

Shine like stars in the world  
Philippians 2:15

# WESTERN Recorder

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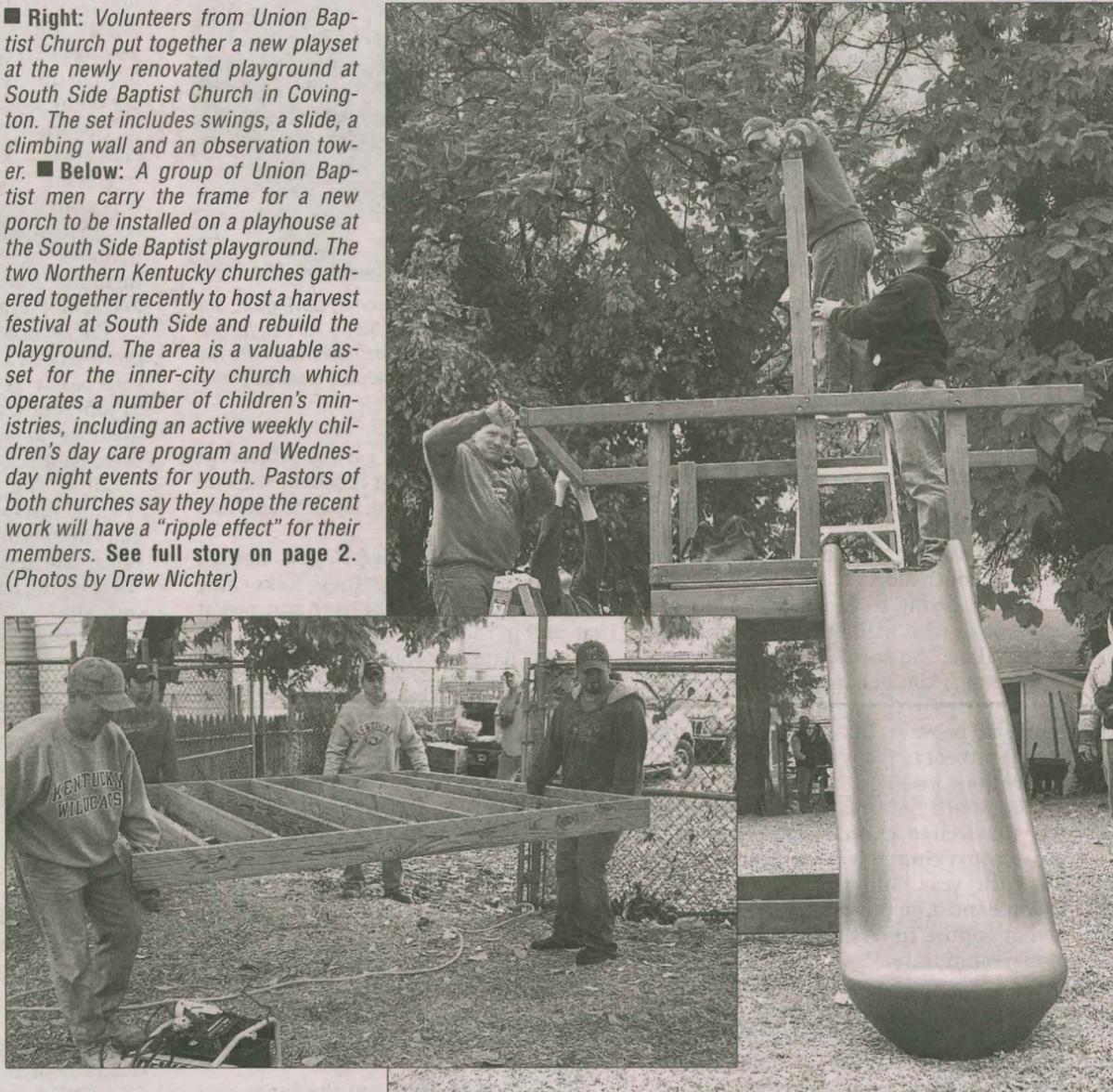
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## 'The ripple effect'

■ **Right:** Volunteers from Union Baptist Church put together a new playset at the newly renovated playground at South Side Baptist Church in Covington. The set includes swings, a slide, a climbing wall and an observation tower. ■ **Below:** A group of Union Baptist men carry the frame for a new porch to be installed on a playhouse at the South Side Baptist playground. The two Northern Kentucky churches gathered together recently to host a harvest festival at South Side and rebuild the playground. The area is a valuable asset for the inner-city church which operates a number of children's ministries, including an active weekly children's day care program and Wednesday night events for youth. Pastors of both churches say they hope the recent work will have a "ripple effect" for their members. See full story on page 2. (Photos by Drew Nichter)



## Physicians give chaplains clean bill of health

San Francisco—Science and faith may often clash, but a new survey suggests that most American doctors believe religion and spirituality can help patients.

Published late last month in the Archives of Internal Medicine, the survey found that 90 percent of physicians are satisfied with spiritual services provided by hospital chaplains to their patients.

While most doctors in the survey acknowledged that religion and spirituality help patients cope with illness, the study found that at least one-third of U.S. hospitals do not have chaplains, and many of those that do have chaplains don't have enough to address all patient needs.

Consequently, doctors play a crucial role in ensuring that patients have access to chaplains, the study said. But most doctors have little training in connecting chaplains to patients, and instead rely on their own spiritual values and experiences.

About 5 percent of referrals connecting patients with chaplains come from physicians, while the rest come from nurses or patient family members, said George Fitchett, a chaplain at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago, and the study's lead author. (RNS)

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## Kluth: Amid financial giants, uncertainty, 'God has answers'

By Drew Nichter  
News Director

Elizabethtown—The numbers are sobering: The average U.S. household has \$10,000 in unpaid credit card bills. There are between 1 and 2 million bankruptcies filed in the U.S. each year. And only 5-22 percent of Christians give at least 10 percent of their income to the Lord.

"We live in a world where people are just operating almost in an insane way because there is just a lack of understanding," observed Brian Kluth, an author, speaker and expert on Christian stewardship.

Much like David when he faced Goliath, Americans are dealing with a three-headed giant of their own these days, Kluth said. The giant of unemployment, global recession and doom-and-gloom media "defies the armies of God and makes us afraid," he explained.

But there is good news: There are 2,350 verses on finances, generosity and material possessions in the Bible, Kluth pointed out.

"God has answers for the churches and the people who will learn and follow His Word," he insisted.

Kluth, a leading authority on church giving and generosity, led last week's Cultivating Generous Churches seminar at Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown.

He said that Americans today "are drowning

in a sea of red ink," because they "don't have answers."

"But when you think about it, who's teaching them? No one's teaching them."

Referring to Proverbs 29:18 which says, "Where there is no vision, people perish," Kluth concluded: "They have no vision for what God would have for them."

Helping them achieve that vision begins with the church, he stressed. Unfortunately, 90 percent of denominations do not offer—or offer very little—financial or generosity training and resources to their churches.

In addition, Kluth pointed out that 85 percent of pastors say they feel "unequipped and uncomfortable teaching on finances and giving." Therefore, 90 percent of churches "have no active plan for teaching biblical financial and generosity principles."

As a likely result, Christian giving has declined for the past 40 years, Kluth noted. Even prior to the current recession, percentage giving reached a record low in 2007 of 2.5 percent of household income.

A possible culprit in that decline: church budgets. Kluth said that too often churches stress meeting budget goals over simply giving to God.

"The budget has nothing to do with teaching people the word of God on finances and generosity," he said. "It's about God's biblical mandate



**TEACHING GENEROSITY** Author, speaker and leading Christian stewardship expert Brian Kluth speaks at last week's Cultivating Generous Churches seminar at Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown. (Photo by Drew Nichter)

that calls people to live generously, not the budget."

Kluth defined a church budget as "an important management tool that accurately mirrors people's levels of unfaithfulness in giving so you don't overspend."

"If we teach people to give to God, if we teach them the word of God on finances, guess what? We're going to have enough in our budgets," he said.

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Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, Nov. 4

## Church partnership starts 'ripple effect'

By Drew Nichter  
News Director

**Covington**—When a stone is tossed into a calm body of water, a series of ripples will expand out from the center.

It is that parallel Kevin Milburn said he wants his congregation to experience in their communities day in and day out.

As pastor of Northern Kentucky's Union Baptist Church, Milburn has challenged his church to "put some feet to our faith," and ponder one important question: "How can we make a positive difference for Christ in our community?"

One answer to the question has taken the shape of a partnership between Union Baptist and South Side Baptist Church in nearby Covington.

The two congregations gathered late last month to rebuild the run-down playground area at South Side's inner-city location. It also was a time to reach local residents through the Covington church's annual harvest festival.

"South Side has a great history of inner-city ministries," Pastor Dave Foley said. "We've always had an involvement and a very powerful presence in this part of town."

And children are a significant part of that presence.

South Side Baptist operates the Moore Activity Center which provides a number of services to hundreds of area children and their parents each year.

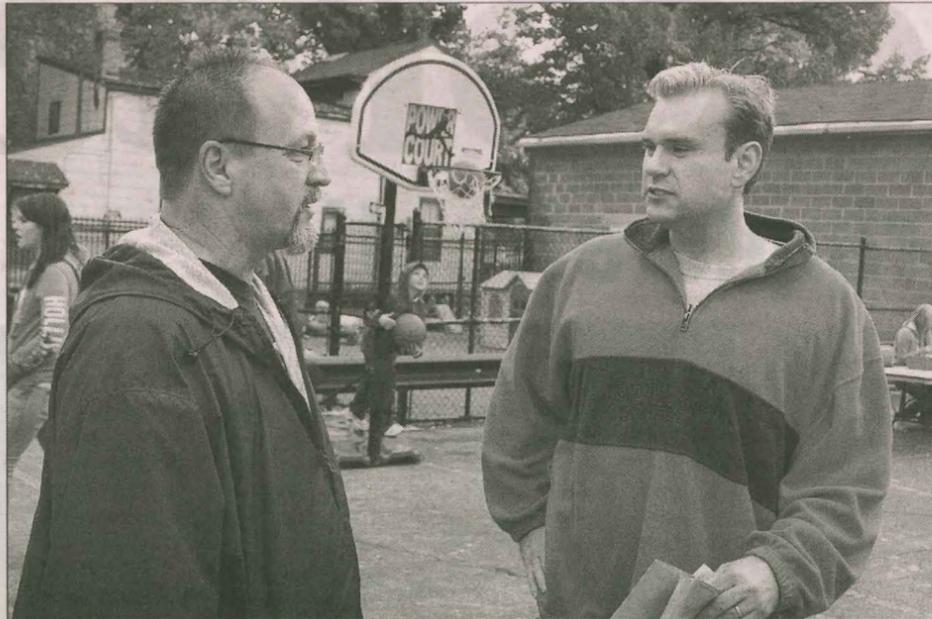
The church also has an active day-care center, a tutoring curriculum and a Wednesday night program called Hiding Place, which includes a meal, gym time and a Bible study for children and teenagers.

With so many children passing through South Side's doors each week, a nice playground becomes an important asset.

"It's going to be a great tool for us to be able to utilize here," Foley said.

So, while South Side and Union members coordinated the harvest festival at the church parking lot—complete with games, music and free food—another group spent the cold, blustery morning and afternoon across the street giving the playground a much-needed facelift.

In just a few hours, Union Baptist members cleaned the area; laid down several inches of mulch; restored a playhouse that was damaged and overgrown with weeds; and built three new picnic tables and a playset with swings, a slide, a climbing



**PARTNERS IN MISSIONS** Dave Foley (left), pastor of South Side Baptist Church in Covington, and Kevin Milburn, pastor of Union Baptist Church, chat with one another at South Side's harvest festival Oct. 24. The two Northern Kentucky churches formed a partnership that saw members from the two churches coordinate the festival and rebuild a playground for South Side's numerous children's ministries. (Photo by Drew Nichter)

wall and an observation tower.

Milburn said the work was a good example of "churches working together to reach communities," adding that the "ripple effect" started at the playground will continue at South Side.

"We're trying to touch lives who will touch lives who will touch lives and kind of pass it on," he noted.

Although Union Baptist regularly takes mission trips in the state and beyond, Milburn said he wants his members to use the recent project to focus even more on what can be done locally.

