

Shine
like
stars
in the
world
Philippians 2:15

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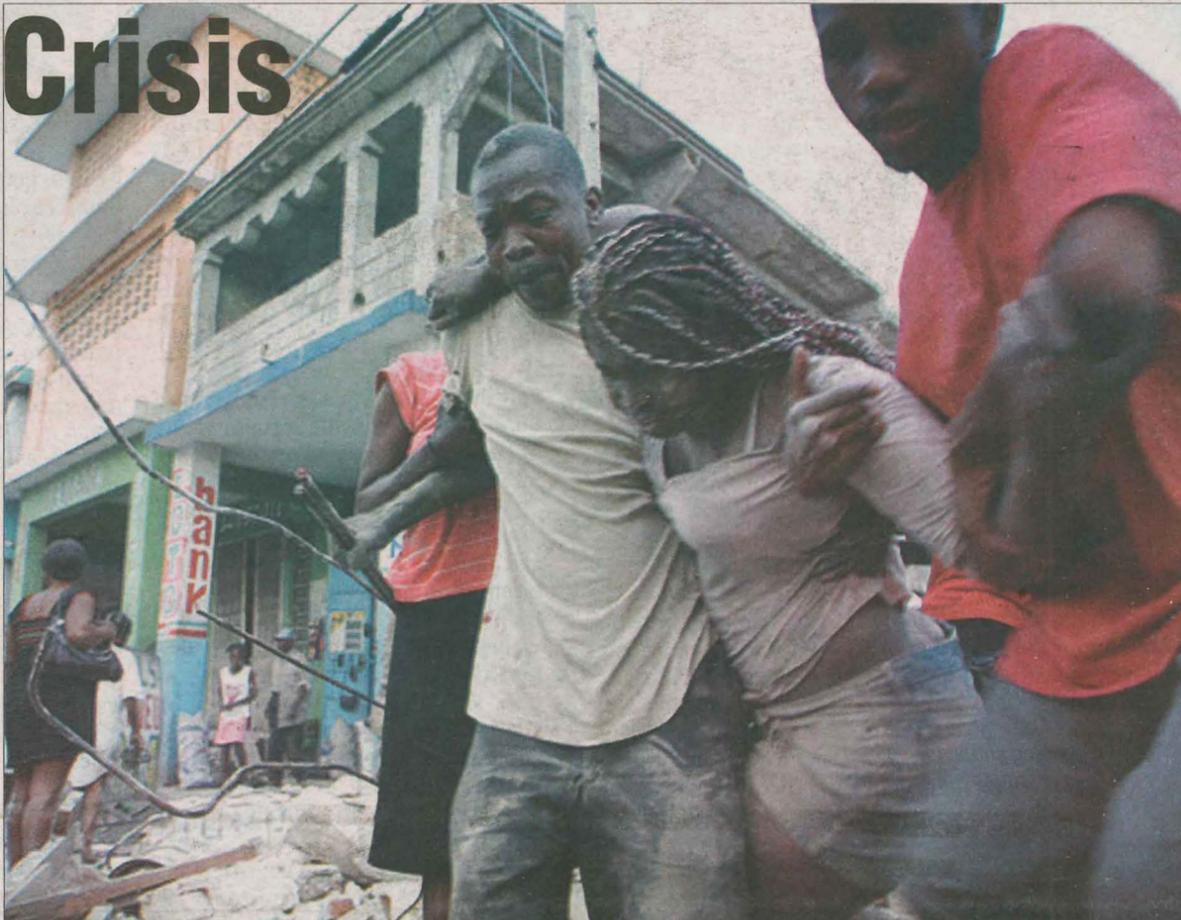
Baptist relief teams assess needs, while Ky. Baptists 'on alert'

Port-au-Prince, Haiti—Numerous Baptist groups have mobilized to assess disaster relief needs after the largest earthquake in more than 200 years rocked Haiti the evening of Jan. 12.

The initial Southern Baptist disaster relief efforts are being led by the Florida Baptist Convention, who have had ministry relationships in Haiti for more than 20 years and currently have six staff members who live and work in the country, according to Jim Brown, U.S. director for Baptist Global Response. The International Mission Board does not have long-term personnel stationed in the country.

Meanwhile, Kentucky Baptists are on standby to respond when called upon. Last week, the North American Mission Board's disaster relief office organized an emergency consultation with state disaster relief directors to coordinate response to the catastrophe, Brown reported.

An assessment team organized by Baptist Global Response, IMB, NAMB and state convention disaster relief directors traveled to Haiti
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PULLED TO SAFETY Two men pull a woman from the rubble of a collapsed building shortly after a 7.0 magnitude earthquake struck the island nation of Haiti last week. The quake has displaced millions on the already-impoorished island. Numerous Baptist groups are working to provide relief and recovery aid for Haiti's residents. (IMB photo)

For more on the crisis in Haiti and the Baptist response to last week's deadly earthquake, including how you can help through monetary donations, turn to page 6.



Churches see ministry boom from Fort Knox soldier surge

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

Radcliff—Whether expanding their children's outreach, helping recruits relax or offering military families a chance to air grievances, Kentucky Baptist churches near Fort Knox are stepping up ministry in the midst of a population boom.

"We've about outgrown some of our facilities," said Gregg Curtis, pastor of Stithton Baptist Church. The congregation is contemplating a \$300,000 facelift that will include a new welcome center and a remodeled fellowship hall.

"Our children's church is running about 50 kids; a year ago it was about 20," Curtis added. "The room is about maxed out."

"We see the growth in Fort Knox as folks who will be part of our community," said Christian Burton, pastor of Valley View Baptist Church in nearby Vine Grove. "If we're going to have 3,000 to 5,000 soldiers coming in, we need to pay attention to that."

Driven by changes directed by the federal Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, Fort Knox's population is expected to increase by nearly 1,400 soldiers this year.

Military family members will add another 3,000, said Anne Torphy, the post's media relations officer. Counting civilians and contractors, the boost to the overall population will be nearly 5,200.

The largest contingent is about 3,500 soldiers with the 3rd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, from Fort Hood, Texas. Seventy percent of those soldiers already have transferred to Kentucky.

The activity will step up in June when a new human resources center is scheduled to open. It will employ 4,400 soldiers and civilians, Torphy said.

In addition to expanding its Sunday school rooms, last May Stithton Baptist hired Campbellsville University graduate Priscilla Janes as its children's ministry director.

□ See *Churches see ministry boom from surge* ... *Page 3*



'BOLD' OUTREACH ■ Above: A group of Fort Knox soldiers awaits a meal at an Operation Bold Knight event last month at First Baptist Church of Brandenburg. ■ Right: Soldiers move through the chow line, piling their plates high with pizza. First Baptist, Brandenburg, hosts an Operation Bold Knight event once every three months for soldiers stationed at nearby Fort Knox. The events often involve a meal, a worship service and a time of prayer for the servicemen. (Photos courtesy of First Baptist, Brandenburg)



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Find It Here ad campaign expected to reach more than 8 in 10 Kentuckians

Louisville—An advertising campaign that is part of Kentucky Baptists' Find It Here door-to-door evangelism initiative is expected to reach approximately 85 percent of the adult population in Kentucky with a gospel message this spring.

The statewide campaign will use a 30-second TV spot produced by the North American Mission Board for three weeks leading up to Easter to direct viewers to the FindItHere.com Web site. The site features the stories of individuals who have found hope, purpose, peace and life through a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Radio spots and billboards also will be used in some locations.

"Kentucky Baptists are pulling out the stops to reach our state this spring," Kentucky Baptist Convention Communications Director Robert Reeves said. "In this time of recession, war and cultural confusion, we have an important message of hope for people and are looking forward to this opportunity to connect with the people of our state."

Reeves said Southern Baptists will be spending more than \$182,000 on the campaign in Kentucky, using funds from the KBC, NAMB, Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union and Baptist state conventions in states surrounding Kentucky that will impact the border areas.

The advertising campaign will provide important "air support" for the 50,000 volunteers from Kentucky Baptist churches who will be delivering a bag containing a brochure that uses the Find It Here theme to more than 4.1 million Kentucky households starting in March, he noted.

Reeves said the campaign was put together by the Van Winkle and Associates advertising firm of Atlanta. The firm was contracted by NAMB to handle an advertising buy which will exceed \$1.8 million nationwide.

In Kentucky, the campaign is designed to reach 85 percent of the adult population with the message at least three and a half times during the period. Reeves said the number of times an individual sees the spot will vary based on his or her specific location and viewing habits.

Viewership in Eastern Kentucky may be somewhat higher due to a \$30,000 grant for media provided by Kentucky WMU. Those funds, made possible because Kentucky WMU exceeded its \$1.1 million goal for the Eliza Broadus Offering last year, are being used to supplement the broadcast television purchases with a cable TV buy.

Part of the advertising buy also is being used to purchase billboards and radio time in Spanish to help reach Kentucky's Hispanic population.

"One of the greatest things about the entire Find It Here emphasis is the way it demonstrates the power of Baptist cooperative efforts in putting love in action," Reeves explained. "Baptists are getting to see their Cooperative Program, Annie Armstrong Easter Offering and Eliza Broadus Offering for State Missions directly at work in their own communities in a very direct and tangible way, which is exciting."

Reeves said the total advertising campaign is expected to be strengthened by churches that have TV and radio ministries of their own by incorporating the Find It Here spots into their broadcasts. The ads are available to download for free in the "God's Plan for Sharing" section of the oneMISSION.tv Web site.

The Find It Here TV spot features three people telling snippets of their life stories—a woman whose husband died, a man who lost his job and another man who still felt empty despite success and wealth. Each shares that they finally found peace through a relationship with Jesus Christ. The spot ends by directing the viewer to the Find It Here Web site.

At the site, which is available in English and Spanish, visitors will be able to read more about the Christian faith, use a search feature to find a Southern Baptist church near them, access a phone number to call for spiritual help, or download a free e-book.

More information about the Find It Here evangelism initiative in Kentucky can be found at www.KyBaptist.org/FindItHere.

Cumberlands grad named one of 10 So. Baptist pastors to watch in 2010

By Daphne Baird
University of the Cumberlands

Oklahoma City—The Oklahoma Baptist Messenger has named University of the Cumberlands alumnus Tony Merida as one of its "10 SBC Pastors to Watch in 2010."

The newspaper, the news service of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, ranked Merida, who is the teaching pastor at Temple Baptist Church in Hattiesburg, Miss., No. 3 on its list.

The accompanying story commended Merida on his recently published book, "Faithful Preaching: Declaring Scripture with Responsibility, Passion, and Authenticity." According to the Baptist Messenger, the book "has gained wide acclaim as one of the best and most accessible books on preaching available to date."

The article also praised Merida's presence in the pulpit. "His sermons are notable for their verse-by-verse orientation and penetrating applications," the story noted.

Baptist Messenger Executive Editor Douglas Baker, who wrote the article, said he combed through news analyses and reports on the Internet and other sources to research young Southern Baptist Convention pastors whose work and life show great promise.

"We attempted to make the selections for the list as quantitative as possible," he explained. "We looked all across the SBC for young pastors who were attracting notice at a regional and national level."

Baker said that Merida fit the search criteria, describing him as the motivational pastor of a thriving church, who employs new approaches, seeks ecumenical community involvement and has created a mentorship program that extends beyond the boundaries of the congregation.

When asked about his inclusion on the Baptist Messenger's Top 10 list, Merida said he was shocked to be included with the others on the list, most of whom he knows.

"It is humbling and an honor to be named with people like J.D. Greear, Matt Chandler, David Platt and others. It's encouraging and uplifting," Merida said. "However, I try not to make too much of it, because someone else could create another list next week."

"I didn't know anyone was watching. Now, I'll have to behave," he remarked with a laugh.

