Christ through the Great Commission."

Baptist Women in Ministry hires Durso—Just six years after it laid off its staff and considered closing for good, Baptist Women in Ministry has hired a new full-time executive director. Pamela Durso, who previously was associate director of the Baptist History and Heritage Society, began July 1 as leader of the group that advocates and provides services for women ministers in Baptist life. The group was formed in 1983 at Crescent Hill Baptist Church in Louisville and later moved to Central Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Kan. Facing declining membership and reduced funding, the group was forced to lay off two staff members in 2003 and launched a study to determine if it should continue to exist. In 2004, BWIM moved its offices to the campus of Mercer University's McAfee School of Theology in Atlanta.

Liberty offers compromise on student clubs—Liberty University has decided to detach itself from all campus political clubs that misrepresent the schools' Christian mission, stripping them of funding, but compromising on regulations. Classifying them as "unofficial clubs," the school has adopted new policies to regulate school groups that "are not aligned with Liberty's core values." These clubs still can use the school's name, but only if they publicize that the school does not endorse them. They also can assemble on school grounds and use campus resources if their purposes are not in conflict with the religious doctrines of the university.

SBC Executive Committee VP Logan resigns, Chapman declines comment

Nashville—The Southern Baptist Convention official responsible for planning the SBC annual meeting has abruptly resigned after less than two years on the job and two weeks after this year's convention meeting in Louisville.

The Southern Baptist Texan newspaper first reported the resignation of Clark Logan, the SBC Executive Committee's vice president for business and finance since October 2007. Executive Committee President Morris Chapman told the newspaper that Logan resigned July 1. Asked to confirm reports that Logan was fired, Chapman said, "It is not the practice of the Executive Committee to respond to rumors."

Another Baptist state newspaper, the Florida Baptist Witness, reported that Logan released a statement declining to comment on the reasons for his resignation other than to clarify that he was not accused of, or involved in, anything immoral or unethical.

Logan said he was asked July 1 to submit his resignation by the end of the day and that he complied. "I

have enjoyed the past 21 months of service to the people of the SBC through the VP role and that of convention manager," the statement said. "I am grateful to God, my staff and countless volunteers for a successful annual meeting just two weeks ago."

The Executive Committee elected Logan, 42, to the position unanimously in September 2007. He succeeded Jack Wilkerson, who retired in October 2007 after 14 years.

Before that, Logan worked seven years at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, first as assistant director of admissions, later as director of development and finally as senior vice president for institutional advancement.

Logan worked in the insurance business before entering the ministry in 1998. He holds bachelor's and master's degrees in business administration and in 2001 earned a master of divinity degree from Southern Seminary's Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Church Growth.

He worked as a youth minister



RESIGNED Clark Logan addresses the SBC Executive Committee after his election as vice president for business and finance. Logan abruptly stepped down from the post July 1 after less than two years. (BP photo)

and an assistant pastor at two Kentucky churches and was ordained to the ministry by Highview Baptist Church in Louisville in 2005.

Logan and his wife, Helen, have three sons. He said in his statement that he wishes God's blessing on the Executive Committee and is trusting the Lord for "protection of and provision for" his family. (ABP)

Former Southern Baptist leader Mosley dies at 81

Gastonia, N.C.—Ernest Mosley, whose ministry spanned 65 years, stretching from local churches to leadership roles in the Southern Baptist Convention, died July 8 at age 81. He was diagnosed with cancer last fall and had been under home hospice care.

Mosley was executive vice president of the SBC Executive Committee from 1987 until his retirement in 1998; executive director of the Illinois Baptist State Association from 1980-87; and pastoral section supervisor at the former Baptist Sunday School Board (now LifeWay

Christian Resources) during 13 years on staff at the SBC entity.

He was president of the Hawaii Baptist Convention in 1966-67 and was a pastor, assistant pastor or minister of education of churches in four states.

SBC Executive Committee President Morris Chapman said Southern Baptists have lost "an outstanding servant of Christ and denominational statesman."

"Ernest Mosley gave of himself through a lifetime of service as a pastor, author, editor and denominational leader. He also gave of him-

self as a faithful husband, father and grandfather," Chapman added.

"Through his gentle spirit and lighthearted manner, he fostered openness, trust, respect and cooperation during a tumultuous period in Baptist life," Chapman said. "He was truly a giant of a man, a genuine man of God."

Mosley is survived by his wife, Vivian, three daughters and 10 grandchildren.

Funeral services were held July 11 at Parkwood Baptist Church in Gastonia, N.C., where the Mosleys were members. (BP)

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Without reversal, Southern Baptists face significant decline

Stetzer: SBC must baptize more young adults, reach more foreign-born people

By Rob Phillips
LifeWay Christian Resources

Louisville—Southern Baptist membership will fall nearly 50 percent by 2050 unless the aging and predominantly white denomination reverses a 50-year trend and does more to strengthen evangelism, reach immigrants and develop a broader ethnic base, according to data recently released by LifeWay Research.

Ed Stetzer, director of LifeWay Research, told editors of the Association of State Baptist Papers last month that while SBC membership has risen most years—by as much as 4 percent in 1951—the rate of increase has been declining by 0.06 percent per year, and the membership change trend line now has passed into negative territory.

“If the 50-year trend continues, projected membership of (Southern Baptist Convention) churches would be 8.7 million in 2050, down from 16.2 million last year,”

Stetzer noted. “Using U.S. Census projected population figures, SBC membership could fall from a peak of 6 percent of the American population in the late 1980s to 2 percent in 2050.”

Stetzer quoted Cliff Tharp, an SBC statistician for 35 years, who said, “We have been slowing in our growth and have now passed into decline. We are right at the top of the arc and beginning to go down. But changes we make now can change that trend significantly. These stats are not new but it has never caught anyone’s attention until now.”

Stetzer said there are many factors that can contribute to such decline. One factor is that the mean age of the denomination’s members is increasingly older than the general population, especially in the South, and Southern Baptists are reaching and baptizing fewer young adults. Second, Southern Baptists have failed to keep pace with the rising number of non-white and non-black citizens in the United States.

“The difference in the mean age of Southern Baptists versus the U.S. population shows SBC members older, especially since 1993,” Stetzer pointed out. “Pri-

or to 2000, the difference in ages was not statistically significant, but we started to see a statistically significant divide in the age distribution of SBC members versus the general U.S. population after the turn of the century.”

Meanwhile, the percentage of the non-white and non-black population is very different in the U.S. versus the SBC, Stetzer said, drawing from General Social Service data. Last year, for example “other” races made up 10 percent of the U.S. population but only 2 percent of SBC membership, according to the GSS.

At the same time, the portion of the U.S. population that is foreign-born is outpacing the segment of foreign-born Southern Baptists. In 2008, 14 percent of the U.S. population was foreign born while only 3 percent of SBC members hailed from other countries.

The gap is particularly evident in the South, where immigrants make up a growing portion of the population, especially since 2000. “The South is becoming increasingly multi-ethnic but the SBC is not keeping pace,” Stetzer said. “Although Southern Baptists have done great work among immigrant and ethnic

groups, they are still underrepresented in our denomination. Great opportunity exists for us to share the gospel and minister to people. Ironically, the world is coming to us more quickly than we are going to the world.”

Stetzer also addressed the recent decline in baptisms in Southern Baptist churches, pointing out that while baptisms have fallen every year but one since 1999, the trend line since 1950 shows no discernible pattern. “Baptisms often have risen several years in a row, only to fall for several years following,” he said. “The annual percentage change of total baptisms in the SBC since 1950 is essentially flat. That means total baptisms between now and 2050 are projected to remain roughly unchanged as well. We hope that the last few years of decline are not a trend but just a blip, but there is no way to tell.”

But it’s not an inevitable fate, he explained. “We can rally Southern Baptists in efforts such as engaging ethnicities in a way that we currently are not.”

Bottom line? “There’s work to be done,” Stetzer said.

With additional reporting by Grace Thornton of The Alabama Baptist

Series of constitutional changes likely at upcoming BWA meeting

Ede, Netherlands—A number of significant constitutional changes are slated to be made during the Baptist World Alliance annual gathering in Ede, Netherlands, July 27-Aug. 1.

The proposed amendments will be brought before the General Council, which convenes during the meeting.

The size of the BWA Executive Committee, now numbering more than 60, would be reduced to 25. The number of BWA vice presidents is to be cut from the current count of 19 to 12, one of whom will be designated first vice president.

Also chairs of program committees no longer will have a seat on the Executive Committee. However, chairs of standing committees will continue to serve as members of the executive group. Program committees are expected to become advisory committees, assisting BWA directors in their work, and no longer will have an executive or governance function.

The new Executive Committee, which is to be elected next year during the 20th Baptist World Congress in Honolulu, is intended to become “more deliberative” and to take on broader responsibilities.

The proposed changes came after a series of meetings and deliberations by the Implementation Task Force, formed in 2005 to study and implement proposals coming from the 21st Century Committee, which was created in 2000 to study the effectiveness of BWA ministries.

After the ITF report was received and voted on by the General Council at last year’s meeting, the Constitution and Bylaws Committee took on the task of proposing the relevant changes that will be considered at this year’s annual gathering.