The South Side playground makeover was the second church-wide community project that church leaders plan to schedule each year, Milburn said. Last year, Union Baptist members built a prayer garden at Baptist Towers, a Covington retirement community.

"It was a great experience for our organization to see somebody come in and do something for them like that," said Robert Long, CEO of Baptist Life Communities and a member of Union Baptist Church.

Baptist Towers is a seven-story building that houses about 110 elderly residents and serves about 50 Baptist Life Communities employees.

Although the prayer garden project hit all kinds of snags, Long recalled, the end result has been a blessing for residents and workers alike.

"When (Baptist Towers) just needed some infusion of energy, these folks came along at exactly the right time and gave it that shot in the arm," Long said.

Union Baptist's volunteerism even got the attention of the Kentucky Association of Homes and Services for the Aging. The organization named the church its volunteer group of the year for 2008.

"That's a nice ripple effect," Long said.

Both pastors of Union and South Side said they hope to see an extended ripple effect from the recent playground project.

Milburn has encouraged his people to carry over that kindness into everyday life.

"We're trying to make sure that it doesn't just stay to a single day," he said.

At South Side, Pastor Foley said he wants to see his church further broaden its missions focus.

"Even though we're (in) the inner city and we're crossing cultural barriers right here, we can do that in going to another part of our state or another part of our world," he noted. "It can go even further."

## KBREA group to hold annual meeting Nov. 9

**Rineyville**—The Kentucky Baptist Religious Education Association will host its annual meeting Nov. 9 at Rineyville Baptist Church near Elizabethtown.

The meeting will be held the day prior to the Kentucky Baptist Convention's annual meeting at Severns Valley Baptist Church.

Describing the group as a "networking organization," KBREA President Rob Patterson called the annual meeting an opportunity for "idea sharing among peers (and) for connecting with folks in different parts of the state who are doing similar work."

Patterson, who is associate pastor of education at Eastwood Baptist Church in Bowling Green, said KBREA primarily is geared toward "second-chair leaders" in Kentucky Baptist churches. That includes "age-graded staff," he noted, including ministers of youth, children and senior adults, among others.

The keynote speaker for next week's event will be Don Blackmore, discipleship pastor at Central Baptist Church in Jonesboro, Ark., and a former staff member at Bowling Green's Living Hope Baptist Church.

Illustrating the meeting's theme of "vision, discipleship and teamwork," Blackmore will lead two teaching sessions: the morning session is titled, "Developing a Vision for Your Discipleship Ministry"; the afternoon session, "How to Relate: Ministerial Staff Working as a Team."

"He'll lay out some broad concepts for what it takes to develop an overall discipleship process," Patterson said of Blackmore's presentations.

Patterson will end his one-year term as KBREA president at next week's meeting. Tommy Redding, minister of education and administration at Simpsonville Baptist Church, is president-elect. Rodney Lynch, minister of education and church administration at Parkway Baptist Church in Bardstow, is secretary.

The KBREA annual meeting runs from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. The cost to attend is \$35, which includes the program fee, KBREA registration and lunch. Advance registration is requested. For more information, contact Lynch by e-mail at [RLynch@ParkwayBaptist.com](mailto:RLynch@ParkwayBaptist.com).

## Stewardship expert touts importance of raising generous church givers

Continued from page 1

And getting church members to become generous givers is the responsibility of church leaders, Kluth stressed.

"A lot of spiritual leaders in this day and age, they somehow think that this whole area of finances and generosity is someone else's job," he observed. He pointed to several heroes of the faith who "inspired God's people to greater levels of generosity."

But what exactly can churches do to boost generosity among their people?

A few years ago, Kluth met with stewardship pastors from leading churches in the U.S. He asked them what they were doing "to impact lives, to see lives transformed (and) to see giving increase?"

From that he compiled a list of 50 best practices and more than 100 Web resources for churches to increase congregational giving. Included among them are:

- Teaching through classes, groups and seminars. Kluth encouraged pastors to schedule generosity seminars at their churches. But, he noted, while seminars

ensure a large turnout, they offer the smallest amount of "life change."

He said that teaching tools will have the greatest effect on individuals in Sunday school or small-group settings.

- Teaching through written materials. While not every person in a church will attend a seminar or a small-group study, written materials can get into everyone's hands, Kluth said.

- "We live in a time when a godly balanced generosity message needs to get into the hands and hearts of God's people," he stressed, adding that written materials provide the easiest opportunity to do that.

- Preaching and worship services. Too often, pastors miss the joy of delivering a stewardship message, Kluth said. "It's not about duty and it's not about drudgery. It's about an absolute delight."

- Kluth suggested bringing in a guest generosity speaker or an individual to share a testimony on how giving generously has changed his or her life.

- Shepherding and counseling. This area

includes coming alongside people in need, Kluth said. That may involve benevolence ministries, estate or planned giving services, or offering referrals to Christian financial professionals.

- "If you have a couple in your church and they're having financial problems, you want to connect them to somebody who will walk them through and help them out," he noted.

- Collections and administration. "In America, our offering plates are too small," Kluth observed. Most churches, he pointed out, only allow for offerings at a specific time on Sunday mornings.

- Kluth encouraged church leaders to "make bigger baskets" by giving their members more ways to give. That includes on-line giving, EFT withdrawals or, in some larger churches, opening giving kiosks. "We need more ways to give because the goal is to help people be faithful," he said.

- Leadership training. Kluth advocated for involving a church's entire leadership team in implementing generosity tools and

for the whole group to "own this area."

- Campaigns. Whether it is an annual stewardship campaign, a teaching series or a large capital fundraising effort, "a campaign will bring a concentrated focus," Kluth said.

- He described pastors as "cat herders"—a near-impossible job. But campaigns, he noted, can get "all the cats pointed in one direction."

- Of the 50 best practices, Kluth said most churches only implement seven to 12 of them. But none of them will succeed unless church leaders schedule them. "It ultimately has to get put on a calendar," he emphasized. "If you don't put it on a calendar, nothing's going to happen."

- In conclusion, Kluth said his suggestions simply are "about blessing people; it's not about burdening them."

- "Whatever it is you do, it's more than you've done before," he said. "You can trust God to use it and bless it and to grow people up to become strong, generous, faithful givers."

## Mathis discusses goals as lone KBC presidential nominee

Don Mathis, vocational evangelist and staff member at Eastwood Baptist Church in Bowling Green, will be nominated as Kentucky Baptist Convention president Nov. 10 during the KBC annual meeting in Elizabethtown. He currently is the only announced candidate.

Mathis served as KBC president in 1985-86, and has been a full-time vocational evangelist since 1999. He became the staff evangelist at Eastwood Baptist in 2004. A former president of the Kentucky Baptist Pastors' Conference, Mathis has served on a number of KBC committees and is a trustee for Clear Creek Baptist Bible College in Pineville. He also has held denominational leadership roles at LifeWay Christian Resources and the West Virginia Convention of Southern Baptists.

**Q: If you are elected KBC president, what would be your major goals and hopes for the coming year?**

If God and Kentucky Baptists see fit to allow me to serve as KBC president, I will seek to serve in a manner consistent with who I am and what my ministry for 45 years has been: evangelism and missions.

Specifically, if we could see an increase in baptisms and Cooperative Program giving, I will give praise to God and the people. I will be delighted to serve as a cheerleader for the Cooperative Program.

The ministry that God has given us in Kentucky and around the world needs a boost that comes from prayer, enthusiasm, motivation and communication. One of the roles of KBC president is that of serving as a spokesman for Cooperative Program support.

**Q: You previously served as KBC president in 1985-86. Why do you feel that now is the appropriate time to be nominated again? How did you reach that decision?**

The short answer is I have sensed God's approval and leadership toward being KBC president a second time. As I have discussed this possibility with my wife, family and trusted friends, their affirmation has encouraged me to allow my name to be placed

in nomination. It is not something that I sought, but it seems to be the direction that God is leading. Thus, if Kentucky Baptists confirm that indeed this is God's will, I will be humbled and delighted to serve.

I was grateful and honored to be elected the first time. I am humbled more than I can adequately express to be considered for election this second time.

**Q: You have served as a full-time evangelist since 1999. How has that role helped prepare you for a second stint as state convention president?**

Preaching in so many different Kentucky Baptists churches has helped me not only to know much about Kentucky Baptists, but it has helped me to keep current with the various ways that we do ministry. Our worship styles are not all exactly the same. The way we do Sunday school, discipleship, missions education, evangelism and our other ministries vary. We also have a few regional uniquenesses.

I certainly don't know all there is to know, but I have had the privilege of getting to know a lot of Kentucky Baptists both in pulpits and in pews. I spend a lot of time with a lot of real people in real churches, many of whom God is using in fantastic ways. Every year and almost every week, I am more and more appreciative of who Kentucky Baptists are.

Of course, my background before evangelism includes 30 years as a pastor, all of them in Kentucky. So evangelism has simply been part of 45 years of getting to know and love Kentucky Baptists.

**Q: What is your perspective of the Great Commission Task Force that currently is examining the effectiveness of Southern Baptist Convention entities, and the possibility of a similar task force doing the same work on the state convention level?**

At this point, I believe that we need to wait and see. Let's be patient, not chase rumors or jump to conclusions.

I believe at the SBC level, there are god-

ly men and women who are seeking to find the will of God in carrying out the Great Commission more effectively. God has and is abundantly blessing Southern Baptists. However, that does not mean that we cannot be more efficient and more effective. Of course we can. Let's build on our best and tweak what needs to be tweaked.

I believe the same is true for us in the KBC. God has given us great leadership, programs, entities, institutions and agencies. That which is good will not be hurt by evaluation. It will lead to a better celebration.

That which needs to be adjusted or done better, let's do it. Let's work together, love one another and go forward in Jesus' name.



Don Mathis

**Q: What similarities and/or differences do you see in Kentucky and Southern Baptist life as compared to when you served as KBC president 24 years ago?**

So many things are different, such as technology. I did not have a cell phone or computer, much less an iPhone or Blackberry. Sometimes we twiddled our thumbs, but nobody Twittered.

We did not sing off the wall, we held hymnals in our hands. Most of us had discipleship training on Sunday night and had two revival meetings at least Sunday morning through Friday night every year. We did not have all the options of doing missions that we do now.

Yet, the more things change the more they remain the same. Persons who do not know Jesus still are lost. They need the gospel. They must be saved to go to heaven. The saved need to be baptized and discipled. We have numerous opportunities to be directly involved in missions. However, we must never lose sight of the fact that the foundation for the way we do missions is the Cooperative Program—it still works.

**Q: One of the primary responsibilities as president is to appoint three members to the KBC Committee on Committees. What criteria would you use to make your appointments?**

These, of course, are regional appointments in such a fashion that all eight of our regions are represented. So, I will prayerfully seek out persons within the three vacant regions who know and love Jesus; believe the Bible; are active in their churches; support their churches with tithes and offerings; come from churches that support the Cooperative Program; and are active in the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

**Q: How do you identify yourself within the current political/theological spectrum of Baptist life?**

I believe the Bible is the inerrant, infallible Word of God. I am a cooperating Kentucky and Southern Baptist. I subscribe to the latest edition of the Baptist Faith and Message. By most anybody's definition, including my own, I am a conservative.

**Q: What do you consider Kentucky Baptists' greatest strengths? Why?**

Our greatest strength is that God has seen fit to bless us. Our predecessors have been faithful and have passed along to us the stewardship of the greatest missions organization in the state, coupled with the Southern Baptist Convention, the greatest missions organization in history.

This has happened because of God's abundant blessings. I am praying that God will give an awakening that will glorify Him, and may God see fit to use Kentucky Baptists even more today and on into the future until Jesus comes.

**Q: What do you consider Kentucky Baptists' greatest weaknesses? Why?**

I would prefer to say that there are things under God that we can do better. What God is doing and opportunities to be a part of what God is doing through Kentucky Baptists need to be shared even more effectively.

More young leaders need to be welcomed, loved, accepted, mentored, and we need to learn from them. I believe that we have the greatest group of young pastors and leaders here in Kentucky that I have seen in my lifetime.

### New Ky. missionaries serve among Indians, homeless

Alpharetta, Ga.—The North American Mission Board has appointed four new missionaries in Kentucky.

Prasad and Vandana Aghamkar are serving in Louisville where Prasad has been named as a church planting missionary.

Prior to his new post, he attended Southern Baptist Theological Seminary where he majored in missions. Aghamkar also attended Maharashtra Bible College and Kirti College in India.

