Shine like stars in the world
Philippians 2:15

Western Recorder

March 9, 2010
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For the Record

Kentucky
Kentucky Baptist teens selected by Woman's Missionary Union for Acteens honors. *Page 3.*

World
Students statewide raise funds for world hunger relief through 30 Hour Famine. *Page 3.*

Editorial
Western Recorder: Helping Kentucky Baptists work together. *Page 4.*

Baptists
New paradigms, creative thinking needed to reach a lost world, IMB Rankin tells trustees. *Pages 7.*

Baptists
North American Mission Board to ramp up presidential search. *Page 7.*

Missions
More than 150,000 Buckets of Hope for Haiti expected to be delivered this month. *Page 8.*

Missionary Luis Rodriguez (center) talks to Coamo Christian Academy students during a recent field trip. The North American Mission Board missionary, supported by gifts to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, help found the Christian, bilingual school along with his church planting team in Coamo, Puerto Rico. (Photo by James Gregg/NAMB)

Showing God's compassion

Puerto Rican church planter recalls trials, joys of following God's call

By John Correa
North American Mission Board

Coamo, Puerto Rico—At the onset of his missionary career, pastor Luis Rodríguez and his wife, Lourdes Santiago, were dismayed at the lack of commitment from church members at the church they had planted in Coamo, Puerto Rico. However, this apathy did not hamper the Southern Baptists' efforts. Besides, from God's divine perspective, this was only the beginning.

Luis recalled the challenges faced during those uncertain days after being sent by the Raham First Baptist Church of Santa Isabel to plant a new church in Coamo.

"When we arrived at Raham-Coamo, we noticed the believers there didn't really have a commitment to come to the services," Rodríguez said. "When we were on our way to a prayer service, they started calling to excuse themselves from coming to the service. In that moment I turned and looked at my wife and wondered if our efforts were really worth it. We began doubting if God was really involved."

❑ *See NAMB church planter does God's work ... Page 6*

Baptists assess quake damage in Chile, gauge relief response

Concepción, Chile—Despite logistical difficulties, Southern Baptist workers are responding to help those suffering from an 8.8-magnitude earthquake that rocked central Chile Feb. 27.

With highways cracked, bridges collapsed and the international airport closed, travel to and through Chile is greatly limited. The earthquake was centered in Concepción, Chile's second-largest city, home to more than 1 million people.

It also is the hometown of Claudio Toro, pastor of Iglesia Bautista Cardinal Valley, a Kentucky Baptist Convention High Impact church plant in Lexington.

Toro said his aunt and cousins who live in Concepción escaped harm in the massive earthquake, but their homes were heavily damaged.

More than 700 people died as a result of the tremor, one of the largest in the history of a country that deals with earthquakes on a near-daily basis.

The death toll was miniscule compared to that of the January earthquake that struck Haiti, even though the Chile quake was more powerful. Toro said Chileans have plans in place for how to deal with such events.

"That is one of the reasons why people did not overreact to this," he noted. "We train people there in Chile how to act in those cases. That was the main thing that saved many lives."

Toro said like in the Midwest with tornados or the Gulf Coast with hurricanes, Chileans just know how to deal with earthquakes. "We live with this, and

❑ *See Kentucky Baptist ... Page 2*

Kentucky Baptist churches kick off Find It Here efforts

By Drew Nichter
News Director

Lawrenceburg—While prayerwalking a neighborhood street, 4-year-old Gabrielle asked: "Mommy, how can you pray and walk if you can't see where you're going?"

The sunny Saturday morning presented an ideal opportunity for Gabrielle and her family to prayerwalk a Lawrenceburg subdivision along with dozens of other members from Sand Spring Baptist Church.

Last weekend marked the beginning of the ambitious Find It Here campaign. The Kentucky Baptist Convention-sponsored evangelistic push is intended to reach more than 1.4 million households statewide with the gospel leading up to Easter Sunday, April 4.

Spearheaded primarily by state Baptist associations, the effort has relied on dividing associational areas among local churches in order to deliver bags to homes. Each bag contains a gospel presentation and an invitation to visit a local Baptist church for Easter.