If the changes are approved, a new Nominations Committee will be formed, replacing the Officers Search Committee which previously named individuals to BWA committees.

Budget issues, generational shift headline 2009 CBF General Assembly

By Bob Allen

Houston—The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship faced financial hardship and generational change at its 19th General Assembly July 1-3 in Houston.

Registration for the meeting reached 1,637, well below the 2,250 registered at last year’s meeting. Organizers anticipated a smaller crowd, because the meeting was held on a different week than usual and wrapped up at the beginning of a holiday weekend.

Participants adopted a budget of a \$16.1 million, slightly less than last year’s budget, but the organization will enter the 2009-10 fiscal year spending at 80 percent of that amount. That continues a contingency spending plan in place since March to handle a budget shortfall.

“It will come as no surprise to you that this has been a difficult fiscal year for everyone, including the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship,” said Colleen Burroughs, chair of the finance committee of the group’s Coordinating Council. “The contracting global economy has affected millions of lives around the world, and CBF is not immune to that reality.”

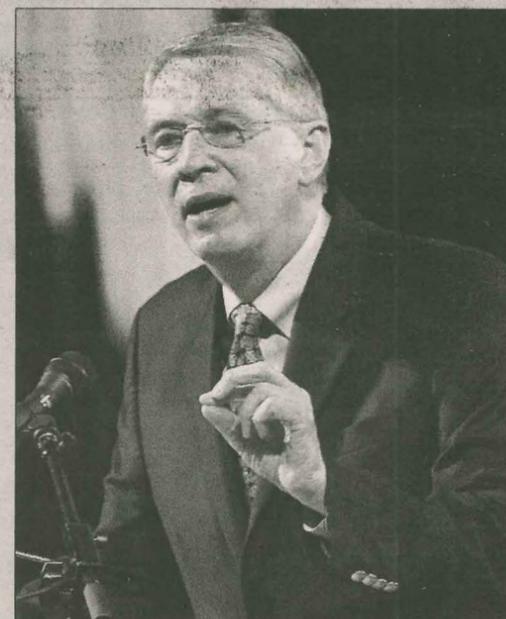
As the CBF prepares for its 20th General Assembly next year in Charlotte, N.C., Daniel Vestal, CBF executive coordinator, described the movement, which formed in the 1980s, as “a testimony of grace and providence.”

“I know we are living in a recession,” Vestal said. “I know that we are in a culture—both secular and popular Christianity—that in many ways is hostile to what we believe. I also know that some of you live and serve in difficult and dangerous places. I know some of you feel isolated and, at times discouraged. I feel that way at times, but I believe in the grace of God and the providence of God working in and through us.”

The assembly crowd was younger than in previous years. Terry Hamrick, a CBF official who for many years has held a leadership training seminar for ministers, said this year, for the first time, participants from the 15 theology schools supported by the CBF outnumbered those who graduated from Southern Baptist Convention seminaries before the 1990s.

In other business:

■ About 800 people at a commissioning service July 1 at Houston’s South Main Baptist Church prayed for six newly commissioned CBF



Daniel Vestal

field personnel. All six are self-funded and will serve in ministries to the homeless in North Carolina, poor children in Miami, and churches and suffering people in China.

“It’s not about you. It’s not about us,” CBF Global Missions Coordinator Rob Nash challenged the missionaries. “It is about the most neglected. It is about the least-evangelized and the most-marginalized people in the world.”

■ CBF leaders formally signed a memorandum of understanding with the Japan Baptist Convention, representing an official partnership between the organizations.

In the three-year partnership, the Fellowship and the Japan Baptist Convention will coordinate their efforts related to church planting, faith sharing and education ministries. The primary ministry of mission personnel will be teaching English in the local churches.

■ The CBF elected Christy McMillin-Goodwin, associate minister for education and missions at Oakland Baptist Church in Rock Hill, S.C., as moderator-elect. When she assumes office in 2010-11 she will become the first moderator to graduate from a CBF partner school, Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond. (ABP)

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FBC Dallas to end Criswell College ownership

By Jerry Pierce
Southern Baptist Texan

Dallas—In a nearly unanimous vote, members of First Baptist Church of Dallas voted July 8 to end their 40-year ownership of Criswell College, paving the way for the school's independence.

The vote followed the unanimous recommendation of the church's deacons on June 16, and months of negotiations between leaders of the church and Criswell College, a four-year school with its own radio station.

Church members voted after hearing from several leaders from the deacon body and the school's trustee board, including pastor and Criswell's current chancellor, Robert Jeffress, who in quoting the school's trustee chairman called the agreement a "win-win-win situation."

The fate of the radio station had been a "distraction" since talk of a proposed sale by the college became public several years ago.

"It's time for all of that to come to an end," Jeffress said, explaining that the station would be jointly owned by the church and school as the two members of a newly formed nonprofit corporation.

Going about business

The separation would allow the school to get back to its primary task of "training men and women with a biblical worldview and training preachers" and would give it an advantage in fundraising, Jeffress said, while offering the church a "valuable and much-needed solution" to the burden of tending to the school.

Jeffress told church members the col-

lege's governance also had become a distraction for the last three pastors, whose duties included serving as chancellor alongside the school's president.

Criswell College's new governance would take effect Jan. 1. The changes require approval from the Federal Communications Commission and the school's accrediting agency, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

First Baptist, Dallas, launched the college in 1969 when founding chancellor W.A. Criswell announced his vision for an institution to provide biblical training for pastors, Sunday school teachers and other laymen who had not completed college-level ministerial training. The first classes were held in 1970. Today, nearly 400 students attend undergraduate and master's-level courses at the school. (BP)

Hunt adds four to Great Commission Task Force

Nashville—Four individuals have been added to the Great Commission Task Force appointed June 24 by Southern Baptist Convention President Johnny Hunt during the SBC annual meeting in Louisville.

"After announcing the names of the GCR task force, I received feedback about the need for greater representation," Hunt said July 8, in a statement to Baptist Press. "I have added an African-American who is a church planter, a Hispanic, an additional woman who also is familiar with the Western region of the U.S., and a representative of the Northeast region."

"I want Southern Baptists to know I heard their concerns and have responded," Hunt noted.

Those Southern Baptists added to the task force were:

John Cope, senior pastor of Keystone Community Fellowship in North Wales, Pa., near Philadelphia.

Kathy Ferguson, a women's ministry speaker whose late husband, Rick, was a pastor in Denver before his accidental death seven years ago. In August, she will marry Ed Litton, pastor of First Baptist Church of North Mobile, Ala., who lost his wife in an accident two years ago.

Larry Grays, senior pastor of Midtown Bridge Church in Atlanta.

Ruben Hernandez, associate Spanish pastor at the Dallas-area Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano, Texas. (BP)

Attendance higher, younger at Louisville convention

Louisville—Interest in the "Great Commission Resurgence" caused an attendance resurgence at the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting June 23-24 in Louisville, according to registration secretary Jim Wells. This year's unofficial messenger count was 8,790, more than 1,500 over last year's tally in Indianapolis.

"It was way above my expectations," Wells said.

Location played a large role as well. Kentucky had the largest state representation with 1,597 messengers, more than twice its 2008 delegation and almost twice as many as the next largest state,

Tennessee.

"It was also a younger convention," Wells noted. "I saw a lot of younger pastors and families."

He said the large Kentucky numbers and the younger crowd could be attributed to the annual meeting's close proximity to Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The registration process "went very smoothly," Wells said, praising the participation of 60 collegiate volunteers from Baptist Collegiate Ministries in Kentucky, Tennessee, South Carolina and Indiana.

As for next year in Orlando, Wells said

he thinks he will see yet another boost in attendance.

"It'll be way up," he said. "I'm looking for a significantly larger group because it is such a family-friendly destination."

The top states represented at this year's convention were: Kentucky, 1,597; Tennessee, 805; Georgia, 730; North Carolina, 537; Alabama, 526; Mississippi, 422; South Carolina, 414; Florida, 393; Texas, 389; Missouri, 354; Indiana, 347; Virginia, 313; Illinois, 287; Ohio, 249; Arkansas, 239; Louisiana, 210; Oklahoma, 204; California, 122; Maryland, 86; West Virginia, 66; Michigan, 62; Kansas, 53. (BP)



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Critics charge stem cell guidelines leave ethical loopholes

Washington—Christian conservative groups decried new federal guidelines that will increase taxpayer dollars going to embryonic stem cell research.

The guidelines, which took effect July 7 after they were issued by the National Institutes of Health, stipulate that federally funded research will be allowed only on excess embryos at fertility clinics that would otherwise be discarded.

Embryos cannot be created solely for research, and donors must give "voluntary written consent" to use the embryos for research.

The guidelines also make clear that stem cells derived from therapeutic cloning, also known as somatic cell nuclear transfer, are not eligible for federal funds—a stance that pro-life advocates applauded.

However, pro-lifers claim the rules leave open a loophole that could lead to ethical abuses, conflicts of interest and manipulation of infertile couples.

They also expressed concern that the NIH guidelines fail to require that the fertility doctor and the embryonic stem cell researcher be different people. In other words, the fertility doctor who derives the embryos can, by law, also wear the coat of embryonic stem cell researcher.