Kentucky couple leads American Samoa relief effort

Happy Valley, American Samoa—Former Kentucky Baptist Convention disaster relief associate Larry Koch and his wife, Elaine, are serving as disaster relief volunteers in American Samoa through April.

Following the Sept. 29 tsunami that killed 31 people on the South Pacific island, the North American Mission Board began a disaster relief effort on the island that has run continuously since mid-October. The Kochs are serving as volunteer coordinators for the effort.

"The effort could continue at least a year from now, or it could even be many years," said Terry Henderson,



HOMETOWN HONOREE University of the Cumberlands' graduate Tony Merida, pictured here speaking at the school's 2007 Spring Awakening Revival, recently was named one of 10 young SBC pastors to watch in 2010 by the Oklahoma Baptist Messenger. He is the teaching pastor at Temple Baptist Church in Hattiesburg, Miss.

Many within the Cumberlands' community likely remember Merida as a Barboursville native who came to campus on a baseball scholarship. Although he grew up in church, it was not until his sophomore year in college that he surrendered his life to Jesus Christ.

One friend's witness

Merida credited teammate Stephen Brown as the greatest Christian influence he met at the UC campus.

"He was a second baseman, and I was a shortstop, so we were together when we played," Merida said. "We were also weight-lifting partners, so we spent a lot of time together."

Merida recalled that he did not always respond readily to Brown's Christian enthusiasm. "He would literally pound on my door on Sunday mornings—sometimes for as long as 30 minutes—to get me to go to church," Merida said.

Merida credited his old friend and teammate with taking him to a meeting of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and leading him to Christ. Many people at Cumberlands, like Brown and Merida's roommate Kenny McKinney had a profound effect on the young pastor, he said. "Their grace and humility just blew me away. They were the first Christians I knew who were a part of my world—sports and college."

"It is amazing to see how God has been at work in Tony's life," noted Rick Fleenor, Cumberlands' chapel dean and assistant to the president

for church relations, who once led an accountability group for Merida and others. "It was great to watch him grow deeper in his relationship with God and to see his passion develop for studying Scripture and reaching people for Christ. It's been wonderful to follow his ministry and see how God continues to use him."

As a young Christian on the Cumberlands campus, Merida said he sought to learn all he could and to discover God's will for his life. He got involved in Bible study groups, "looking up words and asking a lot of dumb questions," he recalled.

Merida said he was called to preach shortly after accepting Christ. He often would preach at collegiate and youth events, as well as summer camps like Centrifuge and Crosspoint.

When Merida heard Jim Shaddix of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary speak at Cumberlands using an expository preaching style, Merida said he knew he had found his calling. "It was a real turning point—I wanted to do what he was doing and learn from him."

In January 2000, Merida became a student at New Orleans Seminary, earning a two master's degrees and a doctorate. He also was called to lead his first church, Kenner Baptist Church in New Orleans.

Merida also was offered the position of chapel dean at the seminary, a position previously held by his mentor Shaddix.

Merida became teaching pastor at Temple Baptist Church, a congregation of approximately 3,500 members, in 2007. He also continues to teach part time as a ministry-based faculty member at NOBTS.

"We are both humbled and blessed by how God has been using alumni, like Dr. Tony Merida," said University of the Cumberlands President James Taylor. "In addition to the thousands of our alumni who faithfully perform volunteer ministry or serve as pastors and missionaries, ... God is using a number of Cumberland alumni as key (Baptist) leaders."

Last year, Merida and his wife, Kimberly, adopted four siblings from Ukraine, James, Angela, Jana and Victoria, who range in age from 5 to 10. Merida currently is writing a book on orphan adoption called "Orphanology," with Rick Morton. Merida said he hopes the book will be published later this year.

a relief effort focused mainly on water purification. During that phase, Southern Baptists helped purify more than 7,000 gallons of water.

Henderson said the teams now are shifting to home-repair work, which includes roofing, painting and other construction work.

"God opened the door and we felt like it was something we needed to walk through. When God opens doors, you need to walk through them," said Koch, who served as the KBC's disaster relief associate for 10 years. Both Larry and Elaine have been involved as disaster relief volunteers since 1988.

Appellate court rules Grayson Co. can use Ten Commandments in courthouse display

Cincinnati—In a 2-1 decision, a federal appellate court ruled last week that Grayson County can use the Ten Commandments in a display of “foundational” historic documents.

The Associated Press reported Jan. 14 that the Sixth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals vacated a 2008 decision by U.S. District Judge Joseph McKinley that barred the display because of its primarily religious intent.

In contrast, Judge David McKeague wrote in the majority opinion that Grayson County Fiscal Court minutes showed that county officials considered the courthouse display, which included copies of the Declaration of Independence and Mayflower Compact, historic and not religious.

Joining McKeague in the majority decision was U.S. District Judge Karl Forester of Lexington.

The Sixth Circuit, which includes Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio and Tennessee, made a similar ruling in 2005 regarding another display of documents, this time in Mercer County.

The Lexington Herald-Examiner quoted William Sharp, attorney for the ACLU in Kentucky, as saying, “We’re disappointed with the decision.” Sharp added that an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court is being discussed with the two Grayson County residents who joined the ACLU in filing the original complaint in 2001.

In recent years displays in McCleary and Pulaski counties were ruled unconstitutional by the Sixth Circuit and U.S. Supreme Court. Similar displays in other Kentucky courthouses also have come under fire.

In their rulings, judges noted that the Commandments were displayed alone before the other documents were added. This, according to U.S. Supreme Court Justice David Souter, indicated the display was for a “predominantly religious purpose.”

In her dissenting opinion in last week’s case before the Sixth Circuit, Judge Karen Nelson Moore described Grayson County’s claimed purpose that the display was historic in nature, as “a sham.”

“Although the Supreme Court has noted that the Ten Commandments have some historical value, an objective observer reviewing these minutes and their context in the light most favorable to the County would rightly conclude that the Fiscal Court’s predominant purpose in erecting the display was not secular,” Moore writes.

“The evidence from these meetings clearly indicates that the predominant purpose was to post the Ten Commandments as a religious text and that the additional, ‘historical documents’ were added merely to avoid violating the Constitution.”

Grayson County Judge-Executive Gary Logsdon told the Herald-Examiner that a celebration was planned yesterday to replace the Commandments on the wall of the courthouse. He also said the county was ready to respond to an appeal before the U.S. Supreme Court.

With additional reporting by Baptist Press and Don Byrd of the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty

Churches see ministry boom from surge

Continued from page 1

She replaced Rob Hecox, who worked with Stithton as part of a missionary assignment with Military Children’s Ministry. Hecox left a year ago to pursue a career as a Naval chaplain.

Soon after Janes arrived, the church expanded its Moms Out, Kids In program to encompass non-military mothers. The monthly, three-hour gathering provides games, Bible lessons and other activities for children—and parents some free time.

After averaging a handful the first half of last year, Stithton is seeing about 40 children the third Saturday of each month.

The church continues to host its periodic Operation Military Appreciation days for recruits at the end of training periods. Featuring a time of games, food, free calls home and a worship service, last year Stithton recorded 1,350 decisions of people accepting Jesus as their personal Savior.

In addition to an enlarged children’s church, Sunday morning worship services have grown by three dozen people, with attendance averaging nearly 300.

“I think it’s been positive,” Curtis said of the growth. “Most people are only here for two or three years, so we’re used to them coming and going. We see the military as our mission field and our church as a missions outpost.”

At Mill Creek Baptist Church, a fellowship hall it completed last September is enabling members to welcome larger crowds for Operation Bold Knight.

Like Stithton’s appreciation day, the events offer recruits a chance to relax after training.

The new facility doubled the space that had been available in its family life center, said Jim Griswold, Mill Creek’s military ministry director. In addition, it has created additional Sunday school space by utilizing rooms near the old fellowship hall.

While Sunday school hasn’t increased dramatically in attendance, its Sunday evening Awana program for children rose 15 percent over a year ago. About 100 children now participate.

Griswold said he anticipates steady increases in worship attendance and other programs as more soldiers and their families arrive in the area.

“I’m seeing more 1st Infantry patches” at worship services, the Army veteran said. “The growth has been exciting. We’ve been able to do all this in spite of the economic slowdown.”

The military ministry committee is considering ways it can provide families a forum for discussing problems they encounter, particularly spouses left behind when soldiers are deployed overseas.

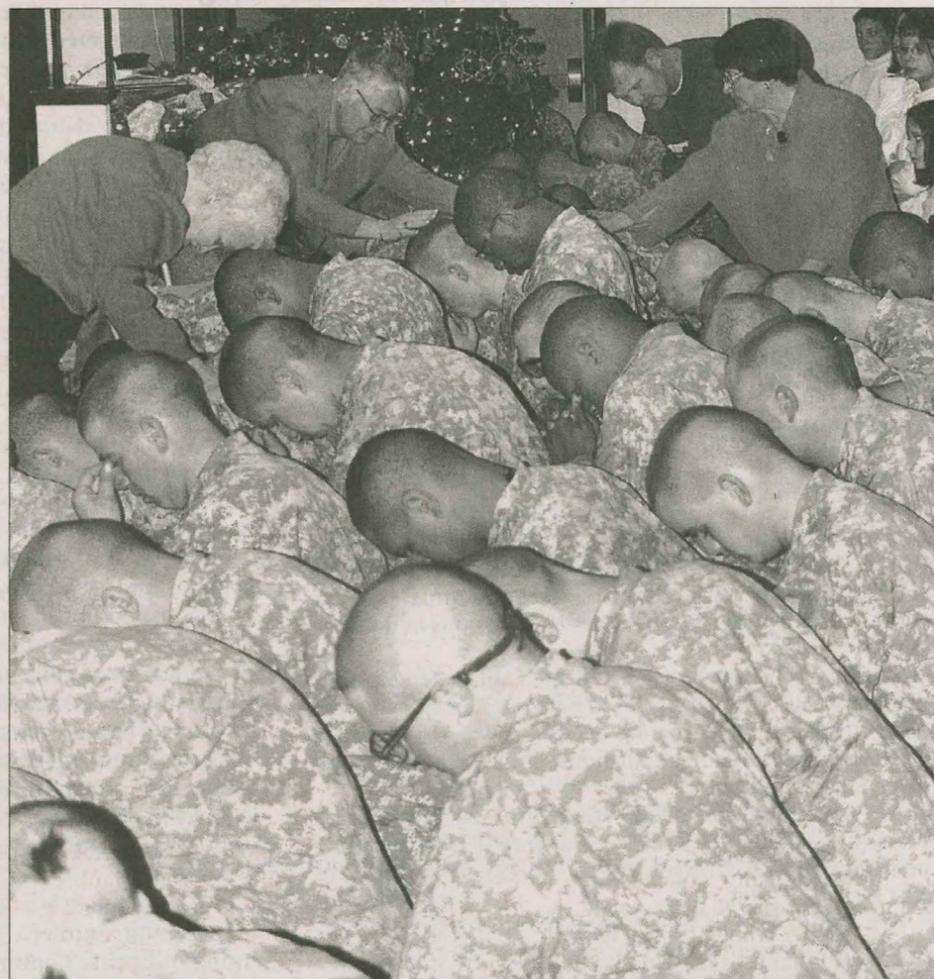
Griswold and Mill Creek Pastor Jim Shaw recently attended a conference in Norfolk, Va., sponsored by the Military Ministry Network. There they learned about other churches around the nation that offer military families a chance to discuss problems privately.

Griswold said there is a widespread impression that if spouses discuss problems on base, it will filter back to the commander and harm the soldiers.

“We want to run a program where they know it won’t get back,” Griswold said. “We’re in the exploratory phase. We want to give families a place to come and talk with each other.”

Although their proximity to Fort Knox gives them more opportunities to interact with Army personnel, Stithton and Mill Creek aren’t the only Kentucky Baptist churches involved in military ministry.