"We're hoping to find a lot of prospects for Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday," noted Sand Spring Baptist Pastor Mike Hamrick. "People are more receptive to the gospel around Easter."

Like many churches, Hamrick said attendance at Sand Spring often swells on Easter Sunday. With an average atten-

❑ *See Find It Here ... Page 2*

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH *A group from Sand Spring Baptist Church in Lawrenceburg prayerwalks a subdivision street as part of the Find It Here evangelistic push that began March 6 leading up to Easter Sunday, April 4. (Photo by Drew Nichter)*

WESTERN www.Recorder.org
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ASSESSMENT *While assessing human needs after the Feb. 27 earthquake in Chile, IMB missionary strategist Charles Clark of North Carolina talks with a displaced family living in a tent next to their condemned apartment building in the capital city of Santiago. IMB missionaries in Chile are working in partnership with local churches to meet needs of people living in tents.*

Kentucky Baptist leader urges, 'Don't forget about Chile' following quake

Continued from page 1

that's the reason why it was less complicated than Haiti," he explained.

KBC Ethnic Associate Carlos De la Barra, also a Chile native, said his family was less affected by the earthquake living 200 miles north in Santiago, the capital city.

He said that now in Chile's "moment of distress" will be the best time to "go there and help and show that we Baptists care."

And that's just what they're doing.

Missionaries from the International Mission Board's Mapuche indigenous team, which ministers to the Mapuche people in South America, moved out March 2 from Temuco to assess needs in the worst-hit areas. Temuco is about 130 miles south of quake-ravaged Concepción.

The missionaries delivered water and first-aid supplies for distribution. Besides providing some initial relief, they also are assessing damage and sharing their findings with Southern Baptist leaders.

Meanwhile, a second assessment team from the U.S. is in Chile. This group is doing assessment as part of joint Southern Baptist relief efforts in Chile.

After they couldn't access the international airport in Chile's capital of Santiago, the team arrived in Argentina and made the trip by bus over the Andes Mountains, reaching Santiago March 3. They joined IMB missionaries in Chile to make the trip south to the hardest-hit areas, including Concepción. There they are assessing the situation and determining how Southern Baptists can best help.

The Chilean convention welcomed assistance from Southern Baptists and has joined forces with the IMB and Baptist Global Response. IMB missionaries in Santiago are working in partnership with local churches to meet needs of some of the people living in tents in the capital city, while two leaders of the Chilean convention joined the assessment teams in South Chile.

While the death toll from the Chile earthquake has not matched that of the Haiti earthquake, the KBC's De la Barra reminded Baptists that the country still needs help.

"Don't forget about Chile," he urged, "because the people in Chile need to know that we Baptists care about them."

De la Barra and Toro both agreed that food and water issues will be resolved relatively quickly, but rebuilding efforts is what will be most needed in the long term.

"People in the south of Chile will need a lot of help rebuilding the highways, rebuilding buildings, rebuilding structures that are gone," De la Barra pointed out. "It's something that needs to be done."

He also noted that the Chile relief effort obviously will look much different than that of the Haiti effort.

Donations for Chile may be directed to the Disaster Response Fund at www.IMB.org. One hundred percent of each donation goes to meet human needs. Updated prayer requests can be viewed at www.IMB.org/Pray. Information also will be updated through Twitter at #Quake Response.

Compiled from reporting by News Director Drew Nichter and the International Mission Board

Find It Here

Churches kick off evangelistic effort with prayerwalks, revival

Continued from page 1

dance of about 540 for Sunday worship services, the pastor said last year's Easter worship drew more than 900.

On day one of Find It Here, about 40 Sand Spring church members fanned out across their designated area of South Lawrenceburg to prayerwalk and prayer drive the streets and homes which will receive a Find It Here bag from the church in two weeks.

Having already prayed over their designated territory, members of Eastview Baptist Church in Hopkinsville delivered Find It Here bags to more than 650 homes this past Saturday, according to Pastor Dan Hunt.

Called to the church last October, Hunt said the church had been declining for some time and very little outreach was being done in the community.

"I have been preaching and challenging the church to see our fields as white for the harvest," he said, noting that worship attendance had dwindled to around 65 people.