Championed by scientists for their potential to treat and cure a multitude of illnesses, embryonic stem cell research raises concern for those who believe that embryos are nascent forms of human life.

"We have stated it is wrong to kill human beings at any stage of life for experimentation or for research purposes," said Wendy Wright, president of Concerned Woman for America. "But on top of that basic wrong, they've added even more problems."

Unproven method?

Critics argue that the practice requires the destruction of embryos and has yet to lead to any cures. They assert that federal money would be better spent on adult stem cell research—which does not involve embryos and has led to treatments for 73 ailments, supporters say—and to induced pluripotent stem cell research, a field whereby skin cells are reprogrammed into an embryonic-like state.

Wright said the guidelines violate the spirit of the Dickey Amendment, a 1995 federal law that prohibits taxpayer dollars from funding processes that destroy or endanger human embryos.

"The whole world of fertility in-

dustry is completely unregulated," Wright said. "That's one reason why we have these excess embryos."

Wright said she worries these guidelines will give incentives to create more excess embryos because the federal government will fund research on them.

Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council, said the new rules are full of problems.

"Embryonic stem cell research requires dissecting and commoditizing the youngest, most vulnerable humans," he noted. "The new guidelines demanded by the president promote poor science, reflect bad health-care policy, and do nothing to fund treatments with adult stem cells that are providing documented benefits for suffering patients. The guidelines implement a plan that will force taxpayers to foot the bill for research that involved human destruction, not healing."

President Obama lifted the ban on embryonic stem cell research last March, but left it to the NIH to craft ethical boundaries. These rules come after a lengthy feedback process, in which NIH received more than 49,000 responses.

Compiled from reporting by Baptist Press and Religion News Service

Evangelical to head NIH

Washington—Francis Collins, the researcher who mapped the human genome and navigated clashes between his Christian faith and science, has been chosen to lead the National Institutes of Health.

Calling Collins "one of the top scientists in the world," President Obama announced the nomination July 8, one day after the NIH released new stem cell research guidelines that angered many conservative Christians.

Though Collins, a self-described evangelical, will head the nation's primary scientific research agency, the avid supporter of stem cell research seems unlikely to ally the fears fellow evangelicals have over embryonic stem cell research.

Collins "is a great person, a good scientist, but we disagree with his positions on human embryonic stem cell research and on cloning human embryos for experimentation," said David Prentice, senior fellow at the Family Research Council.

An atheist who converted to Christianity in his 20s, Collins regularly pushes Christians to reconcile their beliefs with scientific theories such as evolution. He recently launched the BioLogos Foundation, which "emphasizes the compatibility of Christian faith with scientific discoveries."

Collins has said he sees his faith and research informing one another, evident in the speech he gave when former President Bill Clinton announced the first draft of the human genetic blueprint.

"It is humbling for me and awe-inspiring to realize that we have caught the first glimpse of our own instruction book, previously known only to God," Collins said at a White House press conference in 2000. (RNS)

Report: Scientists, Americans sharply divided over belief in God, religion

Washington—Only a third of scientists say they believe in God, according to a new survey, and while 18 percent believe in a high power, four in 10 scientists believe in neither.

The report was released July 9 by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press in collaboration with the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Scientists were evenly split—at 48 percent each—between those who claimed a

religious affiliation and those who did not.

The new statistics vary sharply with findings for the general public: 83 percent of Americans say they believe in God and 82 percent said they are affiliated with a religious tradition.

The Pew report indicated sharp divergence between scientists and the general public on issues such as evolution and climate change. While 87 percent of scientists believe humans have evolved over

time, just 32 percent of Americans in general hold that belief.

A similarly large percentage of scientists (84 percent) said the earth is warming because of human activity, while only 49 percent of the public agreed with that statement.

Also, while 93 percent of scientists favor federal funding for embryonic stem cell research, just 58 percent of the general public agreed with such research.

But despite differences between scien-

tists and the general public, a majority of people acknowledge that science contributes to the wellbeing of society.

Two-thirds of people surveyed who said science conflicts with their religious beliefs nevertheless said scientists contribute "a lot" to society's wellbeing. A slightly higher percentage (72 percent) of people who said there were not conflicts between their beliefs and science had similar praise for scientific contributions to society. (RNS)

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Maine's same-sex marriage law may be undone through unique 'People's Veto' rule

Portland, Maine—Maine's citizens may have the opportunity to decide the future of same-sex marriage in their state the November elections come around.

A coalition that is collecting signatures to place on the ballot a "People's Veto" initiative overturning the state's same-sex marriage law said last week they have passed the critical threshold of 55,000 signatures—the number required to qualify the effort.

The coalition, known as Stand for Marriage Maine, will continue collecting signatures through the rest of July to serve as a cushion, because hundreds if not thousands could be thrown out as invalid. Nevertheless, the number of signatures reveals a desire on the part of many residents to reverse the law, which was signed by the governor in May. The law has not gone into effect and will not do so until the citizens' vote, assuming it qualifies.

"We look forward to submitting the measure for certification and engaging Mainers in a vigorous defense of defense of marriage," said Bob Emrich, an executive committee member of Stand for Marriage Maine. "Traditional marriage has never lost on the ballot in any state. We expect it to prevail in Maine."

Maine's unique People's Veto law allows citizens to gather signatures to try to overturn recently enacted legislation.

The state is being closely watched nationally on the issue. The debate in Maine may mirror that of California, where conservatives flooded the airwaves warning about the consequences if same-sex marriage were legalized, asserting that it would be taught in public schools as standard, as it has been in Massachusetts, where the practice also is legal. (BP)

Imprecatory prayer

Does God really answer prayers to do someone harm?

By Tiffany Stanley

Buena Park, Calif.—Ever since California Pastor Wiley Drake declared not once, but three times, on national radio that he was praying for the death of President Obama, he has been trying to clarify.

Yes, he really does want God to smite Obama. No, it's not a partisan prayer. Yes, it's in the Bible, he says, and no, he wasn't kidding.

The former second vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention said he's merely practicing the age-old art of "imprecatory prayer"—a theological term for praying that bad things happen to bad people.

Imprecatory prayer can turn a verse into curse through reciting Scripture aimed at one's foes. Rather than asking for, say, healing or a win in the big game, these prayers request that God smite one's enemies with—among other things—plagues, death and eternal damnation.

"That doesn't mean I spend every waking hour praying for the death of the president," said Drake, who leads Buena Park Southern Baptist Church near Anaheim, Calif. "Of our prayers, 98 percent should be good prayers and 2 percent should be imprecatory."

Though Scripture says Jesus told His followers to love their enemies and pray for them, the Bible also depicts King David pleading with God to vanquish his adversaries. While famed Christian apologist C.S. Lewis found such imprecatory psalms distasteful and "devilish," even he could not deny their existence.

Derided by some as a bad Judeo-Christian imitation of voodoo, the literal practice of imprecatory prayer has some newfound fans.

Gordon Klingenschmitt, a former U.S. Navy chaplain, posted an online prayer April 25 that targeted his old foes, Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for the Separation of Church and State, and Mikey Weinstein, founder of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation.

Klingenschmitt asked God "in Jesus' name" to "cut off their descendants" and "replace them with godly people."

The reason? Lynn and Weinstein had chided Klingenschmitt for not identifying himself as a former, not current, naval chaplain on his Web site. Klingenschmitt was discharged in 2007 for disobeying a superior and wearing his uniform at political demonstrations.

Weinstein, who is Jewish, said he sees imprecatory prayers as hate speech. He has had a few words of his own for his fellow Air Force Academy alumnus, Klingenschmitt. The two have tangled several times before over what Weinstein calls improper proselytizing in the military.

And while Lynn has been targeted before with prayers to do him ill, he said he worries that religious figures who employ prayer as a weapon might inadvertently be condoning, or perhaps inciting, worse behavior.

"With the climate in this country, these prayers are an invitation to violence," said Lynn, an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. "They provide moral legitimacy to extreme hatred."

Yet God sometimes works in unusual ways, Drake and others say. His confession to praying against Obama came after Kansas abortionist George Tiller was gunned down in church. That killing, Drake suggested, was an answer to his prayers.

For his part, Drake is an equal-opportunity prayer warrior. His list has included Lynn, California megachurch pastor and best-selling author Rick Warren, and former Presidents Bill Clinton and even George W. Bush, whom Drake once maligned for not pardoning two border guards.

Many, including some leaders of Drake's own SBC, argue Drake and Klingenschmitt are on the fringe of Christianity. Yet imprecatory prayers touch on human needs older than the Scripture itself: anger, injustice and a desire for vengeance.

Where do these prayers come from? Mostly, the Psalms, which include not only old favorites like Psalm 23 ("The Lord is my Shepherd"), but also lines about washing one's feet in the blood of the wicked and making the children of enemies wander about and beg.

Long overlooked as the black sheep of the Bible, many of the imprecatory Psalms have been put out to pasture by churches.

Walter Brueggemann, one of the world's foremost Hebrew Bible scholars, wants to recover these problematic texts in Christian practice. He likens imprecatory prayers to venting sessions with a divine psychotherapist: honest words that function as a safety valve against harmful action.