For example, First Baptist Church of Brandenburg also has been sponsoring Operation Bold Knight events for the past



ALTAR CALL Fort Knox soldiers pray at the altar at First Baptist Church of Brandenburg following a Christmas event last month during an Operation Bold Knight event. (Photos courtesy of First Baptist, Brandenburg)

three years. Held every three months, they attract between 130 and 166 soldiers, according to Pastor Sherman Ramsey.

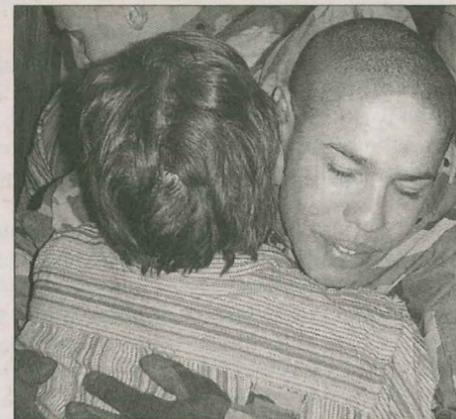
“We’ve had as many as 55 professions of faith at an event,” the pastor reported. “You would be amazed at how deeply you reach into (soldiers’) lives. It would seem we’re helping the soldiers and in actuality, they’re ministering to us. It’s such a blessing.”

About 30 members also support an informal outreach by buying lunch for any soldiers they encounter at McDonald’s or other restaurants, Ramsey said.

Several area churches also participated in Operation Cookie Push during Christmas. Organized in 2008 by Valley View Baptist, this past season Stithton Baptist, Mill Creek Baptist and First Christian Church of Elizabethtown joined the project.

The four churches packaged 200 boxes with about five dozen cookies per box (12,000 cookies). Burton said they cost \$10 per box to ship.

The cookie drive originated in a men’s



A WARM EMBRACE A soldier gets a much-needed hug from a member of First Baptist, Brandenburg, as the servicemen leave the church to return to Fort Knox.

Sunday school class at Valley View. Two members were Vietnam veterans who wanted to let deployed soldiers know of Kentuckians’ support.

“They decided that a great way to have a feeling from home was to receive homemade cookies,” Burton recalled. “We are planning to do the project again next Christmas and to increase the number of cookies sent (and) participating churches.”

Pro-life bill on its way to full Senate

Frankfort—A bill that would require women seeking abortions to view ultrasound images of their unborn babies is on its way to the Kentucky Senate.

Senate Bill 38, filed by Elizabeth Tori (R-Radcliff), passed the chamber’s judiciary committee Jan. 14 with a vote of 10-0. The Senate has passed similar bills the past two years but they did not carry in the Democratic-controlled House of Representatives. According to a report in the Louisville Courier-Journal, the legislation would require women to meet face-to-face with doctors or their representatives at least 24 hours before an abortion occurs.

Tori told the newspaper that this year’s bill goes farther than last year’s in that it requires physicians to explain what the ultrasound shows, including the “number of unborn children depicted” and the presence of organs, arms and legs.

In its report, the Lexington Herald-Leader said SB-38 also would penalize doctors who fail to give a woman an ultrasound before performing an abortion.

Those who agree with SB-38 are encouraged to contact their legislators. Find names, e-mail addresses and phone numbers for senators and representatives at the legislative Web site, www.LRC.Ky.gov.

Call to prayer

Southern Baptist Convention President Johnny Hunt has issued a call to prayer for all Southern Baptists to focus on seeking God's will for major decisions that will impact the denomination in 2010.

Partners in the Mission



By Bill Mackey

Spirit as never before.

In Kentucky, we are in desperate need of prayer. We have the challenge of reaching every home in Kentucky as part of the Find It Here initiative. We also need to pray for the Kentucky Baptist Convention Great Commission Task Force as this committee evaluates the missions and ministries of the KBC.

Also, we must pray for our brothers and sisters in Haiti who have lost so much. May God help us all to share generously to meet these desperate needs.

Now is the time to get our house in order and give priority to seeking God.

Sin separates us from fellowship with God and effective praying (Isaiah 59:2, 1 John 1:9, Matthew 6:33) so sin must be confessed and forsaken (Psalm 51, Psalm 40, Proverbs 28:13, John 16:9-14).

We should remember, though, that God desires to bless those who are contrite and humble before Him (Isaiah 57:15; 1 Chronicles 7:14; James 4:6). I believe God will use those who truly want Him to use them for His glory and honor (Matthew 5:6, 13-17; James 5:16).

We also need to continue to pray for those who have not yet come to Christ in saving faith (John 17:20; Romans 9:3; Romans 10:1; Exodus 32:31-32, Matthew 9:36-38). We need the kind of brokenness for the lost demonstrated by our Lord Jesus Christ, the Apostle Paul, Moses and other great saints of God.

We certainly need to pray for revival, unity and reconciliation in the body of Christ and in our churches (John 17:21-23; 1 John 1:1-7; 1 John 4:7-8, 11-12, 12-21).

It is my conviction that when we focus on our great redeemer God and the mission that He has given us (Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15, Luke 24:47, John 17:18, Acts 1:8), we will be drawn closer to Him and to one another (2 Corinthians 5:17-20).

Will you join me in moving to a new level of faithfulness in prayer (Isaiah 62:6)?

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Parables speak to challenges of Christian life

What do seeds, yeast, fish, pearls, wheat, soil, vineyards and weddings all have in common?

If you answered, "They are all subjects of Jesus' parables," it's likely you are among those who participated in the January Bible Study, "Stories of Life." These truths about the Kingdom of God found in Matthew are as relevant today as they were then.

At first glance, the two articles on the facing page may appear unrelated. Yet, recent sharp criticism directed at Fox News Commentator Brit Hume reveals just how closely connected they really are, and how intolerant of our Christian message our society has become. The Kingdom parables, however, help us understand why venomous darts from those who do not share our faith are predictable.

For those that missed the Fox commentary, Hume stated that the extent to which Tiger Woods can recover from the revelations of his adulterous affairs depends upon his faith. Hume added, "He's said to be Buddhist. I don't think that faith offers the kind of forgiveness and redemption that is offered by the Christian faith, so my message to Tiger would be, 'Tiger, turn to the Christian faith and you can make a total recovery and be a great example to the world.'"

Hume's remarks have been characterized by some as hateful, intolerant, ignorant, foolish and arrogant. One critic even went so far as to say Hume's opinion would be remembered as "one of the most ridiculous of the year."

But others—such as syndicated columnist Cal Thomas—rightly counter: "Christians like Hume are not trying to impose anything on anyone. They know the difference Jesus has made in their lives and they care enough about others to want to share His message in the hope that others lives will be similarly transformed." Well said, Cal.

Meanwhile, Frank Page, vice president of evangelism at the North American Mission Board, aptly commented: "In a land that supposedly cherishes freedom of speech, it is interesting to me to see how strongly persons have objected to Brit Hume's comments" In applauding his courage to be "politically incorrect," Page continued, "Not only is it ironic that those same persons who trumpet free speech are so soundly criticizing Brit Hume. I want to go on record as saying I am proud of him for speaking the truth in his heart."

Still, why do some people react so vehemently? To that, the Kingdom parables speak:

In Matthew, faith as minute as a mustard seed has the potential for fantastic growth and a little bit can have tremendous influence, like yeast in a bread loaf. Yet, many people still will miss the Kingdom of heaven.

Unlike the man who eagerly sold all that he had to buy a field where a treasure was buried, and a merchant who sold his entire inventory to purchase a priceless pearl, they tragically fail to see the incomparable value of God's grace and His offer of salvation.

But the parables of the wheat and the weeds and the fish caught in the net warn of coming judgment. Gerald Stevens, a New Orleans Seminary professor and author of "Stories for Life," points out: "The Kingdom will endure the presence of both wheat and weeds until final judgment. Until then, humans might have a hard time distinguishing the two. ... However, God is not fooled, and judgment will come. The weeds will be distinguished from the wheat, gathered, and burned up."

Sadly, some don't want to hear. Some hearts are as hard, as the soil along a well-trodden path of the Sower; others won't commit, like the rocky soil; still other hearts won't last, like seedlings choked by thorns. Similarly, the parable of the vineyard workers' revolt confirms that they will violently reject the gospel's messengers and, ultimately, Christ. At a wedding banquet, where the invitation is extended to all who respond, one guest is cast out because he prefers filthy rags (sin) to a white garment (salvation) offered by the king.

Nevertheless, Christians must be faithful in carrying out the Great Commission. Like a dutiful servant who wasn't caught off guard by his master's unexpected return, or prudent bridesmaids who kept their lamps ready for a groom's arrival, we must remain vigilant in spreading the Word, always watchful for Christ's imminent return. Furthermore, as the good servants who multiplied talents for the master's sake, we must use our gifts and abilities diligently to expand the Kingdom of heaven, in spite of ridicule and persecution.

At the "Shepherding the Shepherd" conference this past weekend, Eric Kerr of Pittsburgh captured the Christian's zeal with an original song, "I'm Pressing On," in which he enjoined ministers: "Some folks like to put me down; some folks try to push me around; the devil wants me underground. ... But I'm pressing on; no matter what it takes. I'm pressing on even if the devil breaks both of my legs. I'm pressing on; it's just a matter of time. Even if I have to crawl, I'm going to cross the finish line."



After Thought

By Todd Deaton

Think you've got troubles?

By Phil Boatwright

Each of us seeks the cottage with the white picket fence, that restful abode by the shore where love is present and strife is beyond the sea. Perhaps that's why we love movies; they keep alive the dream of a happy ending, where love and acceptance, peace and respect are attainable. But that's not always how it is, is it?

Some actually do have that cottage by the sea, their lives seemingly untroubled. But don't let their possession of things fool you into believing they have no worries. "Well, I'd rather have money and problems than just problems." Can't argue with that. But more than not, it's the money that leads to problems.

I've read nearly 200 biographies of celebrities. I learned something about facing life from, of all people, Robert Mitchum and Frank Sinatra. In "The Robert Mitchum Story: It Sure Beats Working," author Mike Tomkies writes, "The only man in this town I wouldn't want to tangle with is Frank Sinatra. I might knock him down, but he'd keep getting up 'til one of us got killed." That iden-

tification of Old Blue Eyes' determination is a poignant evaluation of a man's character. At times life seems little more than a schoolyard bully,

FIRST PERSON

down on knocking you down. What labels your character, however, is what you do once you're lying face down on the playground asphalt. With his art, Sinatra taught: If you keep getting up, you begin to stand for something.

I found by reading bios of the rich and famous that movie stars, even Mitchum and Sinatra, had problems. Not even the beautiful and the famous are able to avoid dispute and pain. What's more, success, brought on by an unaccountable charisma and a considerable talent, is often the genesis for stress and strain.

John Wayne lost a mansion and mementoes to fire and faced near bankruptcy because of an accountant's mismanagement. He died emaciated and in pain from cancer. Marilyn Monroe suffered depression and was found dead at age 36 under mysterious circumstances. Pregnant Gene Tierney shook hands with a measles-infected fan, caught the ailment herself and gave birth to a

mentally challenged child.

If we can't escape problems no matter how rich, famous, bright or beautiful we are, then maybe there's a reason for these inescapable adversities. As Christians, maybe our struggle through trouble is one of the main reasons we are here, for these woes cause us to trust in God.

By studying Scripture, one must come to the conclusion that the only way to please God is through faith. "And without faith it is impossible to please God..." (Hebrews 11:6). We see through a glass darkly, but remember, we're not alone and forgotten in the shadows. "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God, I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand" (Isaiah 41:10).

God isn't petty, unforgiving or vindictive. And when the next ordeal overwhelms you, remember you are not alone in this travail. Others have been right where you are. And our Lord does promise to be beside us. "For I am the Lord, your God, who takes hold of your right hand, and says to you, do not fear; I will help you" (Isaiah 41:13). (BP)

Phil Boatwright reviews films from a Christian perspective for Baptist Press.