A native of India, he has served as a pastor, church planter and youth president for the C&M Alliance in Mumbai, India. His wife, Vandana, is an OB/GYN. They have one daughter, Prabhavi, 7.

"I thank God that He has used me and my family to reach many South Indian and Nepali people in Louisville over the last year," Aghamkar said.

John and Dawn Ferguson also are serving in Louisville where John has been appointed by NAMB as executive director of the Jefferson Street Baptist Center. Previously, he served as life renewal program director at Lexington Rescue Mission.

Jefferson Street Baptist Center is an urban ministry that exists to "serve and glorify God by meeting the physical, emotional, spiritual, educational and vocational needs of the homeless and hurting of Louisville," according to Ferguson. A native of North Aurora, Ill., Ferguson is a graduate of Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. He and his wife, Dawn, have three children, Wynn, Joelle and Nathaniel.



Prasad and Vandana Aghamkar



John Ferguson

### High Attendance Sunday School day set for spring

By Kristie Randolph  
Kentucky Baptist Convention

Louisville—In an effort to encourage Kentucky Baptists to reach new people, the Kentucky Baptist Convention is organizing a High Attendance Sunday School event next spring.

The event also will serve as a means for follow-up after the Find It Here door-to-door gospel distribution effort, scheduled to take place during the weeks leading up to Easter Sunday 2010.

"It is absolutely essential for us to follow up on decisions made and interest expressed during Find It Here," said KBC Sunday School Department Director Darryl Wilson, who is working with associational directors of missions to coordinate the High Attendance initiative.

"Sunday school classes are natural groups to care for and follow up with unconnected people, and high attendance days concentrate those efforts," he explained.

According to Wilson, the High Attendance Sunday School initiative is designed to help Sunday school members make a concerted effort to invite people they know to Sunday school. Since everyone is inviting their contacts to attend on the same Sunday, the initiative naturally should produce a larger number of participants, he pointed out.

Wilson said churches interested in participating will want to plan for a four-week process, beginning with a launch date of March 28 and ending with the High Attendance Sunday School day April 18, two weeks after Easter. Preparation leading up to the four-week process also will be an important component of the effort, he noted.

"In addition to strong pastoral leadership, a key part of preparing for high attendance will be prayer. Prayer enables God-sized goals to be set, commitments to be made, invitations to be extended, and hearts prepared to care for new people," Wilson said.

He recommends that participating churches organize the High Attendance Sunday School focus through their existing Sunday school classes. Teachers can lead their classes to understand the purpose, set a goal and provide encouragement for class members to follow through on their commitments, he added.

"The ultimate goal of the High Attendance effort is to extend God's love through prayer, invitations, fellowship and class attendance," Wilson said. "As a result, unconnected people begin connections with a class and church that lead them to the most important connection—one with Jesus Christ."

The KBC is providing a number of materials to support churches in their plans for the High Attendance Sunday School day. A preparation guide and sample poster will be mailed to each church, and additional posters will be available as a free download or for purchase for a nominal charge. Commitment cards and reminder postcards also will be available for free download.

Following the event, churches will have the opportunity to report their attendance totals through their associational offices or the KBC Web site.

For more information, visit [www.KyBaptist.org/](http://www.KyBaptist.org/) Reach or contact the KBC's Sunday school department at (502) 489-3572, or toll free in Kentucky at (866) 489-3572.

## Pastor appreciation

I recently had the privilege of speaking at Central Baptist Church in Hawesville and of joining the congregation for a luncheon after the service. Before I spoke, Pastor Brian Adkins heavily promoted the luncheon.

### Partners in the Mission



By Bill Mackey

Unknown to the pastor or to me, however, was that the luncheon itself was for the purpose of honoring Adkins on Pastor Appreciation Day. The church had a good time egging the pastor on to promote the luncheon for himself.

It was a joyous time and a real privilege for me to recognize this fine pastor and his wife, Velma. In the past five years, the church has grown by about 50 percent in Sunday school attendance, average worship attendance and undesignated giving. Baptisms have averaged 28 each of the past five years, which is an outstanding record.

Pastor Adkins is from the area and previously had served the church as music director. He and his wife enjoy singing, but he now is known for preaching the Bible, his godly life and his evangelistic outreach, along with his spiritual care and admonition of the saints.

As part of the recognition, a member shared the following:

#### Proud to call you my Pastor

*A man who teaches the word of God, the word of truth that gives the people power ... the power of love ... the love of God!*

*A man who not only hugs the sheep, but touches the heart of his flock. The sheep know his voice and are blessed by his presence.*

*A man who teaches the medicinal benefits of laughter and the financial benefits of giving.*

*A man whose singing brings light into dark places, and pierces the heart into conviction.*

*A man whose smile actually means "I love you."*

*A man whose eyes say, "I'm praying for you."*

*A man whose lessons from the pulpit make you jump up and say, "I can take on the world, bring it on!"*

*A man who everyone has heard of, most people know, who many people want, but we have him! Because he chose to stay our shepherd ...*

*A man I appreciate and love, and who I am proud to call "My Pastor!"*

As do all pastors, Pastor Adkins stays busy. He teaches a Sunday school class, prepares three messages each week, cares for the sick and hurting, conducts ministries, organizes the church work, consults with program and ministry leaders, relates to the community and denomination, and cares for his family and his own spiritual vitality.

Consider sending your pastor and his wife a note of appreciation frequently and a reminder that you are praying for them. They will be encouraged and you will be blessed.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

## Five 'stones' for growing generous givers

In his opening remarks at the Cultivating Generous Churches seminar in Elizabethtown, Brian Kluth of Colorado Springs encouraged churches to follow David's example when fighting Goliath. In facing the giants of global recession and doom-and-gloom media that are roaming the land, Kluth advised Christians to first determine that they are going to operate in faith, not out of fear.

Like David, who was weighted down and clamored about clumsily in Saul's armor, seminar participants easily become burdened in attempting to make all of the speaker's armor fit them, Kluth said. Instead, David took off Saul's armor, went down to the stream and picked out five smooth stones, he recalled. "Your challenge is: What does God want to give you so you can fight some giants in the land?" Kluth explained. He advised the audience to take away five "stones"—key insights that will allow them to win a great victory for God. So, here are five stones that I picked up to help grow generous givers:

**Change the rule of thirds.** Kluth claimed that a third of active church members give nothing; another third give less than \$500 per year. Other church leaders have quoted numbers that are slightly better: One out of five Christians, or 20 percent, gives nothing. Nevertheless, the statistics invariably point out that the vast majority of churchgoers minimally support the work of God, and far too few are cheerful, generous givers.

"A \$100 bill in church looks large, but take it to WalMart and watch it shrink," Kluth chuckled. He told a humorous story about a conversation between a \$100 bill and a \$1 bill. The \$100 bill bragged about having a great life, being spent on sports cars, beautiful houses and fantastic vacations. The \$1 bill, however, complained that all it ever did was go to church. Puzzled, the \$100 bill replied, "What's a church?"

**Fish on the other side of the boat.** Relating it to the story of Jesus telling the disciples to cast their nets on the other side of the boat after catching nothing, Kluth urged churches to find creative ways for members to give. Observing that 90 percent of personal assets are in estates, while only 10 percent of wealth is in cash, he quipped, "Our church offering plates are too small."

Wealth gets heavy and is tiring to carry around, he joked, comparing it to a bulky suitcase on a long trip. Nine out of 10 people do not have a will or trust, Kluth noted, seeing a great opportunity for promoting giving to God beyond one's earthly lifetime.

**Nurture generous givers.** Twenty-nine percent of churches saw a decline in giving last year, and 54 percent are running behind their budget needs this year, Kluth said. While more than 2,350 verses deal with money and giving, 85 percent of ministers are uncomfortable about addressing the subject. The problem, he feels, is that we are approaching giving from a wrong perspective.

"It's not about the budget; it's about planning to give to God," Kluth asserted. "It's about God's mandate that calls people to give generously." Citing 1 Corinthians 16:2, Kluth emphasized the principle of every person setting aside a sum of money in keeping with his income to give to advance God's kingdom.

**Nothing is more important.** Declaring that we are living in "Haggai days," Kluth observed how cold economic winds are blowing and our once-deep pockets seem to have holes in them now. "The 'Haggai days' happened because the people forgot to give to God," he asserted. "There is nothing more important in life than recognizing the provisions of God and then giving generously to His work as He guides," Kluth affirmed.

Identifying four groups of people in the church—those who have a surplus, those who are financially stable, those who are struggling, and those who are sinking in debt—Kluth urged church leaders to start initiatives and ministries to help people in each group. He suggested more than 50 "best practices" in seven primary areas: teaching, written materials, preaching, counseling, collections, leadership training and campaigns.

**God is the provider.** "Would you rather be dependent upon people's ability to give or on what God provides for you?" Kluth insightfully asked. "We've made it about the money. It's not about the money," he said. "God's ways may include money, but they are not dependent upon money."

Working as a missionary to raise funds for a camp, Kluth said he experienced a defining moment when he was in dire need of new shoes during a bitter cold, snowy winter. He was praying for more money; instead, a man showed up with some boots and asked if he knew anybody who could use them. "Something inside me changed that day," he affirmed. "God showed me, 'Brian, I can provide for you.'"

Kluth concluded with three "I's" for encouraging generous giving: instruct with scripture, inspire with stories, and ignite with vision. When these three are in place, he declared, "Watch out! God will move."

## After Thought

By Todd Deaton



## Living by God's economy

By Chuck Bentley

Many people list Jeremiah 29:11 as one of their favorite verses in the Bible: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." This inspirational verse brings comfort to our lives when the future looks bleak. This verse reminds us that we can take comfort in knowing that our Heavenly Father has a good plan for our future.

But do we ever stop to think about the context of this verse? Who was God giving this promise to? Jerusalem had been attacked by the army of King Nebuchadnezzar, the city destroyed and all the people carried away as captives to Babylon. Now, God's chosen people lived as exiles in a strange country. Understandably, they were distraught and hopeless. What would become of them in this foreign land?

To a people who had no hope, to a people who were captives in a foreign country, God gave instructions in Jeremiah 29 on how to live their lives. They were to build houses, plant gardens, marry and have children. He also told them to pray for the peace and prosperity of the very land that held them captive. As that land prospered, so they also would prosper.

The Lord gave the people hope that they would be delivered from their captivity and brought back into their homeland. And then He assured them that none of this was happening by accident. God had a plan for His people, just as surely as He has a plan for each of us today.

We know that this world is not our final home. How do we need to live here in this "foreign land"? We should follow the Lord's instructions to go about our daily lives in the way He has instructed us. And one very important instruction is

to pray for the peace and prosperity of the land.

Our country has undergone major financial upheavals. Many people are beginning to see that they have been living by man's economy, trusting in money and possessions to bring happiness, but finding out that it only brings worry, doubt and unhappiness.

God's economy calls us to make Him the Lord of our lives, in every aspect, including our finances. Recognizing that God is the owner of all things and that we are stewards of His blessings will give us that peace we all search for. And by being wise stewards, we can be free to use His resources in the way He instructs, to be free to be generous and to help others.

God still has a plan for His children today, a plan to prosper us and not to harm us, a plan to give us hope and a future, if we choose to live in God's economy, even in the midst of a "foreign land." (BP)

Chuck Bentley is CEO of Crown Financial Ministries.

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"Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another." Romans 14:19

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## Take the financial aptitude test

By Don Spencer

1. It always is smart to send a minimum credit card payment and stretch out payments as long as possible. *True or False?*

2. Your credit record can be a factor when you apply for a loan or credit card, but cannot affect non-credit decisions such as applications for insurance or an apartment. *True or False?*

3. A debit card may be a good alternative to a credit card because the money is automatically deducted from a bank account, thus avoiding interest charges or debt problems. *True or False?*

4. It makes no sense for very young adults to put money aside for retirement many years away. People in their 20s should focus on monthly expenses and short-term goals and not start saving for retirement until their 30s at the earliest. *True or False?*

5. If you receive an e-mail from a company you've done business with asking you to update your records by entering your Social Security number or bank account numbers, it's safe as long as the e-mail explains the reason and it shows the company's official logo. *True or False?*

6. If you or your family has \$100,000 or less on deposit at an FDIC-insured bank and the bank fails, your money is completely safe. *True or False?*

7. All checking accounts are pretty much the same in terms of features, fees, interest rates, balance requirements, etc. *True or False?*

8. There is no harm in having many different credit cards, especially when they offer free giveaways as incentives. The number of cards you carry won't affect your ability to get a loan; what matters is that you use the cards responsibly. *True or False?*

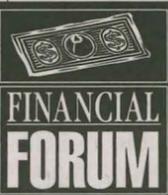
9. While one or two late payments on bills may not damage your credit record, making a habit of it will count against you. *True or False?*

10. The best way to avoid a "bounced" check is to keep your checkbook up to date and closely monitor your balance. Institutions do offer "overdraft protection" services but these programs come with their own added costs. *True or False?*

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

Answers:

1. False. 2. False. 3. True. 4. False. 5. False. 6. True. 7. False. 8. False. 9. True. 10. True.



## Faith is key to growing stronger through trials

By Lisa Huddleston

"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you" (Matthew 6:3).