He added, however, that Psalms are potent, and their use requires a sensitive leader. Otherwise, they become "social poison." (RNS)



Wiley Drake



Gordon Klingenschmitt

LifeWay study: Parents value God but worry about money

By Mark Kelly

Nashville—Most American parents believe things are going well with their families—except when it comes to finances. And a large majority highly values their children having a relationship with God—except when it comes to taking them to worship.

A nationwide LifeWay Research survey of American adults with children under 18 living at home found 87 percent feel they have strong marriages. A full 74 percent strongly believe they will remain married for life, and 64 percent strongly agree that if they had it to do over again, they would still marry their spouses. As parents, 76 percent agree they give enough of their time to their children, but only 56 percent agree their families enjoy enough relaxing times together.

African-Americans, women and born-again Christians believe most strongly that they give their kids enough time, the study revealed. Parents with evangelical or born-again beliefs and people who attend religious worship services often are considerably more likely to report having strong marriages.

The money issue

When it comes to finances, however, barely half—52 percent—agree their households bring in enough income to support their lifestyles. Asked what level of income would be needed to make them "financially comfortable" (not wealthy), 14 percent said they would need \$10,000 more a year, and 47 percent said they need at least another \$20,000. Only a small fraction—4 percent—said they could be financially comfortable on an income lower than what they now make.

Saving money regularly is a crucial element to financial security, but only 28 percent of parents agreed their families put enough into savings each month. More than two-thirds—69 percent—expressed concern that their families can never seem to get ahead financially. Half of parents agreed they want to give their children more materially than

they already have, and almost three-fourths—72 percent—wanted their children to have more than they themselves had growing up.

Although a large number of parents are dissatisfied with their financial situations, many of them do not have a plan to improve their situations, the research revealed. While 64 percent said they have clear goals for what they want to accomplish as parents, only 7 percent have put that plan in writing and only 50 percent agreed their families have a financial plan for the future.

Research conducted in 2007 for "The Parent Adventure: Preparing Your Children For a Lifetime With God" indicated that 67 percent of parents have a parenting plan.

"Parents have great aspirations for their kids," said Scott McConnell, associate director of LifeWay Research and co-author of The Parent Adventure. "Yet one in three parents is not planning ahead to help their child achieve specific goals."

While most American parents have a desire for more financial security and material comfort, the large majority also said they place a high priority on their children having a relationship with God. A full 87 percent of parents said they believe it is important to teach their children how to have a relationship with God, including 57 percent who strongly agree. Almost as many—79 percent—agreed they do that, but just 39 percent agreed strongly.

Only 55 percent of parents agree they try to take their children to worship services on a regular basis, while 47 percent agree they do not want to influence their children too much about religion, saying, "It's important they find their own way."

"Most parents not only want their children to have a belief in God but also a relationship with God, yet many parents are failing to make the introduction," McConnell noted. "Churches must prove they are ready to help parents make this connection or they will continue to only see those parents who feel most strongly about teaching their children to know God."

Barna: Spiritual immaturity stymies church

Ventura, Calif.—An unclear understanding of spiritual maturity may be an underlying reason why there is so little progress in seeing people develop spiritually in the United States, despite overwhelming access to churches and unlimited products and resources, The Barna Group reported.

"America has a spiritual depth problem partly because the faith community does not have a robust definition of its spiritual goals," said David Kinnaman, Barna's president. "The study shows the need for new types of spiritual metrics."

Barna found that most Christians equate spiritual maturity with following the rules described in the Bible. Also, many churchgoers were unable to identify how their church defines spiritual maturity. Most Christians, Barna said, offer one-dimensional views of personal spiritual maturity, giving answers such as having a relationship with Jesus, living a moral lifestyle or applying the Bible.

Most pastors struggle with articulating a specific

set of objectives for spirituality and instead list activities over attitudes, the study noted. Pastors are willing to acknowledge that a lack of spiritual maturity is one of the largest problems in the nation, but few of them say spiritual immaturity is a problem in their church.

Barna identified some opportunities in addressing the problems related to spiritual maturity in the nation. One positive, they said, is that Christians and pastors understand the obstacles that must be overcome, such as a lack of personal motivation, other competing obligations and a lack of involvement in spiritually nurturing activities.

Also, while most Americans are relatively content with the current state of their spiritual maturity, millions aspire to grow, Barna said. Christians under the age of 40 are less satisfied with spirituality and less "rule oriented" compared to older believers. (BP)

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As a parent, I have been very excited for Alex to take this trip as I pray that God opens his eyes to how much of the world lives.

Due to the lack of technology where he is staying, we have not been able to speak with Alex. However, we did hear that nearly 100 people so far have made salvation decisions during their trip.

Our hope and faith as a camp ministry lies in the fact that lives are instantly changed by God's power and the process of a week of camp. Or, that a mission trip can radically alter the future direction of someone's life.

As we now have passed the midpoint of the summer, we have seen hundreds of students make salvation decisions, and those who have felt called to full-time ministry in the first four weeks. The implications of the future of each person changed cannot be measured or even fully understood by our human abilities.

Ky. Baptist Assemblies



David Melber

I am privileged to serve in camp ministry and still contend that weekly retreats from the world are more important now than ever before. We all are familiar with how a week of vacation can recharge our bodies.

So then, even more important is a week of God focus. The human soul is forever changed.

There still is time throughout July to come and observe what takes place at Cedarmore and Jonathan Creek.

Please call our office to arrange a visit to see Crossings in action.

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

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For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



Preacher's Kids

David Ayers



Bible Crosswords

By Evelyn Boyington

Across

- 1 Kind of walker
- 4 One that sends hisses
- 7 What the diseased woman touched on Jesus' garment
- 10 "___ no man any thing, but to love one another" (Romans 13:8)
- 11 Capture, in a way
- 12 Son of Seth
- 14 Chicken, in Dodge City
- 16 Accomplished
- 17 Laughing syllable
- 19 ___ head
- 20 "They ___ my path" (Job 30:13)
- 21 Like 911
- 22 "The ___ enemy .. is death" (1 Corinthians 15:26)
- 24 Son of ___
- 25 Oil or water
- 26 King of Bashan (1 Kings 4:19)
- 27 "Arise, take up thy ___, and go unto thine house" (Matthew 9:6)
- 28 "Write in it with a man's ___" (Isaiah 8:1)
- 29 "I saw seven ___ candlesticks" (Revelation 1:12)
- 32 "Lord, they have ... ___ down thine altars" (Romans 11:3)
- 35 Potato part
- 36 ___ potato
- 37 Bible language (abbr.)
- 38 "Jesus saith unto them, Come and ___" (John 21:12)
- 40 Funny person
- 41 "This is the whole ___ of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13)
- 43 Masculine nickname
- 44 Knock
- 45 Sample
- 46 Revere(d) state (abbr.)
- 47 Douglas is one
- 48 Thing to be controlled

1	2	3		4	5	6		7	8	9			
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46			47					48				49	50
	51	52				53						54	
						56						57	

- 51 Average
- 53 ___-Gurion
- 54 Sprightly one
- 55 "He walketh through ___ places, seeking rest" (Luke 11:24)
- 56 Breadcrust, for example
- 57 Throw away

Down

- 1 "They rejoiced with exceeding great ___" (Matthew 2:10)
- 2 ___ struck
- 3 Painful cries
- 4 In a short time (arch.)
- 5 "A time to rend, and a time to ___" (Ecclesiastes 3:7)
- 6 Liquid measure (abbr.)
- 7 Son or daughter, most likely
- 8 "He that keepeth my works unto the ___, to him will I give power" (Revelation 2:26)
- 9 "Show Me" state (abbr.)
- 13 "Their tongue is as an arrow ___ out" (Jeremiah 9:8)
- 15 Put a match to
- 16 Tribe of Israel
- 18 Furniture wood
- 20 Consumed by, with "for"
- 21 Paul and Silas prayed and ___ in prison
- 22 Captain's journal
- 23 Times past

- 24 "Whom do ___ say that I am?" (Mark 8:27)
- 25 "Therefore shall he ___ in harvest, and have nothing" (Proverbs 20:4)
- 27 "The Lord shall hiss ... for the ___ that is in the land of Assyria" (Isaiah 7:18)
- 28 Seed
- 30 Part of church calendar
- 31 Tie-___
- 32 "A living ___ is better than a dead lion" (Ecclesiastes 9:4)
- 33 Mother's advice concerning broccoli
- 34 ___ run
- 36 Chance (arch.)
- 38 Item on an AKC document
- 39 Duke of Edom (Genesis 36:43)
- 40 Rage against
- 41 Far from brainy
- 42 "He shall show you a large ___ room furnished" (Luke 22:12)
- 44 Tim, for one
- 45 Post
- 47 ___ cry
- 48 Perfect score, sometimes
- 49 Father of Hophni (1 Samuel 1:3)
- 50 "Mayberry ___" (former TV show)
- 52 Publishing person (abbr.)
- 53 Live

Last week's solution

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
T	S	P	A	L	O	N	E	S	P	A	
O	I	L	S	O	P	E	N	H	A	S	
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Baptist relief agency takes aim at hunger, malnutrition with 'Wise Mother' project

By Ashleigh Campbell
Baptist Global Response

Singapore—In one part of southern Asia, where as many as one-third of the people suffer from malnutrition, Southern Baptists are making a difference with a project called Wise Mother, Healthy Family.