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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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It's tax time!

By Laurie Valentine

We are fortunate to live in a country that encourages our generosity by allowing us to deduct our gifts to charity on our income tax returns—if we itemize. To assure our charitable income tax deductions will be allowed we must follow the IRS' reporting and substantiation rules. Make sure you are ready for tax time by having the required gift substantiation paperwork in hand when you file your return.



Gifts of cash. For a cash gift of less than \$250, the giver must have a bank record or a written communication from the charity that includes the donor's name, contribution date and gift amount. "Bank record" is a bank statement, electronic funds transfer receipt, cancelled check, scanned image of both sides of a cancelled check from a bank's Web site, or credit card statement. If the cash gift was \$250 or more, a bank record is not enough, the giver must have a written communication from the charity.

Non-cash gifts. Gifts of non-cash assets such as stock, bonds or real estate with a value of more than \$500 must be reported on Section A of Form 8283 (Non-cash Charitable Contributions) filed with your tax return. If the value of the non-cash asset is more than \$5,000 (\$10,000 for closely held stock), the asset must be appraised and the appraiser's findings must be reported in Section B of Form 8283. The only exception to the appraisal requirement is that one is not required for publicly traded securities gifts. You also must have a written communication from the charity acknowledging the non-cash asset gift.

Used-car donations. The deduction for a used car with a value exceeding \$500 depends on the charity's use of the vehicle. If the charity sells the vehicle, the deduction is the smaller of the gross sales proceeds reported by the charity on Form 1098-C or its market value. If the charity uses the vehicle or sells it for a price significantly below market value to a needy individual in furtherance of its charitable purposes, the deduction amount is the market value.

Learning life lessons from Tiger

By Kenneth Hemphill

Just a few weeks ago the title "Lessons from Tiger" would have been understood as the chance of a lifetime to learn the golf swing from one of the greatest golfers to play the game. Any avid golfer would have jumped at the chance.

It's hard to believe how quickly things change. From the bizarre wreck in his driveway to the unraveling of his well-crafted persona, we thought, "Surely, things can't get any worse." But they did.

The Tiger Woods story moved from sports news to network TV to entertainment news to the tabloids. But, knowing that "love refuses to rejoice in unrighteousness," I can't laugh at the tragedies caused by his web of sin. Instead, I've pledged to take a different approach.

Pray for Tiger

I'm praying this will provide the opportunity for this couple to experience God's amazing grace. I'm praying that God will place someone in their path who can share with them the only One with the power to forgive sin and grant a brand new start. I'm committed to pray that Tiger will become a better man as he goes through this process.

Over the years, I've watched as Tiger has transformed his swing and emerged a better golfer. In this instance, he won't be able to bring needed transformation simply by the exertion of will power. However, God is able to transform man completely and to bring good out of tragedy.

Learn from Tiger

I don't offer any of these thoughts out of harshness in my heart, but in a spirit of "truth in love." Even so, as I examined myself, I felt the sting of these spiritual truths.

You reap what you sow

Even those who don't know much about the Bible often speak of the law of sowing and reaping. Still, knowing this principle is true, we often live with arrogant disregard.

What made this story so shocking is that Tiger's public persona and private life were so completely out of sync. Outside of a quick temper that sometimes led to a tossed club and a foul word on the golf course, there was little indication Tiger was leading a double life. It just goes to show, we cannot live as if we will be the exception to the law of sowing and reaping. Even if we manage it for a lifetime, one

day all will be exposed. We must live with integrity.

Sin is destructive.

We're prone to forget that there is a real and evil adversary who prowls about like a roaring lion. He's the father of lies and seeks only to kill, steal, and destroy.

Tiger was up against three opponents that overwhelmed him—the adversary, the power of sin and the overwheled flesh. Sin often disguises itself as "the good life." It advertises that it brings ultimate pleasure and that we deserve to live life to its fullest measure. We can see the results pretty clearly in Tiger's life as we know "the rest of the story," but we still find ourselves tempted to flirt with sin and treat it casually, thinking we can handle it. But there can be no comperver with the adversary and with sin: It destroys whatever it touches.

We can't beat sin with our own strength.

What truly is amazing about Tiger is his iron will. Commentators often refer to Tiger's ability to will his game to another level when the occasion calls for it. But human will is not enough—sin is an opponent that defies the exercise of sheer will.

Tiger must have desired to break out of his slavery to sin and the flesh, but found himself drawn back as if by a magnet. In Romans 7, Paul speaks of his inner desire to do good, but notes that the law of the flesh made him a prisoner of the law of sin. He wrote, "Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?" He answers his own question: "Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

Tiger, like the rest of us, needs the inner resources made available through Christ to defeat the sin adversaries he faces. It is sobering, but those of us who know Christ, know we must live daily in the power of God's Spirit. We must recognize our need to be totally dependent on Him for strength—through the Word, through prayer and through fellowship with other believers who sharpen us as iron upon iron.

Pull for Tiger

I still am pulling for Tiger. But now it's not for him to prevail on the links, but that he won't miss this learning opportunity. I pray that he will find the only source of strength that will enable him to win against the real adversary. I pray that God will restore his family and strengthen them—what a platform for the display of God's power. (BP) Kenneth Hemphill is the SBC's national strategist for Empowering Kingdom Growth and former president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Celebrating liberty on Religious Freedom Sunday

By David Shelley

Religious Freedom Sunday, observed by Southern Baptists in January, is an important day for American believers. It's a special day for churches to remember the precious freedoms that all Americans enjoy under the U.S. Constitution expressly stated in the Bill of Rights. This year's theme for Religious Freedom Sunday was from the Bible verse quoted on the Liberty Bell: "proclaim liberty throughout the land" (Leviticus 25:10).

When it comes to religious freedom in America, often the phrase "separation of church and state" comes to mind. But what exactly does that phrase mean and where does it come from? Actually, the notion of a separation of church and state has come to mean the loss of religious liberty in practical terms.

The First Amendment plainly forbids the creation of a national church, because that would be an "establishment of religion." However, the Constitution says nothing about the so-called "separation of church and state" that is referred to so often in the public discourse today. The phrase simply does not exist in any of our nation's founding documents. It is a phrase used by Thomas Jefferson in a personal letter that he wrote to some pastors from Danbury Baptist Association of churches in Connecticut in 1802.

In the early 1800s, many of the original states had churches sanctioned by state governments. These were "established churches," but because they were state matters, they were not for-

bidden by the U.S. Constitution. Mostly, the state churches were Anglican, Congregational or Presbyterian, created through each state's elected representatives. The only state without an official church was Rhode Island, established by the banished Baptist pastor, Roger Williams.

James Madison, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, a framer of the Constitution and an author of the Virginia Declaration of Rights, helped fashion the First Amendment. Madison explained that: "The civil rights of none shall be abridged on account of religious belief or worship, nor shall any national religion be established, nor shall the full and equal rights of conscience be in any manner, or on any pretext, abridged."

In the early 21st century, the biblical bedrock of American government is crumbling due to a pervasive lie that the Constitution requires the church (the body of Christ) to stay out of matters of the state. This doctrine has given some church leaders a rationale to be silent on cultural and political issues—and the nation is morally ignorant because of it.

Is it any wonder that we are suffering in so many areas of society? Upwards of 50 million babies have died in America through legalized abortion, and most Christian people either do not know about this infanticide or feel powerless to do anything about it. The Old Testament prophet, Hosea, lamented: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6).

Many Americans today assume that the words "separation of church

and state" are written in the Constitution, even though they are not. Thomas Jefferson usually gets the blame for introducing the separation doctrine, but actually it was Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black who moved the separation phrase into common jurisprudence in the 1947 decision, *Everson v. Board of Education*. Since then, the U.S. Supreme Court has handed down decision after decision eradicating Christianity from the public schools and the civic arena.

As a result of the absence of Christian values in the government due to the separation of church and state doctrine, we now have the legalized butchering of children in the womb, same-sex marriage and homosexual adoption, tax-supported gambling through state lotteries, no-fault divorce laws that leave millions of innocent children in poor single-parent homes, television programs that parade sodomy and pornography through Americans' living rooms in the name of "free speech," and a pervasive fear on the part of many pastors to preach on moral and cultural topics from God's word.

Jesus said: "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:32). It is very important that Christian Americans know the truth about our religious freedoms and that we pass this truth down to our children and grandchildren so that America might continue to be the "land of the free."

David Shelley is pastor of Smith Springs Baptist Church in Nashville, and director of church and community relations for the Family Action Council of Tennessee.

Make 2010 a 'target-rich year'

By Scott Wigginton

Q: Recently my teenage sons, both Christians, were talking about their lack of enthusiasm for 2010 bringing anything new to their lives. They commented that



"one year is pretty much like the next" and made reference to "living on the treadmill." Both are entering this year with little sense of purpose. What would you recommend?

A: Assuming that your sons have not experienced any significant trauma or life-changing circumstances,

they might benefit from creating a "target-rich year." Teens without targets tend to drift through life.

Challenging your boys to create targets for the coming year in the following areas: physical, mental/intellectual, spiritual and career/vocational. They may want to add financial and career/vocational if they want to begin exploring possible careers. Challenge the boys to set targets for each area that are SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely.

Remind your sons that it is better to set a number of targets and miss some than to set too few. This is vital—lots of targets mean lots of success. Following are some examples from each area:

Physical—Run 10 miles per week. Drink soft drinks twice a week instead of every day.

Mental—Read 10 novels this year. Take guitar lessons once a week.

Social/Relational—Call one person every day on the phone (instead of texting). Learn 52 new names this year.

Financial—Save 10 percent from every paycheck, and buy a laptop computer. Begin tithing this year.

Career/Vocational—Shadow five jobs this coming year for one day each. Volunteer one day a week at the veterinary clinic.

Spiritual—Read the Bible through this year. Attend Fellowship of Christian Athletes each week.

Scott Wigginton is associate professor of pastoral ministries and counseling at Campbellsville University and minister of counseling at Campbellsville Baptist Church.

Haiti in Crisis: Baptists assess relief needs, pledge support



Be part of Western Recorder's ongoing coverage of recovery efforts in Haiti. If your church or group already partners with Haitian Baptists on the island or in Kentucky, let us know by posting details on our Facebook fan page or by sending us a direct message via Twitter. We can be found on Twitter as "westernrecorder."

Continued from page 1
this week. Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief Associate Coy Webb is among the five team members in the country. They are working with Haitian Baptists to identify immediate needs that must be addressed and will draft mid- and long-term plans for an ongoing relief effort.

Once a detailed plan is in place, Webb said Kentucky Baptist disaster relief volunteers will be needed to help with the disaster recovery. Teams potentially could be needed within a few weeks, but there is no way to know for certain at this point, he added.

"Our first team will be limited to only a few members from our specially trained international rapid response team," Webb said. "Then, in the coming months, there will be tremendous needs and opportunities for Kentucky Baptist disaster relief volunteers to respond. The most helpful thing for our trained volunteers to do right now is to pray for the effort and wait until we are able to communicate the need for teams."

At that point, the recovery effort likely will include water purification, medical teams, crisis counseling, evangelistic outreach and children's ministry teams, Webb pointed out, though interested volunteers should be prepared that the experience will require "extreme roughing it."

Trained Kentucky Baptist disaster relief volunteers interested in serving on a team once opportunities become available are being asked to express their interest by sending an e-mail to BaptistMen@KyBaptist.org. Volunteers should indicate their availability, contact information and what type of volunteer work they are able to do.

Millions affected

The 7.0 magnitude tremor hit 10 miles from the center of Port-au-Prince, Haiti's capital city of 3 million people, at around 5 p.m. Jan. 12, according to news reports. One source said the quake could be felt more than 200 miles away. The earthquake triggered a tsunami watch for Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Cuba.