As a rehab doctor in a veterans' hospital, my husband treats soldiers who recently have returned from the war in Iraq, as well as veterans from past wars.

Not surprisingly, many of these men and women have been through some terrible traumas and not only have physical injuries to deal with but emotional scars as well. What is surprising to him is how differently people respond to their wounds. Some soldiers are stoic about their pain and keep their nightmares to themselves. Some wear their wounds on their sleeves and continue to live in angry bitterness. Some give up and turn to drugs or alcohol to dull the memories. And some incredibly grow stronger. It is this last group that interests me most.

Why do some people experience the same trauma, loss and suffering as others, but they never give up? In fact, they actually grow from their experiences and go on to do amazing things—even to help others who are suffering.

It would be grossly presumptuous on my part to say that I understand where these men and women are coming from. My traumas are puny in comparison with what they have endured. Yet, they have been big enough to cause me pain—divorce, leaving friends behind, deaths of loved ones, miscarriage and so on. Life is hard for us all at times. Some crumble under the weight of it and others grow stronger. Therefore, my question remains: What makes the difference?

Why, even as a child, did I feel that each event, even the painful ones, provided a lesson to be learned and to be used? Is it simply a matter of per-

sonal fortitude? That would be presumptuous. No, I can be as big a weenie as the next guy. Is it wholly due to personality traits? No, I see both survivors and victims in all personality types. Is it found in other characteristics: gender, race, age, education, wealth? Again, the obvious response is no.

### FIRST PERSON

*I believe that we always have a choice: to give in and live as a victim to the pain and suffering of life on this planet or to choose to live in His victory and strength.*

The answer to my question seems to lie in believing that there is a greater purpose to life than personal welfare and physical wellbeing; not a delusion of grandeur, but a spiritual perception that there is something more—that this world is not our final destination and what happens in it is in some way a training ground for what will follow. It is the heartfelt belief that God has a plan for each one of us and for the world as a whole. Nothing happens only by chance. Nothing is beyond His redemptive reach or outside of His control. He sees, He knows and He will not let us suffer in vain.

I believe that we always have a choice: to give in and live as a victim to the pain and suffering of life on this planet, or to choose to live in His victory and strength. Even as I write these words, I confess that I am not often up to such a positive choice. Without His reaching down to lift me, I could not even choose to seek Him. But He does reach down.

The knowledge of that truth fills my heart with joy. Yes, "each day has enough trouble of its own" (Matthew 6:34). But "consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is going to be revealed to us" (Romans 8:18) and rejoice.

Let the knowledge of that glory change you now and forever—for your benefit, for the benefit of those around you, and for the glory of His name. It makes all the difference in the world and in the world to come. (BP)

Lisa Huddleston is a freelance writer who lives in Middle Tennessee.

## Hopkinsville students experience being homeless

Over fall break, the student ministry from Hillcrest Baptist Church in Hopkinsville participated in a "homeless work camp." Bill Houpt, associate pastor for youth, explained: "For the past few years, we have taken our youth to inner-city Washington to work with the homeless. We have fed them on the street, cleaned homeless shelters, took them to dinner with us and done a variety of other ministries. While my students felt sympathetic toward them, they never could feel empathetic toward them."

"The students came on Sunday night with just the clothes on their backs, a sleeping bag and a cardboard box," Houpt said. "After they got their homes (a box) set up, I gave each student \$5 and sent them walking to Kroger to buy their food for the week. Some bought a box of cereal, some peanut butter and crackers, some ramen noodles—all with the knowledge they would have no way to heat food up. They would just have to eat it the way it was."

Houpt had all of the students journal about their experiences. That night, Kristen Stephens, a senior at Christian County High School, wrote: "Tonight we were given \$5 to buy food to last until Wednesday night. Man, did I find out what a dollar is really worth. I wanted to use every last cent. We had to walk to and from Kroger in the cold wet rain. But we came back to a warm fire. I felt so blessed; most homeless people don't get that luxury."

Monday through Wednesday, the students performed a variety of ministries, all of which involved manual labor. "This represented the day-job atmosphere that the homeless person lives in," Houpt explained. At night, they had Bible study and worship.

Kristen's account of the first day included these notations: "I'm so tired. But I am OK! Today we were supposed to wake up at 8 a.m., but all of us were up and around

the fire before 6:30. Today was a good day. We went to the worksite and got most of the work done. We worked really hard. And, man, did we stink! All I can really think about is how we were only experiencing half of what real homeless people go through. They have to deal with so much more—like getting mugged, sleeping outside without a box and going days without food. I take so much for granted. I am really learning to appreciate what I have and what my parents do for me."

"By Wednesday," Houpt recalled, "we were quite smelly and hungry, but God had begun to do His work. The overriding empathy for what a homeless person's life is like was present. Many saw a new value of a dollar. Many had a new respect for what their families had provided. This has spawned a few new ministries: collecting coats and feeding at the soup kitchen, just to name a few."

Kristen's final entry read: "Today was a 'no food day.' We got breakfast and coffee. That's it. I'm hungry." She added, "This week was amazing! I've learned so much. The main thing I got out of this week is it's not what you get out of an experience, it's what you give. We can get so much out of this, like learning to appreciate things and really understand and be more compassionate about the homeless. That's great and all, except we don't need God for that. We could be locked in a closet and get all that. We would be just like the Pharisees in Luke 11:37-54. We must give. And we can only do that with God."

Houpt concluded, "The students are not the only ones that learned a lot. We are definitely doing this again during spring break; however, the students want it to be longer, and with less money. Go figure!"

To read all the students' journal entries for the week visit <http://xforce.tumblr.com>.

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

*"This week was amazing! I've learned so much. The main thing I got out of this week is it's not what you get out of an experience, it's what you give."*

—Kristen Stephens, a senior at Christian County High School

## How can I help my child celebrate Thanksgiving?

By David Garrard

Children may have an easier time getting into the true spirit of Thanksgiving because the holiday is free of the commercial trappings that confuse the issue at Christmas.

Psalms 103:1 says, "Praise the Lord ... and forget not all his benefits." Read this verse together and use it as a beginning point for remembering the many blessings God has given.

Get paper and a pencil and make an actual list. Begin by thinking of small things: toothbrushes, pencils, bubble gum, ice cream. Then move to the big stuff: sunsets, mountains, oceans, trees. Make sure someone's list includes God's love and His gift of Jesus.

Ellen Goodman once said that families now are so dispersed that it is easier to bring in the crops than the cousins. Nevertheless, Thanksgiving should be a celebration of family as much as of food. Make a special effort to spend Thanksgiving with family or special friends.

Make a memory and build a tradition. Attend a Thanksgiving worship service, play football in the yard, work a puzzle or go to a movie together. Theatres usually release a family film about this time of year.

As you gather for a special Thanksgiving meal, take time to go around the table and let everyone name something or someone they are thankful for.

Use the occasion of bounty to renew a commitment to help those who are less fortunate. Make a special offering to world hunger or prepare and deliver a food basket. Church staff can provide the name of a family in need.

As you celebrate, remind your children that God wants us to be thankful all the time, not just once a year.

David Garrard is minister to children at St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville. Send questions for Family Forum to Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253 or e-mail [wesrec@kybaptist.org](mailto:wesrec@kybaptist.org).



# State Baptist execs weigh in on resurgence, SBC structure

Dallas—In what might be arguably the most significant meeting yet for the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force, the group met with 22 executive directors of Southern Baptist state conventions Oct. 27, to offer some competing and complementing views and vision about the Southern Baptist Convention and what is needed for a Great Commission resurgence.

Speaking on behalf of the state executives, David Hankins, executive director for the Louisiana Baptist Convention, told the joint meeting in Dallas that pronouncements about the demise of the Southern Baptist Convention not only are premature but ignore research that indicates just the opposite.

"While none of us are satisfied with the declines in membership, baptisms and missions support," he said, "we have had remarkable results and staying power. For example, our total membership in 1979 was 13,379,073. In 2008, it was 16,266,920, or plus 20 percent.

"Compare that to the track record of mainline denominations," he offered. "We may not be at the top of our game, but we are very much in the game."

He also underscored that resurgent cooperation could be the key to a Great Commission resurgence.

"We ought to consider it a primary strategy to marshal all the sectors of Southern Baptist leadership (church, association, state, SBC) to work on the Great Commission resurgence, Hankins said.

Task force chairman Ronnie Floyd, pastor of First Baptist Church of Springdale, Ark., said the dialogue with state conven-

tion executives was crucial for the committee's work.

"In a spirit of deep respect, we wanted to hear from the state executive directors and let them speak to us about their own vision for a resurgence of Great Commission passion among Southern Baptists," Floyd said in a statement released after the meeting. "We were looking for an honest conversation and a meeting of hearts and minds."

While much of the public discussion of the task force's work has focused on ways the SBC might be reorganized, renewed passion for and involvement in the Great Commission mandate to make disciples of all nations won't come through restructuring, Hankins told Baptist Press.

"Talking about structure isn't the right pathway to a Great Commission resurgence, and the 'Great Commission Resurgence' paper says it's not," Hankins pointed out. "It starts with lordship. We just hope we won't forget those declarations and spend 90 percent of our time on structure when there's a lot more important issues to the Great Commission that need to be addressed."

When the discussion turns to structure, however, Hankins said the state convention executives wanted to "lay out some parameters ... we think are important."

Hankins said those constraints consist

of four affirmations:

■ The four-part structure of Southern Baptist life—churches, associations, state conventions and national convention—is still a useful structure for accomplishing the Great Commission.

■ State conventions are necessary partners if Southern Baptists are serious about a Great Commission resurgence—"instrumental to the process, not detrimental."



**"I'm not ready to give up on our structures. I think they have great promise and great value."**

—David Hankins, Louisiana Baptist Convention executive director

■ While "a lot of study needs to be done" regarding the role of the North American Mission Board, state executives believe substantial changes only should be made after a thorough study in which stakeholders, like the state conventions, have an opportunity to weigh in.

■ The Cooperative Program is the vehicle of choice to undergird a Great Commission resurgence among Southern Baptists.

The state executives felt they were welcomed as genuine partners in the dialogue about Great Commission resurgence, Hankins said.

"The state convention executives as a group want to be very enthusiastic about a Great Commission resurgence," he noted. "We are very desirous of being part of that team, and we would hope we wouldn't be devalued or dismissed from that team. ... We have the best opportunity in 30 years to all work together, if we will. That's what we

want to do: work together and move Southern Baptists forward."

Hankins said at least four other issues are as important as whether Southern Baptists are effectively structured for accomplishing the Great Commission: increasing hostility toward Christian values; the need for Southern Baptists to make greater inroads among ethnic groups; an inadequate level of discipleship among church members; and whether congregations are willing to sacrifice comforts for the sake of the Great Commission.

While the Southern Baptist Convention's structure may not be perfect, it is well suited to the challenge of motivating and mobilizing churches for mission, Hankins insisted.

"The thing I see the denominational structure being able to do best on behalf of the churches is motivating and mobilizing," he said. "We really do have the power and opportunity to speak to our constituency, to catalyze them, to motivate them and then to mobilize them. That's why I argued—and my colleagues agree—that our structure is apt.

"I'm not ready to give up on the SBC," Hankins added. "I think we have great promise. I'm not ready to give up on our structures. I think they have great promise and great value. I'm not ready to give up on the Cooperative Program. I think it is still the best vehicle. So we hope all these things can be improved, shined up, but employed to move our churches forward in their task."