More than 15 tons of grain and multivitamin supplements are being made available to pregnant women and malnourished children in four districts, using more than \$33,000 from the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund.

"A recent United Nations report states that an average woman in this area has five children; that all of her children under age 3 are malnourished; that she works 15 hours a day; and is anemic," noted Francis Horton, who with his wife, Angie, directs work in central and southern Asia for Baptist Global Response.

The Wise Mother, Healthy Family project will help at least 500 women and their families with an ongoing distribution of rice, corn and dal, a dietary staple in southern Asia made of hulled, split beans or lentils, Horton said.

Women in the communities will work in groups of 20 to 25 to clean, roast and mill the grain, producing a high-protein, pre-cooked flour that will greatly improve the nutrition of their families.

In addition, the project will monitor the weight of children under 5 years old. The women also will be involved in small-group dialogues about family health.

"The food situation in this area has worsened dramatically, and this project can set in motion a multiphase process that eventually could help far more families than the ones currently being assisted," Horton said. "This project has a goal of establishing five or six locations in each of the four districts. Once completed, it will leave behind leaders who have been trained and can multiply the health education throughout the province.

"Their world is becoming increasingly insecure due to economic, political and religious conflict," he explained. "Please pray that this project would help them understand God's love for them and that they would experience the full and meaningful lives He wants them to have." (BP)

In New Orleans, volunteers still needed

By Mickey Noah
North American Mission Board

New Orleans—Almost four years after Hurricane Katrina brought New Orleans to its knees, Southern Baptists continue to spend a week or so in the Big Easy, volunteering their time and skills to rebuild or refurbish homes devastated by the deadly storm.

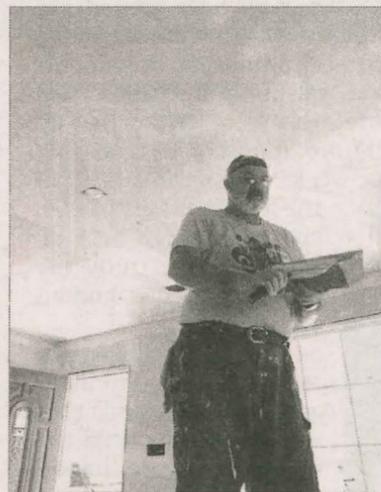
But the number of Baptists who are volunteering is no longer enough.

Since May 2006, under "Operation NOAH Rebuild"—a cooperative ministry of the Louisiana Baptist Convention, the Baptist Association of Greater New Orleans and the North American Mission Board—more than 25,000 Southern Baptist volunteers have assisted in rebuilding more than 1,800 flood-damaged homes. Operation NOAH also has assisted in the recovery of 32 churches and 15 other ministry centers or schools damaged by Katrina.

And as a direct result of Operation NOAH, more than 400 professions of faith have been recorded, according to the latest available statistics.

While an agreement has been reached to transition the day-to-day management of Operation NOAH to the Baptist association, NAMB has committed to extend its support of the ministry until year's end, according to Mickey Caison, NAMB's team leader for adult volunteer mobilization.

"We will continue to work with (the association) to support and implement their '2020 Vision' strategic plan," Caison said. "Part of that plan is to address post-Katrina needs



LABORERS ARE FEW Operation NOAH Rebuild volunteer Andy King, who is skilled at finishing drywall, is one of more than 25,000 Southern Baptist volunteers who have helped rebuild homes in New Orleans since Hurricane Katrina. Skilled volunteers still are needed to complete work on more homes damaged by the storm. (BP photo by Adam Miller)

of the New Orleans community, and housing is still one of the critical needs there."

Caison said 70 more homes remain in the Operation NOAH pipeline for reconstruction or renovation, and "we want to complete every one of them."

"Some of the folks we still want to help have not received any assistance at all from their insurance companies or the federal government, and are the folks who've fallen through the cracks," Caison explained, noting that only 60 percent of the residents displaced by Katrina have moved back home.

But as NAMB's time for involvement ticks down, Operation NOAH is not seeing the number of skilled volunteers the program needs to finish work on the 70 remaining homes, he added.

"We desperately need Southern Baptists who are skilled as drywall workers, plumbers, electricians, framing carpenters and finishing carpenters to volunteer to help us," Caison said. "We can house up to 145 volunteers a week but we're not averaging 145 a week. We only had 66 volunteers during May."

David Maxwell, a pastor serving as coordinator for Operation NOAH Rebuild, echoed Caison, saying that "we want to do quality work for these last 70 houses—the same quality anyone would want for their own home. You just can't do that with unskilled labor."

As for the volunteer shortage, Maxwell attributes it to the fact that almost four years have elapsed since Katrina. Other disasters—like Hurricanes Ike and Gustav, floods in the Midwest and fires in California—have siphoned off some of the volunteer force needed in New Orleans.

"The bad economy and higher gas prices also have had something to do with the smaller number of people who volunteer. People are just staying closer to home," he observed.

"Operation NOAH Rebuild has given people hope where there was no hope, just like Jesus Christ does for all of us," Maxwell noted. "There are literally thousands of homes and people in New Orleans who still need help. Contrary to what local politicians may say, it's not over. We've just scratched the surface." (BP)

Homecoming 2009

Oneida honors past leaders, students with a number of Homecoming events

By Myrtle Webb Cooke, OBI alumni director

For more than a decade, Oneida's Homecoming has been held the last Saturday in June. This year's event on June 27 came the same week as the Woman's Missionary Union and Southern Baptist Convention annual meetings, both held in Louisville during the first part of the week. I have no way of knowing how many of the 400 alumni and friends who gathered at Oneida for our 59th Homecoming attended all three, but I was privileged to do so—and what a memorable week it was.

The first scheduled event of OBI's Homecoming is the hymn sing held at Oneida Baptist Church. Leading it this year was Richard Burns, who directed OBI's band and choir from 1985-91. He is the great-nephew of our founder, James Anderson Burns. Attending Homecoming with Richard were his parents Luther (Class of '47) and Wilma Burns, both former Oneida staff members.

A full house of voices joined together in singing favorite hymns, including "Victory in Jesus," "When We All Get to Heaven" and "Amazing Grace." Interspersed among the songs were stories from former students and staff who shared about their Oneida experiences. Over and over we heard words of appreciation and love for the quality of education at OBI.

The main event and largest gathering of our alumni is the afternoon meeting in the Melvin Davidson Chapel. For the last several years, we have honored our past presidents and unveiled their portraits which are displayed in the chapel.

This year we honored Oneida's fourth president, Charles Goins, who served from 1934-41. His grandsons, Charles House and Charles Goins, unveiled the portrait. Both were named for their grandfather and live in Manchester. House recalled how Goins served as teacher and financial advisor under Burns and Sylvia Russell when the school experienced lean years during the Great Depression. Burns and Russell both credited Goins for the financial leadership he provided in preserving the school.

This is Oneida



W.F. Underwood

The school also inducted Charles Patrick (Class of '50) into its Athletic Hall of Fame. Charles, who is from Frankfort, has been a teacher, principal and state supervisor. He also has served as director of medical care standards for the Commonwealth of Kentucky, and as a director of child care facilities in New Mexico.

Special recognition also was given to the Class of 1959 on its 50th anniversary. President W.F. Underwood gave each class member who was present a photo of the old school building, Marvin Hall, and each classmate shared a special memory.

To conclude the program, Clayton Arnett (Class of '49) presented Underwood with a framed Kentucky Colonel certificate. Diane Burns, wife of Frank Burns (Class of '60), read the proclamation letter from Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear. After the presentation, Clayton played "My Old Kentucky Home" and the school song, "Oneida Fair," on his harmonica.

Thus, another Oneida Homecoming is history. We already are looking forward to Homecoming 2010, which will be held June 26.

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

'Heartbroken for the broken-hearted'

Clear Creek student shares his Crossover experience

Each year some of our students participate in the annual Crossover events leading up to the Southern Baptist Convention. Third-year student Ed Goodman serves as minister to students at West Corbin Baptist Church. He not only participated, but also led a group of WCBC teenagers to serve at Carlisle Avenue Baptist Church during Crossover.

"Saturday morning we were involved in door-to-door evangelism in nearby neighborhoods," Goodman said. "In about three hours, our groups visited almost 400 homes, giving 18 gospel presentations and praying for 23 individuals. I personally shared the gospel with one man who never knew that Jesus was the only way to the Father. And while he didn't profess faith in Christ, he became interested in eternal assurance and thanked me for stopping by his house. Seeds were sown and hearts were touched."

"That afternoon we also helped with a neighborhood block party that was hosted by the church," Goodman continued. "Many people from the community attended this event. In just over three hours, we gave away 25 cases of soda, 25 cas-

es of water, over 800 hot dogs, over 200 bags of popcorn, over 300 snow cones, and shared the love of Christ with everyone in attendance. Over 600 people came to the block party. When combining that figure with the number of contacts we made through our door-to-door evangelism efforts, we reached over 800 people with the gospel on Crossover weekend.