Multiple strong aftershocks continued to rock the country after the initial tremor, said David Brown, who with his wife, Jo, directs Baptist Global Response work in the Americas. Reports indicate infrastructure and many buildings suffered catastrophic damage. The main airport was temporarily closed; power and communications have been down and security remains a serious concern. Specialized search and rescue teams and military units from several countries have been rushed into Haiti to help secure the situation and coordinate relief efforts.

The Red Cross estimated that 3 million people were affected by the earthquake, roughly one in three Haitians. The Caribbean nation has been afflicted by extreme poverty and political instability for decades, and poor infrastructure and virtually non-existent building standards likely worsened the disaster's impact.

Other Baptist groups also are making initial assessments and pledging money, resources and manpower to the massive relief effort in Haiti.



AFTERMATH A pair of Haitian men trek through what's left of a city street searching for survivors of last week's 7.0 magnitude earthquake on the island nation. The death toll from the quake is estimated to be upward of 100,000 people. (IMB photo)

Baptist World Aid has pledged \$20,000 in emergency funds for Haiti, the head of the relief-and-development arm of the Virginia-based Baptist World Alliance announced last week. Meanwhile, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, the American Baptist Churches USA and the North American Baptist Fellowship all are gearing up for relief and development work.

BWAid director Paul Montacute said grants of \$10,000 each were committed to the Baptist Convention of Haiti, a group of 110 churches and 82,000 members established in 1964, and the Haiti Baptist Mission, a network of 330 churches and schools founded in 1943.

Montacute said BWAid will be launching an appeal for additional funds. A link on the BWA Web site directs online donations toward disaster relief.

"We must make a generous response to this massive catastrophe,"

Montacute said.

Lance Wallace, CBF's director of communications, said that group's response to the earthquake would be long-term recovery and not search and rescue. He said volunteers looking to serve through CBF will receive assignments after the initial emergency phase has passed.

Need for prayer

Apart from donating to disaster relief funds, concerned individuals can help greatly by joining in focused prayer for Haiti's 9 million people, more than 80 percent of whom live below the poverty line, David Brown indicated.

"Please pray for us as we assess and monitor the situation in Haiti," he said. "Please pray for victims and their families. Pray for wisdom as responses are initiated."

Compiled from reports by Associated Baptist Press, Baptist Global Response and the Kentucky Baptist Convention

Donate to the Haiti relief effort

KENTUCKY BAPTIST CONVENTION

Donations can be made to KBC's disaster relief effort online at www.KyBaptist.org/DR, or by mail to the KBC, P.O. Box 856300, Dept. 124, Louisville, KY 40285-9900. Please note "Haiti Earthquake" on the check memo line.

NORTH AMERICAN MISSION BOARD

Donations, 100 percent of which are used for direct disaster response expenses, can be made online at www.NAMB.net, by phone toll free at (866) 407-6262, or by mail to Disaster Relief Fund, P.O. Box 116543, Atlanta, GA 30368-6543. Checks should be made payable to "North American Mission Board."

BAPTIST GLOBAL RESPONSE

Donations, 100 percent of which will be used in Haiti relief ministry, can be made online at www.GoBGR.org, or by mail to Baptist Global Response, 402 BNA Drive, Suite 411, Nashville, TN 37217.

WOMAN'S MISSIONARY UNION

The WMU Foundation is accepting donations through its WMU HEART Fund. This can be done by visiting www.WMUFoundation.com and clicking on the "Making Gifts" link, or by mail to WMU HEART Fund - Haiti, 100 Missionary Ridge, Birmingham, AL 35242.

BAPTIST WORLD ALLIANCE

BWAid, Baptist World Alliance's relief and development arm, is accepting donations online at www.BWANet.org, or by mail to Baptist World Aid, 405 N. Washington Street, Falls Church, VA 22046.

WORLD VISION INTERNATIONAL

World Vision International was one of the first relief agencies on the ground in Haiti. To donate to their efforts, visit www.WorldVision.org.

SAMARITAN'S PURSE

The ministry founded by Franklin Graham also was a first responder in Haiti. Online donations can be made at www.SamaritansPurse.org or by phone toll free at (800) 528-1980, or by mail to Samaritan's Purse, P.O. Box 3000, Boone, NC 28607-3000.



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- COM-08 October 2-9



Experts hope joint principles can ease church-state debates

By Adelle Banks

Washington—Legal experts from the left and right say they hope a new statement of shared principles on religious expression in public life will lead to fewer church-state lawsuits.

"There's tremendous confusion about this area of the law," said Melissa Rogers, whose Center for Religion and Public Affairs at Wake Forest University's School of Divinity published the document after five years of work. Rogers is a member of President Obama's Advisory Council on Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

"We hear broad inaccurate statements all the time: on the one hand ... that somehow religion has been kicked out of the public square; on the other hand ... that there are no limits when government deals with religion."

The 32-page document, which was unveiled Jan. 12 at the Brookings Institution, is an effort to "try to blow away those mischaracterizations," said Rogers, who is finalizing recommendations for reform of

the White House Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

The document covers such thorny legal matters as governmental displays and monuments that contain religious elements; public school lessons about religion; and religious symbols in retailers' holiday ads. While its drafters disagree on what some laws should say, the document summarizes current law as it is.

It answers such church-state questions as:

- May a city require individuals to obtain a permit prior to engaging in door-to-door advocacy on religious issues? (No)

- May elected officials reference religious ideas and discuss their personal religious beliefs while in their official capacities? (Sometimes)

- May gravestones at government-run cemeteries display religious symbols chosen by the families of the deceased? (Yes)

Some questions were more difficult than others for the 28 legal experts—who represented groups ranging from the Anti-Defamation League to the Southern Baptist Convention, including Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission President Richard Land. Several experts cited particular kinds of lawsuits they hope will decrease if the document succeeds in bringing greater legal clarity.

"I'd like to see religious symbol litigation go away," said Marc Stern, acting co-executive director of the American Jewish Congress and a member of the drafting committee. "I can think of cases where plaques stood on the corners of courthouses for 75 years and then somebody challenged them. Yes, you understand why some people might be offended, but nobody was for 75 years."

On the Web ...
Read the entire "Religious Expression in American Public Life" document online at www.Divinity.WFU.edu/RPA.

Another drafter, Charles Haynes of the Freedom Forum's First Amendment Center, said some suits involving religion and public schools are "frivolous and ridiculous."

Rogers said the document will be distributed to government officials and will be available through her center's Web site.

Bob Ritter, legal coordinator for the American Humanist Association, criticized parts of the document for favoring "the belief community over the nonbelief community," he told panelists presenting the document.

Rogers described the document as an ongoing project that has attempted to include a broad range of viewpoints. "The conversation continues and we value those voices as well," she said.

The document follows publications produced over the last two decades in which legal experts with differing stances have found agreement on issues such as religion and the public schools, including a 1995 statement that was distributed by the Clinton administration. (RNS)

ERLC: Prop 8, marriage stand not bigotry

By Tom Strode

Washington—Christian opposition to same-sex marriage is not based on hostility toward homosexuals and should not be considered bigotry, the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission said in a friend-of-the-court brief prepared for the trial on California's Proposition 8.

Arguments began last week in San Francisco, in a challenge of the successful 2008 ballot initiative that protected the traditional definition of marriage in the country's most populous state. Lawyers for the ERLC submitted the brief Jan. 8.

In it, the ERLC expresses special concern with the religious liberty implications in the case. It says the court's acceptance of arguments by foes of Prop 8 that support of the measure is based on enmity toward homosexuals could endanger freedom of religious expression.

A faithful Christian will cast votes based on his or her beliefs on all issues, "and a just society will never seek to force a religious believer to vote or participate in the political process without reference to his or her faith," the brief said.

"When that faith is treated as bigotry, however, the participation of Christians in public life is threatened," it continued.

The brief also stated, "(T)o portray religious support for marriage (and, by extension, support for California's Proposition 8) as rooted in anti-homosexual animus is grossly inaccurate and deeply offensive."

ERLC President Richard Land commented on the case's potential impact on religious freedom.

"The support for traditional marriage is not motivated by animus toward homosexuals but by deeply held religious convictions by

many faiths, including tens of millions of people over several millennia," Land noted. "If the court were to rule that opposition to same-sex marriage is de facto animus toward homosexuals, it would in effect seek to negate and nullify the First Amendment, free-exercise religious rights of all Americans of faith guaranteed under the U.S. Constitution.

"This is now not just a case about same-sex marriage but whether or not Americans are free to bring their deeply held religious convictions to discussions of public policy in the public square," he added.

The ERLC's brief, Land said, "states clearly why Americans have the right to defend traditional, heterosexual marriage as the only relationship defined as marriage and why it is wise and prudent of them to do so." (BP)

NATIONAL NOTES

Dobson plans new radio ministry—Broadcaster James Dobson will leave the "Focus on the Family" radio program in late February but will continue on the airwaves through a new ministry. Officials at the Colorado-based ministry that Dobson founded three decades ago said they don't see his plans, which Dobson announced on his Facebook page, as competition. Focus plans to continue the radio program, which will feature Focus President Jim Daly, on-staff family psychologist Juli Slattery and other experts on parenting, marriage and culture, possibly including Dobson. In his announcement, Dobson said his new 30-minute daily program, which will be called "James Dobson on the Family," will begin in March and feature his son, Ryan, as co-host. Dobson's announcement included a request for donations toward the estimated \$2 million first-year costs for his new ministry, including radio airtime. But he also urged continuing support of Focus, saying it "must not be allowed to languish in the days to come."

Religion-related job bias charges hit record—Incidents of alleged religion-based workplace discrimination hit record highs in fiscal year 2009, along with complaints of bias based on disability and national origin, according to the U.S. Equal Opportunity Commission. Charges of religion-related bias in private-sector jobs have increased steadily from fiscal year 1997, when they amounted to 2.1 percent of workplace discrimination complaints, to fiscal year 2009, when they were 3.6 percent. The overall number of charges filed during the most recent fiscal year—93,277—was the second-highest ever. Victims received monetary relief of more than \$376 million during the time period studied, which ended Sept. 30, 2009. Following a trend over the last decade, the most frequently filed charges in fiscal year 2009 related to alleged discrimination based on race (36 percent), retaliation (36 percent) and sex (30 percent).

Executions rise, death sentences decline—The number of state-sponsored executions jumped 41 percent in 2009 even as the number of death penalty sentences dropped, according to a new report from the Washington-based Death Penalty Information Center. Last year's 52 executions nationwide represented a 41 percent increase from the 37 executions in 2008, the DPIC said in its annual report on capital punishment trends. Much of that increase was due to the end of an eight-month informal moratorium on executions nationally through mid-2008, while the U.S. Supreme Court considered a case on methods used in lethal injection, said Richard Dieter, executive director of the DPIC. Fewer death sentences were imposed by courts nationwide in 2009 than in any year since 1976, when states began operating under new laws after the U.S. Supreme Court struck down most death penalty laws in 1972. The 106 death sentences issued nationwide in 2009 marked the seventh year of decline, and were 68 percent fewer than the 328 death sentences imposed in the peak year, 1994, the DPIC reported.

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Report: More than 1,200 crimes involving U.S. churches last year

Cincinnati—More than 1,200 crimes were committed against Christian churches and ministries in 2009, according to an unofficial tally by a firm that specializes in church security.

The Christian Security Network report found 1,237 total incidents targeting churches in all 50 states, including 12 homicides, 38 other violent incidents and \$24 million in estimated property loss.

"It is disheartening to see all these incidents and loss of life in churches in 2009 and even sadder because we know 2010 isn't going to be any different unless the status quo changes," said Jeff Hawkins, executive director of the Christian Security Network. The Cincinnati-based company provides services to make Christian churches and organizations more secure.