The next meeting of the task force will be Nov. 30-Dec. 1 in Atlanta. (BP)

## Task force chair addresses several 'myths' about GCR

Dallas—Following a dialogue last week with 22 executive directors of Southern Baptist state conventions, Great Commission Resurgence Task Force chairman Ronnie Floyd addressed several issues about which he felt the record needed to be "set straight." He listed those issues in a statement released after the task force meeting:

■ The Great Commission Task Force is not considering any abandonment of the Cooperative Program. "We are asking questions about how the Cooperative Program can remain our central system of missions funding, not whether it will remain so," Floyd noted.

■ The task force is not considering any recommendation that Southern Baptists partner with any parachurch or non-Southern Baptist ministry such as the Acts 29 church planting network.

■ The task force is not trying to determine the work of search committees and trustees currently seeking new leadership for the North American Mission Board, International Mission Board and the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee. "Given our assignment, we can't ignore the obvious," he said. "This is an historic moment for Southern Baptists. ... Will our work as a task force have any effect on these entities? Our determined goal is to do more, not less, for the Great Commission in every area. I am sure each of these boards shares that very same goal."

■ The task force is not seeking to diminish the work of either state conventions or local Baptist associations. "To the contrary, we want to forge a future that maximizes Southern Baptist work at every level—and change is happening at every level," Floyd insisted.

■ The task force is not devoting its time or energies to a discussion about specific theological issues discussed within the SBC. "This is not about Calvinism, anti-Calvinism or any other 'ism,'" he said. "This is about faithfulness to the Great Commission—period. That is our theological agenda."

■ The task force is not planning to wait until Orlando to release its report and recommendations. "Our avowed intention is to bring as much as we can to the February meeting of the SBC Executive Committee," Floyd explained. "This is a huge challenge, but we are pushing ourselves hard. Orlando is our ultimate deadline, but only for the final form of our report." (BP)

## BWA leader: Gospel requires Baptist unity

Washington—The gospel requires Baptist churches to associate with one another, according to Baptist World Alliance General Secretary Neville Callam.

In an address during the District of Columbia Baptist Convention's annual meeting Oct. 26, Callam said that unity is a principle grounded in the nature of God. Such association, expressed in a covenant relationship, is essential to the very being, life and mission of the church, he insisted.

Unity, Callam said, "is both a gift and a task." It is a gift that is shared by all who are in the church, and it is a task that must be lived out, "a demand that must be visibly realized."

Christians, Callam emphasized, "are called to live as one people united in Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, serving the one God and Father of all." Believers should not fail to associate with other believers and congregations should consider it an obligation to associate with other churches, he added.

Regarding the local church autonomy principle common among Baptists, Callam warned that "autonomy and isolation are not one and the same thing. Autonomy and separation from the stream of the shared life in Christ are not identical." Rather, he said, "autonomy confers on each congregation a larger responsibility and answerability for the way in which it conducts its relations under God."

## GEORGETOWN COLLEGE

invites graduates and friends for

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Tuesday, November 10

11:30 a.m.

(immediately following morning KBC session)

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GEORGETOWN

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thropic goals the Lord has laid upon their hearts. For more than 64 years, your Kentucky Baptist Foundation has remained worthy of the trust of its Baptist family.

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

### Ky. Baptist Foundation



Barry Allen

## For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



## Preacher's Kids

David Ayers

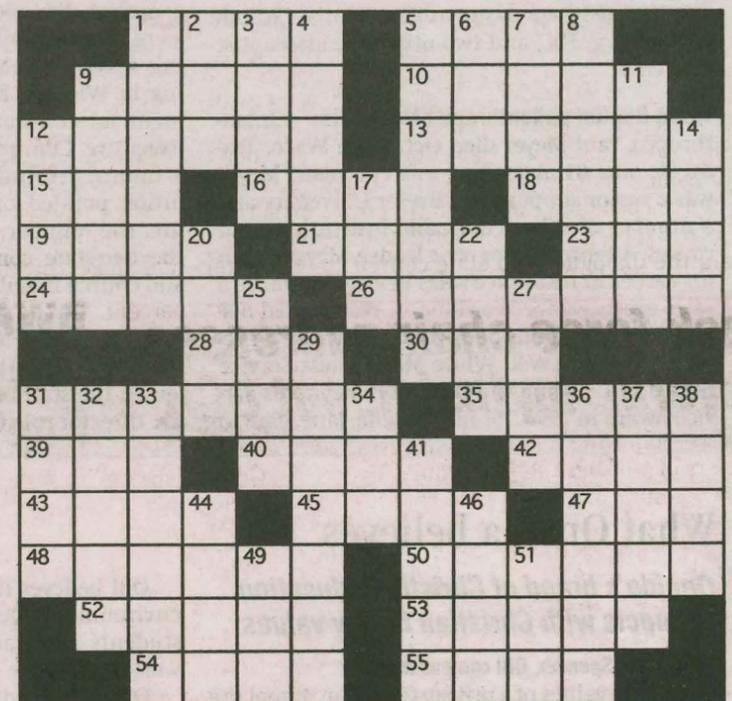


## Bible Crosswords

By Evelyn Boyington

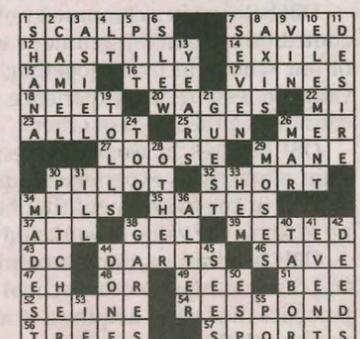
### Across

- 1 Revolutionary hero Nathan
- 5 Step made by faith
- 9 Age of Methuselah when he had a son: one hundred eighty- (Genesis 5:25)
- 10 Aerie dweller
- 12 This may include "or else"
- 13 Most faithful
- 15 "There stood before the river a \_\_\_ which had two horns" (Daniel 8:3)
- 16 Treasured, in a way
- 18 Assess
- 19 Herdsman of Tekoia whom God called to be a prophet
- 21 Rod and \_\_\_
- 23 Bishopric
- 24 Noted Quaker family, and others
- 26 Chooses
- 28 At odds (abbr.)
- 30 Songdom's "gal"
- 31 "The way of man is \_\_\_ and strange" (Proverbs 21:8)
- 35 Is diminished
- 39 "Go, sell the \_\_\_, and pay thy debt" (2 Kings 4:7)
- 40 He went searching for his father's lost donkeys
- 42 Neap, for one
- 43 "Incline not my heart to any \_\_\_ thing" (Psalm 141:4)
- 45 Sesquicentennial segment
- 47 Mature
- 48 Stern
- 50 Like-\_\_\_ (kindred spirit)
- 52 "The angels shall ... \_\_\_ the wicked from among the just" (Matthew 13:49)
- 53 Ezekiel saw a valley that was full of \_\_\_
- 54 Takes no action
- 55 "There shall come forth a rod out of the \_\_\_ of Jesse" (Isaiah 11:1)



- 4 Door direction
- 5 Colossians and Philippians, familiarly
- 6 What one lends
- 7 "The words of \_\_\_ the son of Jakeh, even the prophecy" (Proverbs 30:1)
- 8 "Do I seek to \_\_\_ men?" (Galatians 1:10)
- 9 "Let them be confounded and put to \_\_\_" (Psalm 35:4)
- 11 Fragrant compound
- 12 Sand, for one
- 14 Wooden pegs
- 17 Vitality
- 20 Twentieth-century English novelist
- 22 "His \_\_\_ also shall not wither" (Psalm 1:3)
- 25 LaCosta, and others
- 27 Apartment
- 29 "He had offered up \_\_\_ and supplications with strong crying" (Hebrews 5:7)
- 31 Those opposed
- 32 Splits
- 33 Mount of \_\_\_
- 34 \_\_\_ date
- 36 "Thou shalt also be ... a royal \_\_\_ in the hand of thy God" (Isaiah 62:3)
- 37 "These things, saith he which hath the sharp sword with two \_\_\_" (Revelation 2:12)
- 38 \_\_\_ money
- 41 "Two \_\_\_ of the first year for a sacrifice of peace" (Leviticus 23:19)
- 44 Israel's high priest had to descend from this tribe
- 46 Lose control
- 49 Soak flax
- 51 Compass dir.

### Last week's solution



## UNIVERSITY of the CUMBERLANDS

### Alumni and Friends Dinner

Come and enjoy fellowship with Alumni and other friends attending the 2009 Kentucky Baptist Convention Annual Meeting

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Dinner is free, but reservations are required.

To make reservations, call 606-539-4462 by Thursday, November 5, 2009.

## BAPTIST DIGEST

**Missouri Baptists delegate lawsuit discretion**—The Missouri Baptist Convention broadened authority of its executive board to resolve ongoing lawsuits against five formerly related entities at the convention's annual meeting Oct. 27. Messengers voted to authorize the board "to make any and all decisions and to take any and all actions with respect to the legal proceedings" in between annual meetings. The additional authority extends to ending the lawsuits, if the committee deems such action is in the convention's best interest. The Word & Way newspaper, Windermere Baptist Conference Center, the Missouri Baptist Foundation, Missouri Baptist University and The Baptist Home changed their charters in 2000 and 2001 to allow each to elect their own trustees. The MBC filed suit against the five in 2002.

**Roesel named NAMB 'ambassador'**—Charles Roesel has been appointed "presidential ambassador" by North American Mission Board Interim President Richard Harris. Roesel will represent NAMB at speaking commitments across North America for Harris, who has day-to-day executive responsibilities for the entity, and for the board's senior leadership team. He also will link the work of NAMB's ministry evangelism team with state conventions and associations. Roesel previously was pastor at First Baptist Church of Leesburg, Fla., and two other Florida Baptist churches.

**Texas Baptist philanthropist Meyer dies**—Philanthropist Paul Meyer died Oct. 25 in Waco, Texas. He was 81. A leading entrepreneur, Meyer was a major supporter of Baylor University and a number of other charitable institutions and causes. A central Texas civic leader, Meyer began his career in insurance sales before becoming a sales executive for Word Inc., a Waco-based distributor of religious books and music. Meyer received Baylor's W.R. White Meritorious Service Award in 1988 and the Herbert H. Reynolds Service Award in 1996. He and his wife, Jane, gave to

support and endow several scholarships and faculty positions. In 1988, the Meyers donated the lead gift for the school's basketball arena. A funeral was held Oct. 30, in the arena named for him. He is survived by his wife, five children and 15 grandchildren.

**MBTS honors former president**—Mark Coppenger, the former president of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo., recently was honored for his service to the school. In a ceremony, school officials unveiled a portrait of Coppenger, who led the seminary from 1995-99, to be hung in the seminary's library. Prior to the unveiling, Coppenger, who now is pastor of Evanston (Ill.) Baptist Church and professor of apologetics at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, brought a chapel service message, preaching on Matthew 3-4 about the importance of knowing Scripture and being able to apply it.

**Kansas-Nebraska Baptists honor exec**—Messengers to the recent Kansas-Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists annual meeting honored Executive Director Peck Lindsay, who is retiring Dec. 31 after nearly 40 years with the convention. Lindsay joined the convention staff in 1971 as director of missions and assumed the role of executive director in 1977. He and his wife, Sue, were honored with a reception after the opening session of the convention's annual meeting in Wichita, Kan. Roger Oldham, vice president for convention relations with the SBC's Executive Committee, presented Lindsay with a framed resolution of appreciation. The resolution pointed out that during Lindsey's tenure, the number of churches cooperating with the two-state convention has nearly doubled, and church membership increased by almost 50 percent. Also, total giving by Baptists in the two states increased by more than 450 percent. Bob Mills, the convention's director of missions who joined the staff in 1998, will assume the executive director role Jan. 1, 2010.

## What Oneida believes

**Oneida's brand of Christian education connects with Christian family values**

By Michael Spencer, OBI campus minister

Are the values of a private Christian school the same values held by Christian families who want a Christian education for their children?

That may seem like an odd question, but I've observed a significant change in Christian families over the past 10 years. Many are choosing to home school rather than send them to public or private Christian schools. The values of Christian parents have been affected by changes in society in the last 20 years. Many parents are reluctant to send their children to any sort of influence or activity that isn't home or church based.

A Christian school like Oneida needs to be in sync with the values of Christian parents. What are some of the values of Christian families that are important to us?