"I watched God bring people with hardened hearts into a joyful environment. I felt for a single mother with five children as she told her kids they could only have one snow cone at a time. My heart rejoiced as I led a young boy in prayer to receive Christ as his Lord and Savior."

"This experience has helped me to refocus and given me a fresh perspective on my personal ministry calling," Goodman said. "Crossover weekend simply reaffirmed my personal conviction that the Lord Jesus Christ called me into ministry with a priority that must be focused on people. Simply put, God has called me to be heartbroken for the broken-hearted."

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

Clear Creek Chronicle



Donnie Fox

Response to church outreach varies by ethnic group

By Mark Kelly

Nashville—African-Americans are far more open than other ethnic groups to receiving information about local congregations.

That's one key insight drawn from a survey conducted by LifeWay Research on behalf of the North American Mission Board (NAMB) as NAMB prepares to launch God's Plan For Sharing (GPS) throughout North America in 2010. The survey, which was conducted online in December 2008, asked more than 15,000 Americans about their willingness to receive information about local congregations through various channels.

The survey asked about 13 different methods churches might use to communicate with prospective attendees. Respondents were segmented into five ethnic groupings: Hispanics, non-Hispanic whites, African-Americans, Asians and mixed/other ethnicities.

The research revealed that regardless of the communication channel used African-Americans are at least 12 percentage points more open to receiving information than any of the other groups. The responses from other ethnic groups are within three points of each other in most categories.

For example, every ethnic group expresses its greatest openness to receiving

information through a family member, but 80 percent of African-Americans say they are "willing" or "very willing" regarding that interaction. The next largest response is from Hispanics, who register 64 percent openness. Non-Hispanic whites, Asians and mixed/other Americans trail Hispanic openness by only two or three points.

"The church has been the only institution we African-Americans have had throughout our history that we could trust and depend on," said Tyrone Barnette, pastor of Peace Baptist Church in Decatur, Ga. "The church educated our children, fed our families, listened to our pain, married and buried our loved ones, and provided leadership and insight for our political views. Throughout the years the positive perception of the church has been passed from generation to generation."

Another portion of this study, released in the article, "Survey: Americans open to outreach from churches," revealed Americans are more open to conversations with friends, neighbors and family members than any other method of communication. This is true regardless of ethnic background. Among African-Americans, 73 percent say they are "willing" or "very willing" to listen to a friend or neighbor, and positive responses from other groups ranged

from 51 percent among Asians to 57 percent among Hispanics.

Other methods

Not every method of communication ranks so highly, but even when a church provides information using less popular methods, African-Americans are much more willing to receive that information. The four lowest-scoring methods were:

- E-mail messages: 53 percent of African-Americans respond favorably, while only 31-38 percent of respondents from other groups are "willing" or "very willing" to receive information this way.

- Door hangers left by a church representative: 55 percent of African-Americans respond favorably. From 28-37 percent of respondents from other groups respond positively.

- Social networking Web sites: 50 percent of African-Americans are open to receiving information this way, and 32-38 percent of respondents from other groups respond favorably.

- A visit at their doors by a congregation member: 39 percent of African-Americans respond positively, while only 21-25 percent of respondents from other groups are "willing" or "very willing" to receive information this way.

Survey participants were also queried

about more specific methods of communication:

- Video about a local church's services and beliefs: 66 percent of African-Americans in contrast to 43 percent of Asians and non-Hispanic whites are "willing" or "very willing" to watch.

- Postcard from a church advertising interesting talks: 69 percent of African-Americans, 53 percent of Hispanics and a smaller percentage of respondents from other groups respond positively.

- Interesting ad about matters of faith that listed a Web site: 64 percent of African-Americans, but only 42 percent of non-Hispanic whites respond favorably.

Type of church

Americans' response to how the denomination of the inviting church affects their openness also varies by ethnic group. Twenty-eight percent of African-Americans say they are more open if the invitation comes from a Southern Baptist church, but thirty-two percent of Hispanics and 15 percent of Asians say invitations are more effective if they come from Roman Catholic congregations.

Nineteen percent of non-Hispanic whites and 23 percent of mixed/other ethnicities are more open to invitations from nondenominational churches. (BP)

'Saddle Ridge Ranch' is 2010 VBS theme

Nashville—Kids will head out West for VBS 2010.

Saddle Ridge Ranch is the 2010 Vacation Bible School destination where participants will be roundin' up questions and drivin' home answers. Set among snowcapped peaks and wide open spaces, the Bible study focus will be on questions real kids ask: "Who am I? Does God care about me? What is God's plan for me? How can I be like Jesus? What do I do now?"

The Scripture focal for LifeWay's VBS 2010 is James 1:5: "Now if any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives to all generously and without criticizing, and it will be given to him."

The video for LifeWay's VBS 2010 follows the adventures of four young cowboys and cowgirls and their wrangler friend, Jed, as they discover that the best adventure is more than riding horses or looking for rattlers—it's about discovering Jesus who wants to be the Lord of their lives.

Musical message

Jeff Slaughter has written the music for VBS for the past 14 years and performed in the music videos for all 12 that have been produced.

The music segments of VBS 2010 happen in fields, by lakes and near snowcapped mountains. Slaughter uses these segments to teach not only the music and lyrics, but the motions, too.

"I love doing the instructional musical videos," Slaughter said. "The kids get so much out of them. Some are fun and silly and others are more serious and thoughtful. Sometimes I mess up and we just leave in those bloopers. The kids seem to think it's fun when I make mistakes. I just laugh about it, too."

The CLazyU, a working 9,000-acre guest ranch near Granby, Colo., serves as the backdrop for the VBS video.

Lynne Norris, LifeWay's producer for the VBS video, said the ranch location offered the opportunity to have the video come alive for the children.

"Watching almost 200 horses run down the street of the ranch is a beautiful sight," she said.

"The run—the jingle—happens twice a day on the ranch as the horses are moved from the corral during the day to the pasture at night, and we had the opportunity to use that as part of our story."

Method matters

The whole point of VBS is teaching preschoolers, children, youth and adults about Jesus. While that message never will change, the method for teaching the message changes with each generation, according to Bill Cox, VBS video director. The video does so much more than entertain.

"The video we do for VBS is important," Cox said. "Children today know their world through media so they respond to what they see and hear on screen. They connect with visual stories. This story, the video message, teaches them a valuable lesson on sharing and caring like Jesus."

Paul Klees, who plays Jed the wrangler in the video, really is a wrangler at the CLazyU. Klees, who graduated from college last year with a degree in economics and management, also serves as project manager at the ranch. "I grew up loving horses and love working with them on the ranch," Klees said, "so even when I graduated from college, I didn't want to give that up."

Part of a package

While churches shouldn't only show the video for the week of VBS, it is an important part of the total VBS experience.

"It is important to remember that VBS is not just one thing, but a combination of many parts," Norris said. "It's five days of Bible study, missions, recreation, evangelism, crafts, music, the video and so much more. No part of our VBS program is 'fluff.' Everything ties together. We want churches and the children to get everything possible out of VBS."

She added, "As we shoot the video I can't help but think about the millions of kids who will be touched for Christ by the music and the storyline. It is really my prayer that every song, every motion and every word will be a blessing."



Sunday school or small group: Which one meets basic needs?

By Jennifer Tramel

LifeWay Christian Resources

Nashville—Two men recently faced off in the home office of LifeWay Christian Resources to debate, during a live broadcast, the virtues of Sunday school versus those of small groups.

Representing Sunday school, David Francis, LifeWay's director of Sunday school, came prepared to debate with "small groupologist" Rick Howerton, the small group specialist with Serendipity by LifeWay.

Bruce Raley, director of leadership and evangelism in LifeWay's training and events area, served as mediator and invited Howerton and Francis to "throw down the gloves and talk awhile."

Round one

According to Francis, Sunday school typically occurs before or after the primary weekend worship service; is located on the church's campus; and is usually organized by life stages such as empty-nesters, parents of teenagers or couples without children.

Small groups, Howerton explained, usually meet in a group member's home once a week and are organized by everything from life stages to addiction recovery.

"It comes to intangibles and redemptive community," Howerton said. "This means the goal for the (small group) environment is to create a place where people can confess sin, talk about their longings, their passions, their missed opportunities, and process God's outrageous love and His expectations."

Francis insisted that Sunday school can also foster this type of community environment, though he admitted creating this model is a work in progress

Round two

After allowing the contenders to establish some basic differences between the models, Raley asked Francis and Howerton to dig more deeply into the two options, particularly as they impact a family with children.

"When churches gear up and say that they're going to focus on kids and focus on reaching kids, the young adult parents will come," Francis said, pointing out that churches have historically accomplished this through Sunday school. Howerton agreed that children's church education is important, but said he has noticed an inaccurate perception that small group churches are less strategic with children.

Both proponents highlighted their models' strengths, agreeing that evangelism is key to both.