The most common crime committed against churches is burglary. Sixty-two percent of the incidents in the CSN report—779 in all—were burglaries. The most expensive, however, is embezzling—internal theft committed over a period of time, usually years. Such incidents, according to the report, cost churches nearly \$14 million in 2009.

Other 2009 incidents included three sexual assaults, three kidnappings and 98 arsons.

The report said counting the number of crimes against churches is difficult for several reasons. There is no mandatory reporting of such crimes to any government agency. The FBI tracks hate crimes against religious organizations, but many of the crimes involving churches are not included in hate-crimes statistics because bias against Christians is not a motive in the crimes.

Many crimes against churches also go unreported, because the congregation forgives the offender or wants to avoid bad publicity.

Many of the organizations cited in the report experienced multiple incidents. One particular church in Cincinnati, for example, was burglarized 20 times during a six-month period.

A veteran security specialist with nearly 30 years

experience, Hawkins said criminals nowadays are less likely than in the past to avoid churches simply because they are sacred spaces. Today, he said, criminals are more inclined to view houses of worship simply as "soft" targets. Despite that, he added, 75 percent of churches polled in 2008 said they did not have any security or emergency plan.

Hawkins said with a few precautions and training, many crimes could be averted. "The church has to start taking responsibility for the safety of their ... congregation and (become) good stewards of the gifts God has provided," he said. (ABP)

Larger churches hit harder by economy

Ventura, Calif.—The economic recession has hit larger churches harder than it has smaller ones, according to a new survey by the Barona Group.

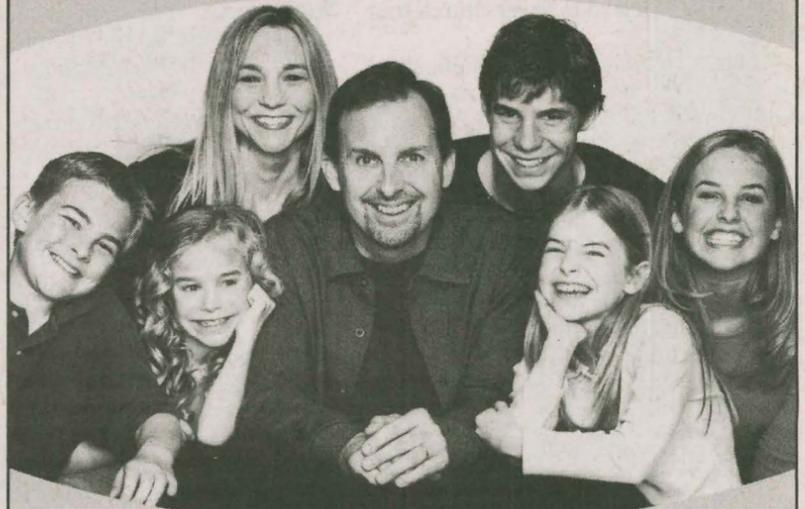
Percentage-wise, churches with fewer than 100 members lost more of their income than churches larger than 1,000 adults (16 percent of income for smaller churches versus 9 percent for large churches). Large churches, however, were more likely to report being under financial duress.

While most pastors and church executives said they have felt the economic pinch, for most it has not been severe so far. In all, 57 percent said the economy negatively affected their church over the past year, but only 8 percent called the effect "very negative."

About a third of churches said the economy had not affected them, while about one in 11 churches defied trends by describing the last year's finances as favorable. Overall, church budgets are down about 7 percent from a year ago, the study found. (ABP)

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A real test of character

Winter weather extremes often will separate the 'women from the girls'

It's the middle of winter—an unusually cold winter. The morning low temperatures the past week have ranged from 8 to 18 degrees. It's 5 a.m. You need to get up, eat breakfast and be ready to go to the farm by 6 a.m. You're a teenager and—don't take me wrong about this—you're a girl. We often talk about "separating the men from the boys," but I've never heard anyone talk about separating the "women from the girls," but that is exactly what this kind of weather will do.

Every morning before school, various students have to get up early, eat breakfast and be ready to go to the farm by 6 a.m. There may sometimes be eight to 10 students sharing the morning farm chores. Right now there are five girls who have morning farm chores—five girls and no boys.

There may be several reasons for this, including the fact that there are other activities going on at this time of year. All students have the option of being involved in a variety of activities. When the winter athletic season ends, several students will go back to working on the farm.

Unless you have been out of the country the past two weeks, you know it's been cold. Regardless of the weather, the farm chores must be done, especially if you have livestock.

A few days ago I saw the farm staff putting up a very large tarpaulin to provide extra protection from the frigid weather for the goats that were about to kid. We have nine new "kids" and we haven't lost any yet due to the very cold weather. During the next week or two, 35 more nannies are due to give birth.

This is Oneida



W.F. Underwood

An additional problem in this kind of weather is keeping the cattle and hogs fed and making sure the water fountains are not frozen. Livestock are incredibly resilient but they do need a little help—and they must have food and water. During weather extremes, they also need some shelter, especially when the extreme weather lasts for three or four weeks.

Keeping our students and farm staff warm also is critical. The morning chores that normally take two to three hours take three to four hours in this weather. The silage, which usually is easy to work with, becomes very difficult to work with when it's frozen.

Getting back to those five early-morning girls, they have two primary responsibilities. First, they must feed and water the calves in the barn. Then they spend the rest of their time working with their show calves.

For the past several years, our students have had tremendous success showing calves, hogs and goats at a local county fair. For those five girls, considering their daily school activities, the best time for them to work with their show calves is in the morning. Let's face it, male or female, you have to be tough—really tough—to hang in there and not quit in this kind of weather.

I don't know what these students think about this experience now, but I do know that they will remember it and talk about it for the rest of their lives. Character is not something you can purchase or attain by reading a book. One of the most important things we do for students is help them develop character.

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

From policeman to pastor

Student transitions from cop to full-time ministry training

First-year student Mark Back, from Indiana, has firsthand experience in seeing people's lives physically saved through his background as a policeman. He recalls his and his wife's unique experience where both their lives were truly saved.

"I grew up in church. I don't think I can even remember a time in my life when I didn't believe in God," Mark said. "But in 1989, my life was truly saved when I accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior. In fact, my wife and I both accepted Christ on the same day and at the same time. We

both walked forward out of opposite ends of the pew during an invitation at the church we were attending at the time. Neither one of us knew the other had gone forward until we met up front at the altar. Our lives were truly changed that day. It really helped our marriage, too.

"From our salvation experience up until February of last year, I had some questions as to whether or not God was calling me into full-time ministry," Mark said. "At that time last year, I was working as a policeman. I was literally dealing with whether I needed to be a policeman

or a pastor.

"My pastor was a Clear Creek alumnus," Mark continued. "Through the years he had seen the struggle I was having as to what I was supposed to be doing for the Lord. I had been working on an interim basis as a youth pastor and I would share with him about God's call on my life. Naturally, he would mention Clear Creek to me as an option for some ministry training. When it finally became clear that I needed to pursue full-time ministry, we looked at Clear Creek.

"As soon as we drove on to the campus we felt like we were home," Mark recalled. "Everything pointed to God leading us here as we experienced our visit. God affirmed that calling later as He removed some very large obstacles to provide the way for us to move here and enroll in school.

"I know God has called me to be a full-time pastor," Mark said. "I'm not sure where God is leading, but I intend on following Him wherever He says to go."

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

Clear Creek Chronicle



Donnie Fox

A Christ-centered will

Estate stewardship requires acknowledging His lordship

New Testament professor R.E.O. White taught the permanent value of Paul's letter to the Colossians is its value both as a theological feast and a spiritual tonic. Paul's purpose in writing was both to instruct a questioning faith and to enrich daily Christian life. Both the fullness of Christ and the Christ-filled life are affirmed by Paul. His fullness is affirmed in relation to God, the universe, the church and experience.

As disciples of Jesus Christ, we strive daily to reflect a Christ-filled life.

In Colossians 1:16, Paul acknowledged "all things were created by Him and for Him" to fulfill His purposes and to promote His glory.

How we plan our estates very likely will be the single most important act of financial stewardship we will ever make. Therefore, it is vitally important we acknowledge and affirm His lordship in our lives with a last will and testament that is Christ-centered.

Through faithful estate stewardship, we impact the world for Jesus Christ, we advance His kingdom and we acknowledge His lordship. Furthermore, obedience in this realm and writing a Christ-

centered will enriches our daily lives as we find contentment in knowing the financial resources He entrusted to us in life will be used in fulfilling His purposes and promoting His glory beyond our lives on this earth.

Ky. Baptist Foundation



Barry Allen

A bequest in a will or revocable living trust for the benefit of your church and other Christian causes is the simplest and most popular way to have a Christ-centered will. The bequest can be a specific sum, percentage or asset; it can be designated or undesignated; it can be outright or for perpetual support through an endowment fund. The reason a bequest is so popular is it allows one to retain complete control and use of the financial resources until death when they no longer are needed.

In 1 Timothy 6:7, Paul reminds us that financial resources are temporal; they provide for our basic needs, but we must put godliness above everything else: "For we brought nothing into this world and we can take nothing out of it." When you and I gain that truth, we gain something lasting.

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

LifeWay report

Economic rebound proves elusive to churches thus far, survey shows

Nashville—While the U.S. economy shows signs of experiencing a "jobless recovery," the country's 10 percent unemployment rate is keeping church budgets in a bind, a new study by LifeWay Research found. Yet in spite of the financial difficulty, many churches are launching new ministries to help families in need.

A full 35 percent of the 1,002 Protestant pastors surveyed last November said giving in their churches was flat compared to the same period in 2008. Another 29 percent said giving was down, including 18 percent who reported a decrease of 10 percent or more.

While the national economy shows signs of improving, churches don't seem to be recovering yet and, in fact, might actually be doing a bit worse, said Ed Stetzer, director of LifeWay Research.

"It's not surprising that churches—and their giving—are more impacted by unemployment than, for example, the stock market or GDP (gross domestic product)," Stetzer noted. "As unemployment goes up, giving tends to suffer since many churchgoers give proportionally."

Job losses taking a toll

More than half the pastors reported higher unemployment in their congregations and almost a fourth said more people have moved away in search of work. Many more churches reported they had frozen staff salaries for 2009—47 percent, in contrast to 35 percent as reported in a similar February 2009 survey.

Seventy percent of the pastors said they were receiving more requests for financial assistance from people outside the congregation, and 42 percent said their churches had responded by increasing spending on behalf of needy families. Additionally, 44 percent said more church members were involved in volunteer service to their communities. While 54 percent said their churches felt a greater sense of excitement about opportunities to minister to the needy, 48 percent of the pastors said they sensed greater caution about trying new things that cost money.

On a positive note, one-third of survey respondents said giving in their churches was up, and 62

percent said their congregations were meeting or exceeding their budgets. That number is down, however, from the February 2009 study in which 71 percent of pastors reported meeting or exceeding the budget.

Stetzer hypothesized that the group of churches that report meeting or exceeding their budgets likely includes many that adjusted those budgets downward.

"The pastors surveyed clearly indicated that the economy has hurt them and, for many, giving is the same or down from 2008," Stetzer pointed out. "Consequently, they are showing more caution in their budgets and seem to be more hesitant to try new things."

Among the survey's other findings:

- 11 percent reduced staff salaries from 2008 levels, 8 percent delayed planned hiring, 5 percent reduced staff insurance benefits, 5 percent laid off one or more employees, and 14 percent delayed large capital expenses.

- 35 percent of the pastors said they had paid more ministry expenses out of their own pockets, 16 percent took voluntary pay cuts, 7 percent added non-ministry jobs for more income, and 7 percent asked their spouses to add a job.

- 38 percent of the pastors said they were receiving more requests for assistance from church members, 14 percent said more people in their congregations had lost their homes, and 14 percent said fewer people are volunteering because they are working longer hours.