OBI believes in distinctively Christian education by Christian teachers, but on the highest level that prepares students for college and work.

OBI believes in a community of students, each contributing something unique to the character of our school. In living together, students learn valuable lessons and experience the rewards of considering the needs of others.

OBI believes in work and responsibility. We want students to experience independence and success in an environment that helps them grow up to know the value of work and honest efforts.

OBI believes in daily worship, evangelism and discipleship. No other school of our type approaches the task of helping a student grow spiritually with the same commitment as we do.

## This is Oneida



W.F. Underwood

OBI believes in diversity and a multi-cultural environment. Our students live and study with students from across the U.S. and around the world.

OBI believes in discipline and consequences, but also in common sense and forgiveness. We have structure, but we believe in flexibility and love.

OBI believes in extra-curricular activities to help students grow physically and socially.

OBI believes in challenging students to prepare for the future, but to begin living their future now through leadership and service opportunities.

Because of these values, OBI offers many things that some Christian parents may not be able to provide and that most public schools certainly do not provide. While our program doesn't have large amounts of money or expensive facilities, we have experience, vision, purpose and practice at working with students.

It is hard for any parent today to release a child into the "real world," but Christian parents know from Scripture that God is at work in the lives of young men and women. Being in a Christian boarding school environment can give them advantages that other students do not have.

It isn't the place of a school to tell parents their children "need" what they have to offer, but it is important for a school to connect with the values of parents who want their children to have opportunities and advantages. A unique school like Oneida will connect with many Christian parents' desires and goals.

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

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## Little is much when God is in it

**Man's life eternally altered thanks to Clear Creek grads**

Enjoy these highlights of a recent letter I received along with a gift for the college. I pray it will encourage you in your Kingdom service:

"Though this gift is small in amount, I realize that the small things of life often make major differences. I would like to share with you about my decision to give this gift.

"I grew up in church. My mother and father were very active members and we rarely missed a service. I had three older siblings that all made professions of faith at younger ages. I was the stubborn one.

"From a young age, I had a sufficient understanding of salvation to know that I needed Christ. But I continued to resist all the way through high school until I was a senior. By graduation, I was already accepted and enrolled for summer session at college and would be leaving home in less than two weeks. I would finally be away from my parents' and the church's constant influence. Now, where does Clear Creek figure into this?

"The church my family was involved in became somewhat of a training ground for students from

Clear Creek. The Sunday morning after my high school graduation, the pastor of the church, a Clear Creek student, asked if he could come by and visit with me later that week. When he arrived, we spent a little time making small talk and then he began to talk to me about salvation. With-

in an hour, I was kneeling at a piano bench in my parents' home where I asked Jesus to come into my life. I often look back on my life and wonder what would have happened to me had I left home without Christ. Since that time, Clear Creek has continued to touch my life through Clear Creek pastors who also have served in my current home church.

"To finish this story, it goes back to the beginning. The seemingly small gifts of service from each of those pastors from Clear Creek led to the salvation of a 17-year-old boy about to leave home. God still works through the small gifts to reach people. Everything belongs to Him and He will accomplish great things if we will trust Him with what He has blessed us with."

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

Clear Creek  
Chronicle

Donnie Fox

## President Obama signs bill extending hate-crimes protections

By Robert Marus

Washington—With the stroke of a pen Oct. 28, President Obama expanded federal hate-crimes laws to include sexual orientation and gender identity as protected categories, a goal for which gay-rights activists have been working for more than a decade.

Obama's action comes after both houses of Congress approved the provision over the objections of some conservative religious groups, who view it as the first step down a slippery slope toward abridging religious speech against homosexuality.

Supporters of the bill say it will make it easier for federal and local authorities to investigate violent crimes motivated by bias against the victim's sexual orientation, racial background, gender and other characteristics.

"Today's signing of the first major piece of civil-rights legislation to protect LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) Americans represents a historic milestone in the inevitable march towards equality,"

Joe Solmonese, president of the gay advocacy group Human Rights Campaign, said in a press release.

Since 1968, federal hate-crimes laws have provided extra protection for crimes motivated by a victim's religion or ethnic background. The new law expands those categories to include sexual orientation, gender identity and disability. It also provides additional resources to state and local law-enforcement officials, who investigate and prosecute the vast majority of bias-motivated crimes.

Most states already have hate-crime laws, and several dozen of them include protections for disability, gender and sexual orientation.

### Threat to Christians?

Religious groups opposed to the new federal law said it ultimately could lead to prosecution of traditional Christians for expressing their beliefs about homosexuality.

"It is my prayer that people of faith will

not be deterred from sharing God's truth about homosexuality because of this law," said Barrett Duke, vice president for public policy with the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. "Our nation needs that truth now more than ever."

"This law is a grave threat to the First Amendment because it provides special penalties based on what people think, feel, or believe," said Erik Stanley, senior counsel for the Alliance Defense Fund.

Stanley said some Christian ministers in other countries with hate-crimes laws have been charged for inciting hatred against gays by preaching. "ADF has clearly seen the evidence of where hate-crimes legislation leads when it has been tried around the world," he noted. "It paves the way for the criminalization of speech that is not deemed 'politically correct.'"

Supporters of the law say other countries that have prosecuted ministers under hate-crime legislation don't have the same free-speech and religious-freedom safe-

guards as the United States. They also point out that already existing hate-crimes laws on the books for more than 40 years have not led to legal restrictions on free speech regarding racial or religious matters.

"As an American, I know the protection of personal dignity and human rights is a principle that makes us that much stronger as a nation, and certainly does not stand at odds with freedom of expression," Derrick Harkins, pastor of Washington's Nineteenth Street Baptist Church, said in a joint statement with other Christian leaders supporting the bill earlier this year. "Passage of the Hate Crimes Bill will help to ensure the safeguards of the law for those who are victimized by acts of bias and hate."

The bill is named for Matthew Shepard, a homosexual college student murdered in 1998, and James Byrd, an African-American man dragged to his death while chained to a pickup truck in Jasper, Texas, also in 1998. (ABP)

With additional reporting by Baptist Press

### NATIONAL NOTES

**Schumer: Gay marriage in all 50 states**—Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., told a gay-rights group last week that same-sex marriage supporters "must not rest" until it is legalized in all 50 states. Rather than saying that each state should have the right to decide the definition of marriage, Schumer instead called for the repeal of the Defense of Marriage Act, a 1996 law that gives states the option of not recognizing a marriage from another state. Schumer, the third ranking member of the Senate, added he hopes soon to see the Senate "get rid of DOMA once and for all." He also said a bill that would repeal the military's Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy will be introduced in the coming weeks.

**Muslim teen convert returned to Ohio**—An Ohio teen who ran away to Florida because she feared her Muslim father after her Christian conversion was ordered by a judge to return to Ohio. Rifqa Bary, 17, was ordered back to the state on Oct. 23 by Judge Daniel Dawson of the 9th Judicial Circuit Court of Florida, the Columbus (Ohio) Dispatch reported. The Florida Department of Children and Families did not release details of the transfer to protect Bary's safety. She will be placed with a foster family. Bary's father has denied the teen's claims that he threatened to kill her after learning of her conversion. During the summer, the teen traveled to Orlando, Fla., after meeting the wife of a pastor on Facebook. A report by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement found no evidence of any abuse or threat against Bary and said her allegations are "based on her belief or understanding of the Islamic faith and/or Islamic law and custom."

**Congregations still giving, despite recession**—Despite the economic recession, a plurality of congregations reported an increase in donations in the first half of 2009, according to a new study. More than two-thirds of 1,500 congregations surveyed said fundraising has increased (37 percent) or held steady (34 percent), according to the joint study between the Lake Institute and the Alban Institute. Nearly 30 percent said giving had decreased in 2009, a significant uptick since 2008, when only 22 percent said giving had declined. Certain types of congregations have survived the recession better than others, according to the report: Congregations where attendance and finances have been growing over the past five years are more likely to have a growth in fundraising than "survival congregations," those in which attendance and finances have dropped by more than 10 percent over the past five years.

**eBay blocks auction for accused killer**—The online auction house eBay has halted a proposed auction of items that aimed to raise funds for the defense of the man charged in the May killing of abortion provider George Tiller. Dave Leach, an anti-abortion activist, said he had hoped to auction items to raise money for Scott Roeder, who was charged with first-degree murder in Tiller's death. Among the items Leach said supporters hoped to sell were a copy of the Army of God manual, an underground guidebook for anti-abortionists that describes how to shut down abortion clinics. Listings that "promote or glorify violence, hate, racial or religious intolerance," are not permitted, eBay said.

## Land tells D.C. leaders SBC opposes same-sex marriage

Washington—The Southern Baptist Convention's ethics entity strongly opposes the legalization of same-sex marriage in the District of Columbia for a variety of reasons, Richard Land told a government board in the nation's capital.

In written testimony submitted last week, the president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission told the D.C. Board of Elections and Ethics an effort to legalize same-sex marriage should be decided by a vote of the district's citizens and not "solely by legislative, executive or judicial bodies."

Land's comments were provided for a hearing by the elections board, which is considering whether to place on the ballot an initiative to preserve marriage as the union only of a man and a woman.

The hearing was held the same day a committee of the D.C. Council heard testimony on a bill to grant marriage rights to same-sex couples. Ten of the council's 13 members are sponsoring the proposal, which would become law without a vote by D.C. citizens.

Southern Baptists "have opposed same-sex marriage consistently," Land said in his testimony. Since 1996, messengers to the convention's annual meeting have approved five resolutions opposing the legalization of gay marriage and supporting one-man, one-woman marriage, he said.

The legalization of same-sex marriage in D.C. would harm families and society, Land told the elections board.

Legalizing same-sex marriage also likely would limit the expression of religious belief by those who oppose it, he pointed out.

Six states have legalized same-sex marriage—Connecticut, Iowa, Vermont, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine. Maine's citizens will decide Nov. 3 whether to overturn the state's law.

The D.C. Council voted in May to recognize same-sex marriages performed in other jurisdictions. The law enables homosexual couples living in D.C. to have wedding ceremonies in states where the practice is legal, and have those unions recognized by the district. (BP)

### J.H. Spencer Historical Society Annual Meeting

Nov. 9, 10-11:30 a.m.

Severns Valley Association office  
500 College Street, Elizabethtown

\*\*Everyone is invited\*\*

Featuring:

- Joseph Early  
assistant professor of theology  
Campbellsville University
- Stephen Wilson  
vice president of academic affairs  
Mid-Continent University

## Experts voice concerns in USCIRF report

By Adelle Banks

Washington—Religious freedom experts called for more specifics in the State Department's policies on international religious liberty, but welcomed a new report that highlights abuse faced by people of faith throughout the world.

Released by the State Department last week, the status report on religious freedom in 198 countries and territories pays particular attention to authoritarian governments that control religious expression or are hostile to religious minorities.

"President Obama has raised religious freedom in his speeches abroad without those sentiments being translated into concrete policy actions," said Leonard Leo, chair of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, "and our hope is that this report will be the administration's call to action."

The independent commission also disagrees with the State Department on the status of religious freedom in some countries. In particular, the USCIRF has called for Pakistan and Vietnam to be added to the State Department's list of "countries of particular concern."

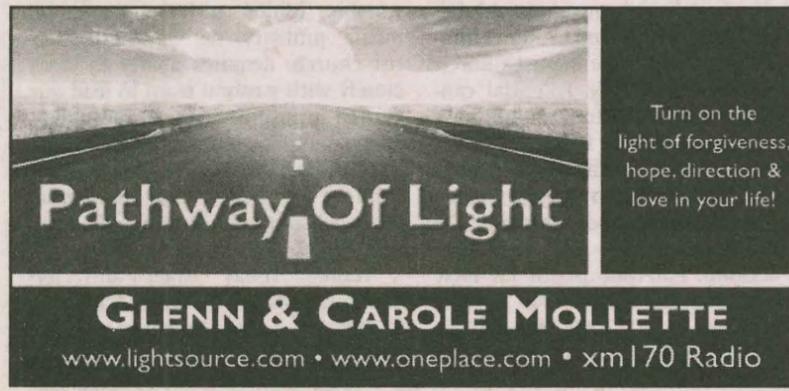
tries of particular concern."

The State Department report notes that "serious" and "significant" problems remain in those countries. Michael Posner, assistant secretary for the department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, told reporters he hopes new the list of "countries of particular concern" will be made public by January.