"I think it's about intentionality," Francis said. He added that if a class is serious about the Great Commission, it should pursue evangelistic goals.

Howerton said the key to being evangelistic is determining what audience you're trying to reach. For instance, Baby Boomers should be approached differently than members of today's postmodern generation."

And the winner is ...

"The goal is not to see which one (Sunday school or small groups) is better than the other, but which one meets the basic needs of the Christian faith," Howerton said. "I think they both do when done in a healthy fashion."

"I hope the church won," Francis said. "If a church chooses Sunday school or its functional equivalent by any other name ... the goal is to see spiritual transformation."

PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following Kentucky Baptist missionaries and ministries:

MSC missionary Greta Wilson of Crab Orchard. Wilson is a missions education promoter working with the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Baptist Men on Mission department. She helps churches become Acts 1:8 focused through missions organization, special events and resources. Pray for opportunities to share the wealth of missions education resources that are available to churches. Pray that more churches would recognize the importance of missions education in fulfillment of the Great Commission.

Northern Kentucky REACH ministry of the Owen County and Ten Mile Baptist associations. Trent Holbert, who directs REACH (Reaching Every Addict with Christ's Help), ministers to those seeking freedom from drug and alcohol addiction. REACH works with community leaders and court officials to offer Christ-centered group meetings for addicts, as well as counseling, family support groups and assistance in finding faith-based residential rehabilitation facilities. Pray that more addicts will seek help and healing through Jesus Christ. Pray that recovering addicts will be faithful to attend meetings and develop their walk with Jesus.

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

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

- **LOUISVILLE**—Joshua Bailes recently resigned as associate pastor for family and community ministries at Lyndon Church.
- **MAYSVILLE**—Stonelick Church recently called Harry Brooks as pastor.
- **NASHVILLE**—Longtime pastor Wilbert Taylor, who served churches in Kentucky and Tennessee, died June 30. He was 85. A native of Allen County and a Campbellsville University graduate, he was pastor of Liberty Church in Scottsville; Mount Tabor Church in Buffalo; Stony Point Church in Albany; and White Stone Quarry Church in Bowling Green. He is survived by his wife, Virginia, four children, four grandchildren and one great-grandchild.
- **PRESTONSBURG**—Benedict Church recently ordained Burns Goble as a deacon. Gordon Fitch is pastor.
- **SHELBYVILLE**—Lighthouse Church

Spotlight on ...

Vine Grove



Revelation Missionary Church will host **The Peacemakers** in concert July 18, 6 p.m. **John Marshall** is pastor.

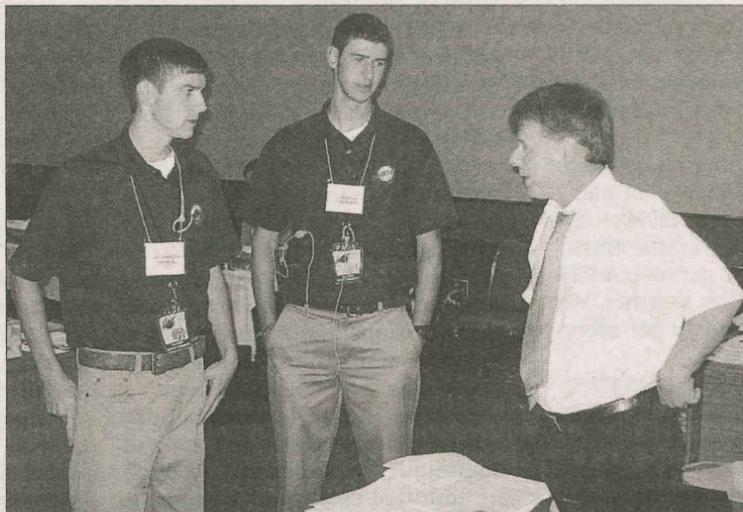
- recently called Tyre Denney as pastor.
- **WALTON**—Jerry Hurley recently resigned as pastor of New Banklick Church.
- **WINCHESTER**—Ephesus Church recently named Malcolm Stokely deacon emeritus. Todd Rader is pastor.

Welcome
Central Baptist, Corbin
Church Newsletter Plan
Darren Gaddis, pastor

SBC images



■ **Above:** Scott Bidwell (right), program director for Crossings Ministries, talks summer camp with Allen Bonnell, pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Corbin, at Crossings' booth in the exhibit hall at the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Louisville June 23. (Photo by Drew Nichter) ■ **Below:** Brothers Christian Cain (left), a rising senior at Grant County High School, and Jonathan Cain (center), a sophomore at Georgetown College, were among 16 students who served as pages during the SBC annual meeting in Louisville. Here, Christian and Jonathan, the sons of Mark and Robyn Cain of Crittenden Baptist Church, meet with Art Toalston, editor of Baptist Press, in the SBC press room. Pages typically assist convention messengers by carrying motions made from floor microphones to the platform. (Photo by Todd Deaton)



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July

- 17-18 World Missions Unlimited, Central Baptist Church, Winchester.
- 23-24 Quarterly Prayer Meeting for Spiritual Awakening, Haven of Rest, Inez.
- 24-25 World Missions Unlimited, First Baptist Church, Madisonville.

August

- 22 Super Saturday, Immanuel Baptist Church, Lexington.
- 29 Super Saturday, Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.

September

- 5-7 Wrangler Trail Ride, Land Between the Lakes.
- 10 Church Retirement Plan "Reality Check" Conference, First Baptist Church, Leitchfield.

- 12 Super Saturday, First Baptist Church, Paducah, and First Baptist Church, Somerset.
- 14 Church Retirement Plan "Reality Check" Conference, Buck Run Baptist Church, Frankfort; First Baptist Church, Murray; Marion Baptist Church; and Piner Baptist Church, Morning View.
- 15 Church Retirement Plan "Reality Check" Conference, Second Baptist Church, Greenville; Unity Baptist Church, Ashland; and Walnut Memorial Baptist Church, Owensboro.
- 16 Church Retirement Plan "Reality Check" Conference, Berea Baptist Church and Calvary Baptist Church, Lexington.

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

Rice sets attendance mark at Walton

Walton—Wayne Rice, a member of First Baptist Church of Walton for nearly 75 years, had not missed a Sunday service in more than 62 years until he fell last fall, and it was later discovered that he had bone cancer.

A longtime fixture in the church's Sunday school office, Rice also was the church's representative for the Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children (now Sunrise Children's Services) for at least a decade.

Although he is physically disabled, Rice has faithfully unlocked

the church's doors for services and special events, said Jeannine Rohrkasse, the church's pianist. Now a resident at Villaspings nursing home in Erlanger, Rice "greatly misses the fellowship of the church" and often asks visitors about how Sunday school attendance is faring there.

"It is always gratifying to see someone who has been faithful to the Lord and to His church for so many years," said Tom Townsend, interim pastor at First Baptist, Walton. "That type of commitment is uncommon in our world today."

CLASSIFIED ADS

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AVAILABLE: Minister available to fill pulpit, interim, staff positions (music, youth, children, discipleship, combo). Call (606) 316-7856.

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

SEEKING: Motivated, Christ-centered individual to work with adult and youth church choirs. Primarily traditional with some contemporary music. Some experience required. Send resumé to Bro. Greg Wallace at mtownfbc@bellsouth.net; or mail to PO Box 444, Morgantown, KY 42261; or call (270) 526-4711.

SEEKING: Pastor for student and family ministries for First Baptist Church, Paducah. E-mail resumé to Mrs. Deanna Bazzell at dbazzell@fbcpaducah.org. For information about FBC, visit www.fbcpaducah.org.

SEEKING: Part-time music minister. Traditional/contemporary music for growing church. Please send resumé to 8200 Owenton Road, Frankfort, KY 40601; or contact Pastor Jeff Sargent, (502) 227-7278.

SEEKING: Shiloh Baptist is a family-oriented church with an active congregation of approximately 200 people located in rural Virginia. We are actively seeking the person whom God has chosen to lead us as we reach, build and serve our church and community in the 21st century. For more infor-

mation, please see www.kgshiloh.org/about/pastor_search.htm or contact the church office at (540) 469-4646.

SEEKING: Part-time director to plan, coordinate and lead music for worship services in a northern Pulaski County church. Send resumé to NBC, PO Box 129, Science Hill, KY 42553.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music and worship (25 hours/week) for Woodland Baptist Church, Louisville. Undergraduate music degree preferred, experience required. Submit resumé to mmayabb1@yahoo.com.

SEEKING: Calvary Baptist Church is accepting written resúmes for pastoral position. Send to 750 Dover Road, Grand Rivers, KY 42045.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of children and youth for Central Baptist Church, Paris, Ky. Responsible for overseeing the planning, coordinating and implementing of programs for the children and youth (K-12). Prefer bachelor's degree and/or experience working with children and youth; talent in music and sports an asset. Applicants may apply by sending resumé to: cbcministersearch@bellsouth.net; or, by mail: Minister of Children and Youth Search Committee, c/o Doug Bechanan, chairman, 829 High Street, Paris, KY 40361.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Pembroke Baptist Church. Send resúmes to PO Box 219, Pembroke, KY 42266.