In many cases, difficult economic times are having the beneficial side effect of enlarging congregations' vision for helping people in need—both inside and outside the congregation. But the financial pinch is not likely to ease until the unemployment situation improves, Stetzer said.

"The economic downturn is forcing many churches to become more volunteer-driven organizations focused on helping the hurting in times of need," he said. "But churches have not yet joined the broader economic recovery and, historically, they tend to recover financially when unemployment decreases—and usually after the economy as a whole."

Pair of Baptist churches in Texas damaged by arson

Athens, Texas—A Southern Baptist church was one of two churches in the Athens, Texas, area heavily damaged by what investigators believe were arson fires set in the early morning hours Jan. 12, marking the third such church fire in a week near the East Texas city.

Local authorities are being aided in their investigation by the state fire marshal's office and the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. Authorities suspected burglary at the churches, but Athens Assistant Police Chief Rodney Williams said the investigation is in its early stages.

"I would assume that it is arson, but as far as the motive, we will probably never know," said John Green, pastor of Lake Athens Baptist Church, which sustained an estimated \$500,000 in damage to its auditorium. "But our hearts are full and our spirits are encouraged. We believe God is going to bring something good out of this."

Athens Fire Chief John McQueary said investigators also are seeking clues to a fire the same day at Grace Community Church in rural Henderson County near Athens, as well as a fire the week prior at nearby Faith Church.

McQueary said dogs trained in detecting accelerants were picking up scents that point to arson, but further testing to confirm that might take longer.

Green said he is thankful that the church office was not damaged and the gym had only minor smoke and water damage.

Lake Athens moved its Wednesday night services to a local fish hatchery and met the following Sunday at a music hall in Athens.

The church fires follow two others in recent weeks in nearby Van Zandt County, the Athens Daily Review newspaper reported. (BP)

Hunt out of hospital after cancer surgery

Woodstock, Ga.—Southern Baptist Convention President Johnny Hunt underwent successful cancer surgery Jan. 7 at Northside Hospital in Atlanta. An update on the First Baptist Church of Woodstock, Ga., Web site said Hunt rested well after the operation and was released from the hospital Jan. 8.

Hunt, 57, announced in November he had been diagnosed with prostate cancer. He was elected SBC president in 2008 and re-elected to a customary second term last year, when he also appointed a 23-member task force to study the denomination's efficiency and effectiveness.

A one-time high-school dropout and pool-room manager before accepting Jesus Christ in 1973, Hunt is a graduate of Gardner-Webb University and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He has led the Woodstock congregation, with 17,600 members the third largest house of worship in metropolitan Atlanta, since 1986. (ABP)

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Join other Southern Baptists and Rev. Roy Myers on this unique vacation package timed to escape our hot summer weather! This will be Rev. Myers' sixth trip with YMT as Baptist Chaplain. He is retired after serving 43 years as Pastor in Mississippi. Devotions and Baptist religious services will be available most days through out this cruise and tour, for those in our Baptist group who want to participate. Friends and family are welcome. One does not have to be Baptist to join our group. Your group will start in Seattle for one night with an included city tour. In Seattle, board your Norwegian Cruise ship, the "Star" for your 7-day inside passage cruise to Ketchikan; Juneau; Sawyer Glacier; Skagway; and Prince Rupert, BC. Enjoy total freedom with NCL's Freestyle cruising. You pick what to wear, and where and when to dine from 10 different restaurants. Next, travel to San Francisco through Washington State. See the Columbia River, Mt. St. Helens, and Mt. Rainier. Travel through Oregon; then spend two nights in the beautiful Lake Tahoe/Carson City area. See this beautiful region made famous in the old TV western *Bonanza*, including Lake Tahoe, one of the most beautiful lakes in the world. Next, take a scenic drive to San Francisco for your final two nights where you'll see the Golden Gate Bridge, Fisherman's Wharf, and lots more on your included city tour. Fly home from San Francisco. *Your price of \$1948 (per pers., dbl. occ.) includes the 7-day cruise on NCL's "Star", 7 nights hotels, baggage handling, taxes, port charges and lots of sightseeing. Airfare is extra.

For information, reservations, brochure and letter from Rev. Myers with his phone number call:

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PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for the following Kentucky Baptist missionaries and ministries:

Two Hearts Pregnancy Care Center in Ashland. Two Hearts offers alternatives to abortion and gives hope and help to women facing unplanned pregnancies. The staff provides practical and spiritual help through prenatal and post-natal education and counseling. Material assistance also is provided through the center's Earn While You Learn program. Pray that clients will feel and know the unconditional love of Jesus through the agape love shown by staff members. Pray that women considering abortion will be drawn to the ministry to discover the hope and healing that only Jesus can provide.

Missionaries Pete and Ann Rivera of Frankfort. The Riveras are multi-ethnic church planting missionaries. They also serve as strategists, helping to train and equip others for planting. Pray for revival among Hispanic churches in Kentucky. Pray for continuing efforts of the new Hispanic congregation in Shelbyville and for church planters to reach Hispanics in the Williamstown and Dry Ridge communities.

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

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Taylor County Association recently called **Ken Forman** as interim director of missions.

Saloma Church will host January Bible study sessions Jan. 24 & 31, 5 p.m. led by **John Hurtgen**, dean of Campbellsville University's School of Theology, on the Kingdom parables in the Gospel of Matthew. For more information, call (270) 789-0082. **John Chowning** is pastor.

■ **CORBIN**—First Church ordained **Nicole Farrar** to the gospel ministry Jan. 10. **Jim Hunter** is pastor.

■ **HARTFORD**—Clear Run Church recently called **Dave Atherton** as pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Deer Park Church ordained **Charles Allen Ammerman** as a deacon Jan. 17. **David Platt** is pastor.

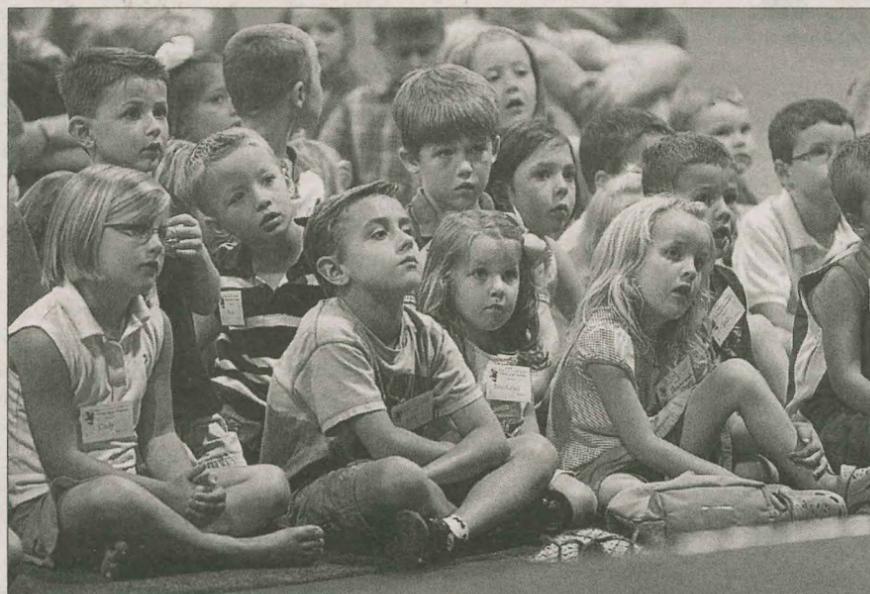
National WMU prepares for Children's Ministry Day

Birmingham, Ala.—On Feb. 20, church groups and families from around the country will collectively put faith into action during the third-annual Children's Ministry Day sponsored by national WMU.

Each year, Children's Ministry Day seeks to help children grow in Christ and serve others as Christ did. "We want children to know that even at their young age, they can make a difference by sharing God's love," said Mitzi Eaker, children's ministry consultant for national WMU.

Last year's Children's Ministry Day engaged more than 20,000 children and leaders as they sought to meet health care-related needs. Stories posted on www.ChildrensMissions.com about how lives were touched and changed through this effort capture a glimpse of impact that children can have for the kingdom.

"The Children's Ministry Day stories are simply amazing," Eaker said. "Leaders related how children were changed and lives were transformed, and many told of how children engaged their whole church in community outreach and ministry. It is inspiring to read the stories and to know that children—some for the very first time—participated and led in minis-



tering to people in their community."

The theme for Children's Ministry Day 2010 is "Home Team." Participants are asked to take part in projects that meet housing needs in their neighborhoods. The focus Scripture for the endeavor comes from 1 Corinthians 3:9, "We work together with God."

"We are excited about the growth of Children's Ministry Day each year, but just imagine the impact that Southern Baptist churches could have across North America if every church involved their children in a concentrated effort to 'work together with God' on Feb. 20," Eaker challenged.

Children's Ministry Day was created to help children become aware of ministry needs in their own communities and to collectively meet those needs by sharing Jesus' love through word and deed.

To this end, a Children's Ministry Day promotional pack is available from WMU and contains everything from ministry project ideas, learning activities and a children's sermon to promotional skits, clip art, and much more to help groups plan and implement their Children's Ministry Day activities. To order, visit www.WMUStore.com, or call WMU customer service toll free at (800) 968-7301.

Children's Ministry Day is held annually, and is scheduled to coincide with Focus on WMU Week each February. For more information on Children's Ministry Day, visit www.ChildrensMissions.com.

Children also have an opportunity to engage in missions all year long through Girls in Action, Royal Ambassadors and Children in Action. For more information about joining more than 200,000 children who already are involved in these three ongoing missions organizations, visit the Web site for GAs, www.GAPassport.com; RAs, www.RoyalAmbassadors.org; or Children in Action, www.ChildrensMissions.com.

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SEEKING: Full-time minister of music for Red House Baptist Church, Richmond, Ky. Bachelor's and seminary degrees preferred, as well as prior experience in music ministry; must be able to work with choirs as well as worship teams. E-mail Alex Poulter, wappbear@insightbb.com.

SEEKING: Pastor for First Baptist Church, Williamsburg, Ky. Beautiful, small town setting located near University of the Cumberland. Diverse membership with an average Sunday attendance of 140 and active youth group. Must be able to work with both SBC and CBF. Parsonage available. Seeking someone with a minimum of M.Div. degree and pastoral experience. Send resumé to First Baptist Church, 230 S 5th Street, Williamsburg, KY 40769.

SEEKING: Interim pastor for Friendship Baptist Church, Campbellsville, Ky. For additional information, contact Barry Blevins, (270) 789-1673; or barryblevins@windstream.net.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor. Send resumé to Fulton First Baptist Church, Box 1140, Fulton, KY 42041; or e-mail swright@fbcfulton.org.

SEEKING: Bivocational pastor for First Baptist Church of Bellevue. Minimum five years ministry experience. Send resumé to FBC Bellevue, 254 Washington Ave., Bellevue, KY 41073, Attn: Pastor Search Committee.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor of worship. Applicant must be a worship leader experienced in working with various styles of music. Zion is a dynamic, growing church that currently averages a total of 750 in two blended Sunday morning services. Candidate must have strong spiritual maturity and leadership skills, must be able to lead all aspects of worship ministry including congregational worship, praise team and band, choir of all ages, and creative arts ministries. Requires a seminary degree with at least five years experience. Send resumé, references and letter of interest to: Zion Baptist Church, 8158 Hwy 351, Henderson, KY 42420, Attn: Worship.Pastor Search Committee.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Old Yellow Creek Baptist Church, Middlesboro, Ky. Please send resumé to: Old Yellow Creek Baptist Church, 225 S 38th St., Middlesboro, KY 40965, Attn: Pastor Search Committee.

SEEKING: Dynamic individual to minister to students (primarily grades 6-12) at Woodmont Baptist Church, Nashville, Tenn. The ideal candidate is creative and upbeat in demeanor and personality, seminary trained and a self-starter. All interested individuals should contact Lil Cook at (615) 297-5303, or send resumé to Woodmont Baptist Church, 2100 Woodmont Blvd., Nashville, TN 37215.