Thomas Farr, the first director of the State Department's Office of International Religious Freedom, said the report shows an improvement in U.S. policy on the issue, but more than incremental progress is needed.

"It is an approach that focuses on people who are being persecuted, as it should, but it tends to talk about cases rather than the structural problems that lead to persecution," said Farr, citing China as an example.

The report notes that China's "repression of religious freedom remained severe in Tibetan areas." It also said: "Citizens do not have the ability to bring legal action based on the constitution's guarantees of religious freedom." (RNS)



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## PLAN OF SALVATION

By Derek Coleman

My favorite childhood book was "Where the Wild Things Are." The movie version premiered last month. It tells the story of Max, a little boy who wears his wolf suit and causes all kinds of mischief. His behavior results in being sent to bed without any supper. Confined to his room, Max imagines a forest growing in which he travels to the land of the "Wild Things." Once there he commands them as their king and begins the "wild rumpus." Max soon finds his mischief-making very unsatisfying and heads back to the place where someone loves him best of all—home—where he finds supper waiting for him and it is still hot.

This childhood book illustrates how some come to faith in Christ. Each of us is engulfed in a "wolf suit" of sin (Romans 3:23). As such, some initially reject God's offer of redemption—they choose to rumpus. Unlike the mom, however, some believers try forcing the wolf-suited person to behave (receive Christ), which rarely, if ever, works.

What draws the boy back home is the "smell of supper." Likewise what draws a person to Christ is God's call of grace through His Holy Spirit. We cannot force anyone to receive the gospel, but God's call will draw him or her to receive it (John 6:44).

If you have a wolf-suited person in your life, be patient and allow God's Spirit to call them into a relationship with Him. I hope you'll use this wonderful childhood story to help a mischievous (lost) person find what he or she so desperately yearns for—God's love and forgiveness found only in Christ.

Derek Coleman is pastor of Erlanger Baptist Church

## MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **BRODHEAD**—Brodhead Church recently called **Jon Burdette** as associate pastor. He previously was associate pastor at Northside Church in Mount Vernon. **Ralph Baker** is pastor.

■ **CADIZ**—New Light Church will hold homecoming services Nov. 8 with **Bobby Melton**, director of missions for Christian County Association, as guest speaker. The church also will hold revival services Nov. 8-11, 6:30 p.m. with **Kent Workman** as evangelist. Donny Garner is pastor.

■ **GRAY**—Knox Association recently received Himyar Church and Indian Gap Church in Corbin as affiliated congregations. **Seymour Wattbarger** is director of missions.

## Spotlight on ...

## Elizabethtown



The Kentucky alumni chapter of New Orleans Theological Seminary will have a reunion luncheon Nov. 11, noon, at Severns Valley Church following the KBC annual meeting. For more information, contact **Ron Wilson** at ron.wilson@NEXTworldwide.org, or at (270) 991-6872.

## Cumberlands' wrestlers, Team USA win gold at Pan-Am Games

**Guadalajara, Mexico**—Five members of the University of the Cumberlands' women's wrestling team recently helped Team USA bring home the overall gold medal at the Junior Pan American Games in Guadalajara, Mexico.

The U.S. team grabbed the No. 1 spot by nabbing three gold medals, two silver medals and one bronze.

Two of the golds were won by UC's Gabrielle Henry and Ashley Shannon. Henry scored the top spot in the 48 kg weight class, while Shannon won the 44 kg bracket.

Two other Cumberlands' wrestlers medaled with Megan Agajanian and Christen Paysse each earning silver in the 67 kg and 72 kg weight classes, respectively. Even though she didn't earn a medal, Cianah Hee's seventh place finish helped se-



Gabrielle Henry



Ashley Shannon

cure the team's overall gold.

"It fills me with tremendous pride to know that our wrestlers contributed to bringing the Junior Pan American championship home for our country," said head women's wrestling coach Kip Flanik.

"Wrestling in Mexico was a new experience," Henry said. "We were all so very different but all there



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## November

5-7 Basic Training for Church Planters, Baptist Building, Louisville.

7 Creative Ministries 101 Workshops, First Baptist Church, Somerset.

9 KBC Mission Board Meeting, Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.

9 Kentucky Baptist Music Conference, Campbellsville University.

9 Kentucky Baptist Pastors Conference, Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.

9 Youth Ministers Fall Meeting, Northside Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.

9 J.H. Spencer Historical Society Annual Meeting, Severns Valley Association Office, Elizabethtown.

10 KBC Annual Meeting, Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.

13-15 All-State Junior High Choir, First Baptist Church, Richmond.

14 GA Jam, Campbellsville Baptist Church.

## December

14-15 KBC Mission Board Meeting, Baptist Building, Louisville.

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

for the same thing—and that was the gold."

"We were a little surprised to pull out the win," acknowledged Team USA coach Trevor Keifer. "We had some up-and-down matches, but they pulled through when they needed to. It's a great feeling to experience the joy the girls had in bringing home the title."

## UC earns NAIA honor

For the ninth straight year, the University of the Cumberlands athletics department has been recognized as one of 231 Champions of Character institutions for the 2008-09 school year by the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics.

The NAIA created Champions of Character with a mission to bring up a generation of students who

demonstrate respect, responsibility, integrity, servant leadership and sportsmanship in their everyday lives. According to the NAIA, "The program is dedicated to the principle that character is a choice and that being a champion is not just about winning, but making good decisions consistently in daily life."

"We are very pleased to be named a Champions of Character institution for 2008-09," said Cumberlands Athletic Director Randy Vernon. "Our administration, coaches and athletes are very serious about the five core values that make up the Champions of Character program and get great pleasure in taking part in all of our activities built around this program. We look forward in continuing to improve ourselves in each area."

## CLASSIFIED ADS

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**RESOURCES:** LongviewNET LLC provides Web site help for churches and ministries. Visit [www.longviewnet.com](http://www.longviewnet.com) for details.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of music (Hopkinsville/Clarksville area). Express interest or request information at [trentonbaptist@bellsouth.net](mailto:trentonbaptist@bellsouth.net), or Trenton Baptist Church, PO Box 191, Trenton, KY 42286.

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister of youth, First Baptist Church, Richmond, Va. Candidates must hold bachelor's and master's of divinity degrees. In addition, at least five years relevant experience is preferred. Visit [www.fbcrichmond.org](http://www.fbcrichmond.org) (youth ministry section) for additional details or to send resumé with cover letter.

**SEEKING:** Part-time worship minister at FBC, Grayson, Ky. Responsible for leading blended-style congregational worship and coordinating praise team. Please send resumé to Paul Schmidt, PO Box 577, Grayson, KY 41143; or e-mail [fbcgrayson@windstream.net](mailto:fbcgrayson@windstream.net).

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister of music for a vibrant Southern Baptist church (running between 700-800 on Sunday morning) in beautiful North-central Arkansas. Church needs a versatile musician and a mature follower of Christ who can lead worship in traditional and blended services and is skilled in media ministry. Send resumé to [esbc@suddenlinkmail.com](mailto:esbc@suddenlinkmail.com); or East Side Baptist Church, 718 E Ninth St., Mountain Home, AR 72653, Attn: David Ethredge.

**SEEKING:** Senior pastor, with excellent preaching ability and a heart for pastoral care, for Trinity Baptist Church of Moultrie, Ga. Located in southwest Georgia, our warm and welcoming 250-member church, dually aligned with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and the Southern Baptist Convention, has a tradition of community ecumenism, an active committee system, a deacon family ministry (we ordain both male and female deacons), a strong Sunday school program, and a dedication to missions. As church administrator, our new pastor should take a hands-on role in these ministries. Our worship style would best be described as traditional-blended, though our quarterly youth services have introduced our congregation to a more experiential worship style. Our prospective pastor should be a people-person and encourager to the church's well-established staff. Direct all inquiries and resúmes to the Pastor Search Committee, Trinity Baptist Church, Moultrie, GA 31768; or to [tpastorsearch@gmail.com](mailto:tpastorsearch@gmail.com). [www.trinityofmoultrie.org](http://www.trinityofmoultrie.org).

**SEEKING:** Full-time worship pastor for Walnut Memorial Baptist Church in Owensboro, Ky. Complete job description can be viewed at [www.walnutmemorial.org](http://www.walnutmemorial.org). Please send resúmes to [sjrsmith@wildblue.net](mailto:sjrsmith@wildblue.net).

**SEEKING:** Pianist for blended-style worship at FBC Fisherville. Work with choir and praise team. For more information, contact Jim Brooks, (502) 742-2440; or send resumé to [jvbrook02@yahoo.com](mailto:jvbrook02@yahoo.com).

**SEEKING:** Bivocational pastor. Please send resumé to West Broadway Baptist Church, 8420 Six Mile Lane, Louisville, KY 40220; or e-mail to [wbbc@unidial.com](mailto:wbbc@unidial.com).

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister to preschool and children families, Hurstbourne Baptist Church. Minimum of a bachelor's degree and three years part-time experience required. Send resumé to: Minister to Preschool and Children Families Search Committee, 8800 Shelbyville Road, Louisville, KY 40222.

**SEEKING:** Full-time senior adult pastor who will disciple our senior adults, and lead our deacon and CAREnet ministries for Living Hope Baptist Church in Bowling Green, Ky. Potential candidates for this position should submit their resúmes by Dec. 1, 2009, to: Richard Carwile, Living Hope Baptist Church, 1805 Westen Avenue, Bowling Green, KY 42104; or electronically to [rcarwile@lhbg.org](mailto:rcarwile@lhbg.org).

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for First Baptist Church, Sonora, Ky. Submit resumé by Oct. 30, 2009, by e-mail to [fbsonora@bbtel.com](mailto:fbsonora@bbtel.com); or mail to PO Box 187, Sonora, KY 42776.

**SEEKING:** Part-time youth minister. Send resumé to Eastern Gate Baptist Church, PO Box 6686, Shepherdsville, KY 40265.

**SEEKING:** Director of missions for Green Valley Baptist Association in Henderson, Ky. Submit resúmes to DOM Search Committee, Zion Baptist Church, 8158 State Route 351 E, Henderson, KY 42420-9406.

**SEEKING:** Full-time Southern Baptist pastor who loves the Lord and has a passion for the lost. Please send cover letter (required) and resumé to New Banklick Baptist Church, 10719 Banklick Road, Walton, KY 41094, Attn: Pastor Search; or by e-mail to [nbbc.pastorsearch@fuse.net](mailto:nbbc.pastorsearch@fuse.net).

**SEEKING:** Full-time Southern Baptist pastor with a passion for the lost. Please send a cover letter (required) and resumé to First Baptist Church of East Bernstadt, PO Box 266, East Bernstadt, KY 40729, Attn: Pastor Search. Deadline for resúmes is Nov. 6, 2009.

**SEEKING:** Full-time associate pastor/worship leader with emphasis on music ministry for Southern Baptist church. Requires ability to work closely with pastoral team to lead our church in inspiring music and praise. Send resumé to: Morganfield First Baptist Church, 200 North Morgan St., Morganfield, KY 42437. E-mail: [morganfieldfbcb@bellsouth.net](mailto:morganfieldfbcb@bellsouth.net). Deadline for resúmes: Nov. 1, 2009.

**TOURS:** 11-day Israel and Jordan tour, March 21 from Nashville, \$2,788. For a color brochure, contact Pastor Jack Studie, (270) 889-7604; or [jstudie@aol.com](mailto:jstudie@aol.com). Our 18th pilgrimage.

## Professor serves God, country

By Keith Collier  
Southwestern Seminary

Fort Worth, Texas—This fall, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary professor John Laing will trade in his academic regalia for a military uniform. He will join approximately 3,600 citizen-soldiers in the 72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team as part of the largest Texas Army National Guard deployment since World War II.

Lt. Col. Laing, who serves as assistant professor of systematic theology and philosophy at Southwestern's Houston campus, will serve as the senior chaplain for the brigade during the yearlong mission. The unit will spend nine months overseas most likely in Iraq, although the troops may be redirected to Afghanistan if needed. With Iraq preparing for national elections in early 2010, the 72nd will serve to aid the country during the change to self-governance.

"Our current mission involves managing the transition of authority to the Iraqi government and security forces," Laing said. Their headquarters will be the commanding control for the International Zone, sometimes referred to as the Green Zone, where troops will handle detainee operations and convoy security.