SEEKING: Instrumentalist for east end congregation—contemporary and traditional music. Send resumé to Melbourne Heights Baptist Church, 3728 Taylorsville Road, Louisville, KY 40220, Attn: Personnel Dept. You may call the church at (502) 454-4681 to set a time for an interview; hours and pay will be discussed at the interview.

South Africa



EXCITING MESSAGE South African students prepare to march the streets of King William's Town to let the town know they believe True Love Waits. Representatives from a dozen government departments, aid organizations and religious leaders signed a document last month committing to the True Love Waits campaign in Eastern Cape, South Africa. (IMB photo)

South African government enlists True Loves Waits

By Jace Williams*
International Mission Board

King William's Town, South Africa—The students chant proudly as they walk the streets, ignoring the stares and questionable looks from those whom they pass.

Gaining confidence in their message, more than 300 high school students shout out in unison, "True Love Waits, True Love Waits, True Love Waits."

A dozen government departments, aid organizations and religious leaders signed an agreement last month with True Love Waits International to promote abstinence in schools within Eastern Cape, a province of South Africa.

Student representatives from 15 schools gathered to celebrate the partnership between TLWI and the Eastern Cape government.

"I see my prayers being answered," said Xolani Klaas, a South Africa national TLWI leader. "Most great changes come from the east in South Africa, like the sun. I see this partnership as the birth of a movement."

With the agreement, TLWI gains access to all the schools within the region.

South Africa is home to more than 10 million youth between the ages of 13 and 30. By the time most of them marry, studies indicate that they will have had approximately 10 different sexual partners.

In Eastern Cape, more than 1 million youth now can hear the life-changing message of abstaining from sexual impurity.

"True Love Waits helps students set goals and then helps students reach those goals," noted Cindy Schirle, a TLWI South Africa country consultant, adding that the sexual decisions students make are leaving them with no hope and no knowledge of a better life.

To launch the partnership, the students marched along some of the main streets of King William's Town in spite of strong winds and rain, boldly proclaiming their belief that true love will wait.

After the march, the students gathered to hear part of the TLW presentation that will be taught in the schools.

"The passion I have for the future of this country is because we are faced with the crisis of HIV/AIDS," said Tomi Matomela, chairman of the finance committee and African National Congress whip. "I believe if we act correctly we can beat it."

About half of the youth gathered raised their hands to show they knew someone who had died of AIDS.

"I believe your generation could come close to ending AIDS," Sharon Pumpelly, lead consultant for TLWI, told the students, encouraging them to remain sexually pure.

True Love Waits "helps students build a better future for our generation and the next," said Thanto, an 18-year-old national TLWI team member. "TLWI helps us with our health, our lifestyle."

Thanto and his friend Sinethemba teach TLW in schools, youth programs and clubs. Most of the after-school programs were started by passionate youth on their own.

In the last few months, 4,500 South African students have made TLW commitments stating they commit to "my God, myself, my family, my country, my friends, my future spouse and my future children to remain sexually pure until the day I give myself only to my marriage partner in a faithful marriage relationship."

As the one who pushed for a formal partnership between the Eastern Cape government and TLWI, Matomela said he wants the program to be a model for change in southern Africa.

"A young girl just told me she wants the program to come to her school because 'we are dying,'" he said. "We have made mistakes as adults ... (and) we need to warn our kids to keep them from making the same mistakes."

"Because of this program I am sure future generations will be better than we are," Matomela said. (BP)

India

Word of God beginning to take root among Mumbai's Muslim population

By Erich Bridges
International Mission Board

Mumbai, India—Farooq* walked right into the trap set for him.

A Muslim-background follower of Christ in the Indian urban giant of Mumbai, Farooq was teaching other Muslims about the gospel in a "seeker meeting." One of the participants seemed especially interested. He invited Farooq to his neighborhood nearby to share more with family members and friends. Farooq gladly obliged.

Soon after he began speaking to the group, police entered the room with some relatives of the person who had invited him. They angrily accused Farooq of "forced conversions," of bribing Muslims to become Christians, of evangelizing minors. None of it was true. But he was arrested, thrown into a jail cell with 30 felons and a single toilet, and repeatedly beaten. Policemen demanded 5,000 rupees—their price to stop the abuse.

Farooq was bailed out of jail and eventually exonerated after repeated court dates. The judge dismissed the charges against him when his primary accuser didn't show up.

It wasn't the first time Farooq endured blows for sharing his faith. It probably won't be the last. But he is learning to thank God for such trials—like the early apostles who rejoiced in the privilege of suffering for Christ.

Other Muslim-background believers "have been beaten severely, multiple times, to the point that they had to leave the city, lose their jobs and possessions and go back to their native place to recover," Southern Baptist worker John Wynn* reported. "But they come back and go to work. Nobody walks away once they make that commitment."

Where does such commitment come from? Solid training, discipleship—and the movement of the Holy Spirit among Mumbai's Muslims.

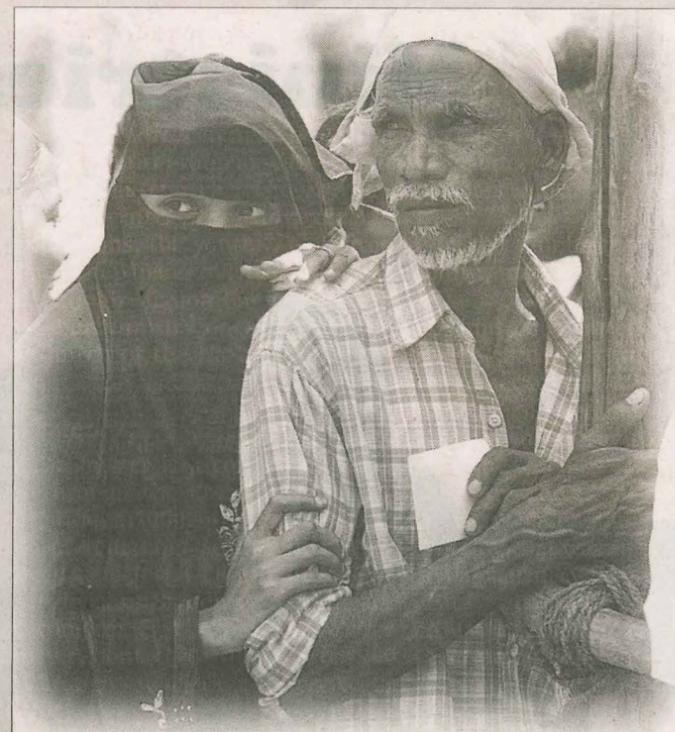
"Biggest gaps"

Wynn and his wife, Rose*, tried for years to mobilize Mumbai churches to reach out to the lost of the vast city. They met with little success. Some congregations were in survival mode; others had their own strongly held ideas about evangelism.

"We were frustrated and discouraged," Wynn recalled. "But the Lord kept saying, 'There's another way.' He really convicted us that this is a huge place with a multitude of needs. So where is it that nobody is working? One of the biggest gaps is among Muslims."

Mumbai is home to some 2 million Muslims. As in other parts of India, they are a large but sometimes embattled minority. Many live in Muslim-only areas by preference—or because of ethnic discrimination and threats of violence at the hands of extremist Hindus. Some of the city's Christians fear them. Some believe Muslims will never listen to the Good News of Jesus.

Not so, according to Wynn. "They want to know the truth," he said. "They're undecided. They don't know if they're in the right sect of Islam. They don't know if they have eternal life. So when they find out that through Jesus they can have it now through His sacrifice, that's a big deal."



"They want to know the truth. They're undecided. They don't know if they're in the right sect of Islam. They don't know if they have eternal life. So when they find out that through Jesus they can have it now through His sacrifice, that's a big deal."

—Southern Baptist worker John Wynn*

Through an extended, trial-and-error search, Wynn became a teacher and mentor to two Muslim men pursuing truth: Farooq and Rasheed*. Farooq is well-educated and affluent; Rasheed comes from a lower-class village background. They offer access to different parts of Mumbai's multifaceted Islamic community.

"I've taught them the same principles, but they've done their own thing with them," Wynn explained. "I just keep giving them the Word of God and let them do what God tells them to do."

God is telling them to teach truth to other Muslim seekers. Farooq started with 10 friends, including a professor, a lawyer, a store owner and several Islamic scholars. Individual contacts develop into seeker groups, some of which become full-fledged jama'ats—indigenous groups of Muslim-background followers of Jesus Christ.

The conversation has spread into some amazing places. Farooq befriended a high-ranking Islamic leader who invited him to speak nightly during an annual Muslim festival—for 68 straight nights. At least 10,000 Muslims heard God's truth.

"If anyone stood up and said, 'That's a lie,' or, 'The Bible has been changed,' or, 'There is no Trinity,' one of the big guys would stand up and say, 'This man has some new truth to share with us. You sit down and behave and we'll talk about it later,'" Wynn recalled. Farooq and others have continued teaching during the festival for three years.

Now the movement is spreading beyond Mumbai, as its leaders take the initiative to combine truth teaching with relief ministry to struggling Muslims in other parts of India.

"They're sharing Jesus," Wynn said. "It's their thing." (BP)

*Names changed for security reasons

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