SEEKING: Senior pastor. Hickory Grove Baptist Church, Independence, Ky. (www.HickoryGrove.net) is seeking an educated and experienced minister with SBC background. Candidates should demonstrate strong leadership, communication, follow-through and evangelism. Send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, HGBC, PO Box 640, Independence, KY 41051. No phone calls or e-mails please. Applications will be accepted through 2-27-2010.

SEEKING: Bivocational minister of children and bivocational minister of music for CBF church in Western Kentucky. Positions can be combined or fulfilled separately. Contact Chris Hopgood, 311 Rudy Ave., Henderson, KY 42420.

SEEKING: Part-time worship pastor for Victory Baptist, Lexington, Ky. Send inquiries to worshippastorsearch@vbclex.org.

SEEKING: Part-time director of missions for Red River Baptist Association in rural Eastern Kentucky. Send resumé to Red River Baptist Association, PO Box 130, Hazel Green, KY 41332. Questions: Lewis Faulkenberry, (606) 568-6817.

SEEKING: Part-time student minister for Dripping Spring Baptist Church in Olmstead, Ky. For more information, see www.drippingspring.com.

SEEKING: Full-time Southern Baptist pastor for Grace Baptist Church, Pikeville, Ky., a member of Pike Association of Southern Baptists. Submit resumé to PO Box 1485, Pikeville, KY 41502.

SEEKING: Part-time music minister for Audubon Baptist Church. Responsible for blended-style congregational worship and choir direction. Only mailed resúmes will be accepted. Mail to Linda Owen, 3205 Broeck Pointe Circle, Louisville, KY 40241.

SEEKING: Full-time activities pastor to minister to our church family and community through sports and recreation. Please send resumé to Search Committee, Campbellsville Baptist Church, PO Box 530, Campbellsville, KY 42719; or bradl@cvillebaptist.com.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January

22-23 Region 2 Disaster Relief Certification and Training, Second Baptist Church, Madisonville.

26 Pastor/Staff Forum, Living Hope Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

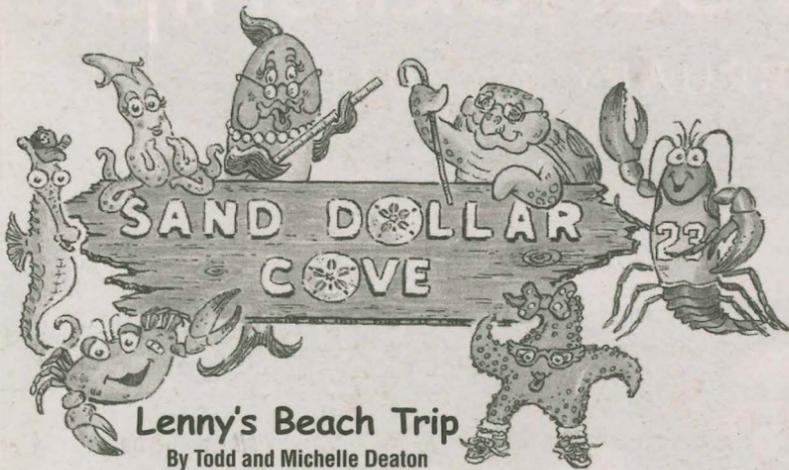
28-30 Southeast Conclave, Chattanooga, Tenn.

29-30 Deacon/Pastor/Spouse Retreat, Holiday Inn Plaza, Bowling Green.

29-30 Preschool/Children's Ministry Meeting, Baptist Building, Louisville.

29-30 Regional Women on Mission Retreat, Laurel Lake Baptist Camp, Corbin.

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



Lenny's Beach Trip

By Todd and Michelle Deaton

One weekend, Lenny Lobster, Craig Crab and Seamore Seahorse sat near the shore of Sand Dollar Cove. They liked to watch boys and girls playing on the strand.

"They have such fun, building sand castles, lying in the sun, collecting shells and tossing beach balls," sighed Lenny.

"Yeah, it sure seems like more fun than we have," Craig agreed. "Here, it's always so wet. Our sand is soggy, our sandcastles look more like mud pies, and the waves carry our beach balls off," he griped.

"I've got a great idea," said Lenny. "Let's go to the beach."

"I don't think that is a good idea," said Seamore. "Besides, sea horses can't walk on land."

"But we can," Lenny said. "Come on, Craig."

Off the two went to have a great adventure. First, they built a sandcastle. But the sand grew hotter in the sun.

"I think I'm getting a sunburn," howled Lenny.

"How can you tell?" Craig said. "You always are red."

"This sand is so hot," Lenny said, dancing from claw to claw.

"It's gritty, too," griped Craig. "Some sand is under my shell, and it is rubbing a rash," he said, clawing at his shell.

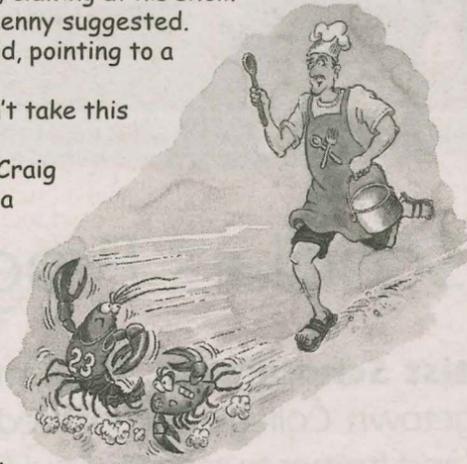
"Let's find some shade," Lenny suggested.

"There's an umbrella," he said, pointing to a bright yellow one.

"Great," said Craig, "I can't take this sun any longer."

After a while, Lenny and Craig became bored. "Let's throw a beach ball," he suggested.

While they were tossing the ball, a breeze began to blow. At first it felt good on their sunburnt shells. But soon a strong gust blew the ball down the beach. Every time Lenny or Craig got close to it, the wind took it farther away.



"This isn't much fun, Craig whined. "We keep having to chase it."

It was growing dark. People were gathering down the beach. A band was playing, and some were bringing baskets filled with food.

"Looks like a picnic. Let's check it out," Lenny suggested.

When they arrived, the crowd had grown. Hearing the lively beat, the two began to dance the soft-shell step. While they were having fun, someone saw them. He was wearing a red apron and carrying a large, wooden spoon and a huge stew pot.

"Watch out! He's a cook!" screamed Lenny.

"And crabs and lobsters are on the menu!" Craig shouted.

The cook chased them up and down the strand. Lenny and Craig ran home as fast as their little claws would take them.

Solomon the wise sea turtle was sitting on his porch swing with Seamore. "Whoa, boys. What's the rush?" he asked.

"He's after us! He's after us!" Lenny yelled.

"Who's after you?" Seamore asked.

"A cook," Craig answered, without stopping.

"You can stop running. You're safe," Solomon called out. But they were already out of sight.

Solomon said to Seamore, "When they slow down, maybe they will have learned a valuable lesson."

"What?" asked Seamore.

"They thought they would be happier on the beach, but happiness is not something you find somewhere else. Happiness is something you choose to be, wherever you are," Solomon replied.



Treasure Hunt

Why did Crusty and Lenny think they would be happier on the beach? What went wrong during their adventure?

What was the valuable lesson they learned from their beach trip? Read Philippians 4:11 together.

For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



Preacher's Kids

David Ayers



Bible Crosswords

By Evelyn Boyington

Across

- 1 "What ____ I am afraid, I will trust in thee" (Psalm 56:3)
- 5 "They cast ____, that is, the lot, before Haman" (Esther 3:7)
- 8 It's not exactly red
- 12 In the near future (arch.)
- 13 Gobbled up
- 14 First two words in Key's composition
- 15 "Help thou mine ____" (Mark 9:24)
- 17 Au ____ (teenaged helper)
- 18 Relieve
- 19 Filled with evil desires, as a heart
- 21 Synonym for scow
- 24 Toward the sheltered side
- 25 "____ them that have the rule over you" (Hebrews 13:17)
- 26 "Thou hast ____ me when I was in distress" (Psalm 4:1)
- 30 Legal object
- 31 Michael, for one
- 32 Poem
- 33 "Yea, I ____ unto you, and ... none of you that convinced Job" (Job 32:12)
- 35 Zone
- 36 Beverages
- 37 Squander
- 38 Cyrus was the king of ____ (Ezra 3:7)
- 41 One who hisses

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48				49				50		
51				52				53		

- 42 Skirt feature
- 43 "Be sober, be ____" (1 Peter 5:8)
- 48 Melita, for one
- 49 Natural mineral
- 50 Day before (pl.)
- 51 Samuel, to some
- 52 See ____
- 53 Want no more

- 22 Aid's ally
- 23 What's left
- 24 Heavenly beings (Fr.)
- 26 Earnest attempt
- 27 Blood and guts
- 28 Utopia
- 29 "If we be ____ with Christ ... we shall also live with him" (Romans 6:8)
- 31 Girl's nickname
- 34 Resurrection day
- 35 "A word fitly spoken is like ____ of gold" (Proverbs 25:11)
- 37 Supplemental income (abbr.)
- 38 Greek letters
- 39 Word in a threat
- 40 Stir up
- 41 Long in the tooth
- 44 Anger
- 45 Actress Gardner
- 46 Fish trap
- 47 Double this for (perhaps) fatal flier

Down

- 1 Greek letter
- 2 Holiday, for one
- 3 Multitude
- 4 Strength
- 5 Receipt word
- 6 Western Native American
- 7 What the watchful waiter did?
- 8 Mines found on Cyprus
- 9 Dweller in the land of Seir, the country of Edom (Genesis 32:3)
- 10 Depilatory brand
- 11 Seaport in Lebanon
- 16 Recline
- 20 Repast
- 21 Fierce wind of the Adriatic

Last week's solution

S	E	A	S	A	B	D	A	A	R	E
I	T	C	H	N	A	I	L	M	E	R
R	A	C	E	T	R	A	P	E	A	R
E	R	I	E	H	A	N	D	S		
A	P	P	Y	T	A	B				
E	S	T	E	A	S	E	B	A	N	D
L	I	E	S	G	I	N	A	L	O	E
L	A	D	E	U	N	D	O	T	O	E
E	R	E	A	M	E	N	D			
H	I	D	E	R	R	O	R			
H	I	D	S	I	D	E	L	E	V	I
O	R	E	T	R	E	E	T	A	L	
P	E	A	S	E	N	D	S	H	U	L

College Tuition Full Scholarship

APPLY BY FEBRUARY 1, 2010



Photo credit:
Jessica Shields.

Parks Scholars 2009-10

Front row, left to right: Elizabeth Metcalfe, a freshman from Georgetown; Katie Boyd, a senior from Mayfield; Hannah Flanery, a sophomore from Ashland; Anna Fiechter, a freshman from London, KY.
Middle row from left: Elizabeth Fannin, a junior from Inez; Molly Shoulta, a freshman from Louisville; Caitlin Williams, a sophomore from Murray.
Top row from left: Jacob Price, a senior from Somerset; Phillip Davis, a freshman from Somerset. Coran Stewart, a junior from Paducah, is not pictured.

Parks Baptist Scholars Program

The full tuition **Parks Baptist Scholarship** is the most prestigious scholarship offered by Georgetown College. Established as a tribute to Bowling Green, KY, physician and former trustee Dr. Paul Parks '43 and his late wife, Phyllis, the Parks Baptist Scholarship **annually recognizes four highly qualified students** who exhibit intellectual curiosity, global awareness and an appreciation of their Baptist-Christian heritage. It is available to students pursuing undergraduate degrees in preparation for lifelong learning, teaching and Christian service.

For more information on overall qualifications and to receive an application for the fall 2010 Parks Baptist Scholars Program, contact:

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