Laing, whose military career spans 23 years and two previous deployments, will provide guidance and supervision over the chaplains within the brigade and serve as an expert on religious issues in the area of operations. Stephen Missick, one of the chaplains under his supervision, graduated from Southwestern in May and was commissioned in a ceremony following the commencement. Laing has had the privilege of knowing Missick as both a student in his classroom as well as a chaplain's assistant within the Texas Army National Guard.

"My primary responsibility is to provide the spiritual care for the soldiers assigned to the brigade," Laing said. "Beyond that, I'm also an advisor on ethical, moral and spiritual issues to the brigade commander."

During previous deployments, he served as a liaison between commanding officers and local religious leaders such as Muslim Imams and other clerics.

Laing's journey to faith started shortly after he enlisted in the Army at the age of 17. During Basic Training, he began attending chapel through the encouragement of some of his fellow soldiers.

"Basic Training breaks down the pride, so that contributes to one's receptivity of the gospel," Laing said.

When he returned home from Basic Training, he began visiting churches in various denominations. He began reading the Bible on his own and found himself at a point where he wanted to believe its message but felt he could not.

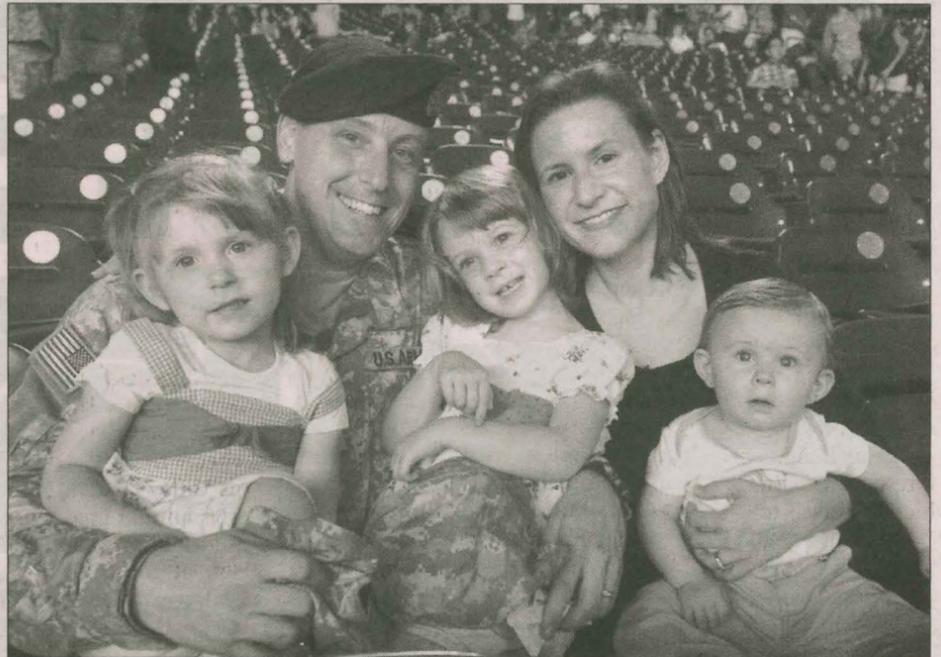
"So, I prayed to a God I wasn't sure existed and asked Him to help me believe," Laing said. "And as I continued to read the Bible and pray and go to different churches to worship, over the course of 3 months or so, I went from not believing to believing."

"When people ask me how I got saved, I say that I honestly believe it was through the work of the Holy Spirit through the reading of God's word that faith came. I became receptive to God's work in my life through Basic Training and that time period in my life, but I'd say I got saved through just reading God's word and the Holy Spirit convincing me of it's truth."

Soon after his conversion, Laing began sharing his newfound faith with fellow soldiers. As reconnaissance scouts, his unit rarely saw chaplains. Eventually, he began leading worship services for his platoon, and over a two-year span, about 90 percent of his 30-man unit became Christians.

Sensing God's call to ministry, he served for a year as a chaplain's assistant. Since that time, he has served as a chaplain in the National Guard in North Carolina, Kentucky, Kansas and Texas.

With experience as a soldier as well as chaplain on two previous deployments, Laing believes God has uniquely prepared



FAMILY John Laing with his wife, Stefana, and three children: Sophia, Sidney and Alasdair.

him for his current responsibilities. Laing served overseas in Kosovo during Operation Joint Guardian and at home during Operation Noble Eagle as part of post-9/11 duties for the Department of Homeland Security.

When asked how his present deployment compares to previous ones, Laing said, "Honestly, I think the biggest one is the stress of a legitimate combat environment will create more situations where counseling might be necessary."

Laing was initially surprised by the great need for counseling soldiers during deployments but realizes many are coping with personal issues back home. Marriage

difficulties have proven to be the most prevalent.

"The greatest need for prayer, apart from the salvation of our soldiers, is for their marriages," Laing said. "Deployment is very difficult on marriages. Even combat issues notwithstanding, when we were in Kosovo, I would say a fair estimate would be that roughly 40 percent of the people who were married had some kind of marriage difficulties over the course of the year that we were overseas. And that's a pretty significant number."

"So I do a lot of marriage counseling, and, of course, in doing counseling, I can bring my faith in and share with them how faith in Christ can transform the marriage relationship, and, of course, consequently, their own life—they can receive salvation and forgiveness."

"The chapel service is certainly a very important part of my ministry, but I've come to realize that counseling is another way of being able to share my faith with soldiers who will not come to chapel but, when they're desperate, will come talk to a chaplain."

Laing appreciates the prayers and encouragement for him and his family. Recognizing the difficulties associated with being separated from his wife and three children for nearly a year, he trusts in the Lord's sovereignty and seeks to serve God and country as he offers hope amidst the crucible of combat.



PRAYER  
LTC John Laing, a Southwestern Seminary professor and Texas Army National Guard chaplain, gives the benediction during the 72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team deployment ceremony at Minute Maid Park in Houston Oct. 4.



GIFT George Beverly Shea received a warm welcome from inmates at Angola Prison, where he donated his 100th birthday gift from the Billy Graham Association—a Rodgers organ—to the prison's Trudy Chapel. Shea, who joined the Billy Graham evangelistic team in 1947, has sung in front of more than 210 million people attending crusades. He has 58 RCA recordings, 10 Grammy nominations and a 1965 Grammy for the album "Southland Favorites."

## Shea gives Angola Prison 100th birthday gift

By Marilyn Stewart  
Louisiana Baptist Convention

Angola, La.—The familiar voice of George Beverly Shea, still rich at 100 years of age, filled the prison chapel with the old redemption story that radically changes lives. Every eye in the 800-seat room at the Louisiana State Penitentiary in Angola was on him.

Shea, the musical face of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association for six decades, was at the maximum security prison to pass along a Rodgers 3 manual draw knob organ he had received in honor of his 100th birthday Feb. 1.

The organ was from the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. Franklin Graham presented it to Shea at his 100th birthday party and told him the organ one day would be given to the prison.

"Franklin said the organ would be mine as long as I'm alive," Shea told the crowd. "But every night, on my pillow, I would think about it."

Shea told the crowd he decided to go ahead and give the organ to the prison cha-

pel because he didn't want to miss out on the joy of giving it away.

The Graham organization's relationship with Angola began when Franklin Graham preached a one-day evangelistic event there three years ago. Graham subsequently raised money to build chapels at Camp F, not far from the death row cellblock, and at B-Line, the community for prison staff members and their families.

Inmates who are trained musicians will play the instrument during worship services at Tudy Chapel, the largest of five chapels in the different units making up the penitentiary.

"It is an honor to sit behind the Rodgers organ," inmate Gary Landry said. "It is like sitting in the seat of a Mercedes car. It is the top of the line."

"The fact that the organ was given by the legendary George Beverly Shea whom I loved and followed as a youth is very surreal," inmate Wayne Guidry said. "It is an honor to play an instrument that is one of the most well-made and most expensive instruments that I will ever lay my hands on."

Shea sang such favorites as "I Walked Today Where Jesus Walked" and "In Times Like These," but when he sang his signature song, "I'd Rather Have Jesus," hands went up in praise and amens echoed around the room.

Shea told the crowd of writing the tune to "I'd Rather Have Jesus" at age 23 at his mother's request. The son of a Methodist minister, Shea was born in 1909 in Ontario, Canada.

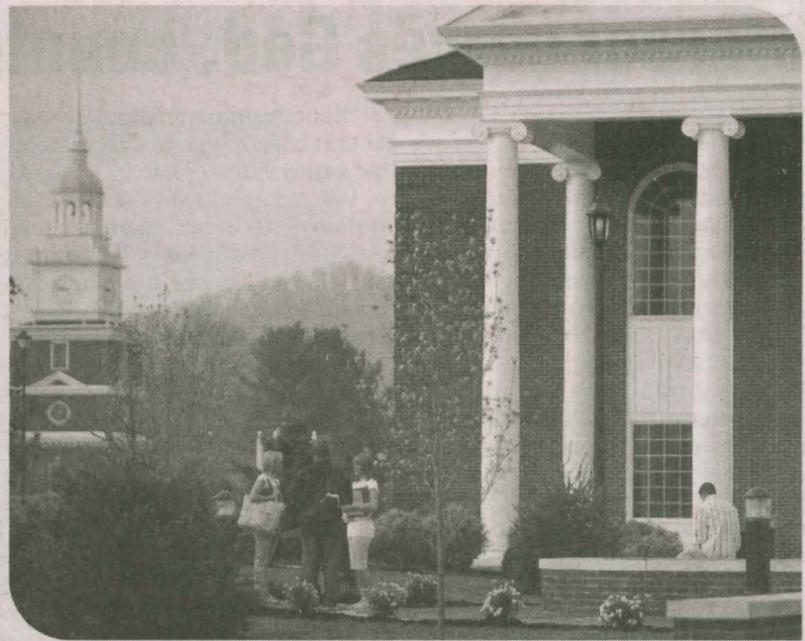
John Innes, organist for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association for 40 years, accompanied Shea on the Rodgers organ.

Between songs, Shea told anecdotes from his long career, such as the time he placed second to a yodeler in a singing contest. Shea quipped about his feminine-sounding first name, saying he received an invitation once to join a beauty contest, with the instructions to "be sure and bring your bathing suit."

Shea challenged the inmates with a favorite quote, "What I know about God is little, but what I do know has changed my life." (BP)

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At University of the Cumberlands, our students' aspirations are as tall as the mountains that surround our campus. Students like being accountable in small, supportive classes. They put themselves in the middle of everything – building homes through the Mountain Outreach Program, teaching English in China for the summer, competing in athletics, making music – and becoming leaders who will change the world through faith, service, and commitment.



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UC offers a quality education in a wide range of academic subjects. Students can enjoy a diverse student body and unique ministry opportunities, as well as competitive sports programs, fine arts and social events. My involvement in missions as a student at UC ignited my passion for evangelism and missions.

**Richard Harris**, DMin, Class of 1970  
Senior Strategist, Missions Advancement Team,  
North American Mission Board  
of the Southern Baptist Convention



God began to grab my heart for global missions while I sat in a History of Christian Missions class in the early 1980s. Traveling to Israel with Professor Milton Murphy, a former SBC missionary, only strengthened my interest. Little did I know then that God was starting a process that would affect the rest of my life.

**Chuck Lawless**, PhD., Class of 1985  
Dean, Billy Graham School of Missions,  
Evangelism and Church Growth  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary



Some of the most formative years I had in ministry occurred during my days at UC. I made friendships that last to this day, both with fellow students and professors. The administration went beyond the call of duty to insure that my needs were met. I can truly say that I owe much of where I am today to UC.

**Bill Henard**, DMin, PhD., Class of 1977  
Senior Pastor, Porter Memorial Baptist Church, Lexington, Kentucky  
President, Kentucky Baptist Convention 2007-2008  
First Vice President, Southern Baptist Convention 2008-2009  
Chair, Board of Trustees, LifeWay Christian Resources



My UC education was a vital part of the foundation I needed in preparation for ministry. I look back with deep appreciation for my time there. I am especially grateful for the men and women who invested their time and energy as instructors in the classroom and in my life's path.

**Paul Chitwood**, PhD., Class of 1992  
Senior Pastor, First Baptist Church of Mt. Washington, Kentucky  
President, Kentucky Baptist Convention 2005-2006  
Chair, Board of Trustees, International Mission Board  
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