Kicking off Find It Here last month, the church-wide effort reaped immediate benefits. After prayer drives through local neighborhoods, five new believers were baptized at Eastview in February, Hunt reported. A new members class which started last Sunday has 11 people enrolled, he added.

After the door-to-door distribution last weekend, Hunt recalled an e-mail he received from a Hopkinsville man who in 28 years of living there had never been personally invited to church.

"I honestly attribute much of the excitement and response to the gospel to our participation in Find It Here," Hunt said.

Meanwhile, Columbia Baptist Church is "throwing caution to the wind and not holding anything back" in their Find It Here efforts, according to Ted Taylor, transitional pastor at the church.

Columbia Baptist kicked off Find It Here this past Sunday with a revival service that runs through Wednesday. KBC President Don Mathis is serving as evangelist.

And the church has invited the entire town—literally.

On the Friday and Saturday prior, several ladies in the church called every name in the Columbia phone book, inviting them to the church's Find It Here revival. "That's pretty aggressive outreach for a little town in Kentucky," Taylor said.

They also have gotten the word out over the airwaves. Columbia Baptist's Find It Here lay leader Kevin Jenkins used his disc jockey experience to put together a couple of 60-second radio spots which have been running regularly. He also has been making the rounds doing interviews at local stations.

Taylor said the church is pushing Find It Here so hard because "if we don't take the gospel to the whole community, who's going to do it?"

Columbia Baptist even has brought in a consultant to evaluate the church's Sunday school classes "to position (them) for growth after Find It Here," Taylor noted.

Campbellsville University School of Theology Professor Shane Garrison has been working with the church for several weeks now observing Sunday school to determine "what we need to do to reorganize and kind of get us unstuck so that we can follow up Find It Here with Sunday school growth," noted Taylor, who also teaches at Campbellsville's theology school.

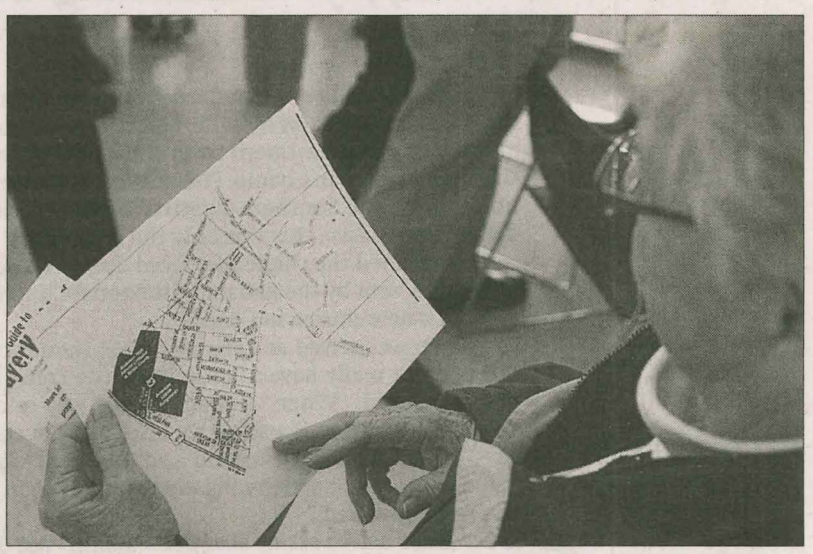
Noting that Kentucky Baptists are in need of such an aggressive evangelistic effort as Find It Here, Taylor said he wants to see Columbia Baptist and others do everything they can to make the campaign a success.

"Baptisms are down and the church is having less impact on reaching people for Christ," he explained.

In 2008 (the most recent data available), Kentucky Baptist churches baptized 15,815 new believers, up slightly from the 2007 total of 15,503, the lowest mark since the mid-1990s.

Although it will be some time before the results of Find It Here are known numerically, Eastview's Hunt said he is confident Find It Here's effect will be long lasting.

"We believe the kingdom of God will be greatly impacted by this campaign and untold lives touched by the power of the gospel through our efforts," he said.



COMMUNITY EFFORTS ■ Above: *A member of Eastview Baptist Church in Hopkinsville places a Find It Here bag on the door of a neighborhood home. The bags contain a gospel presentation and an invitation to visit Eastview Baptist on Easter Sunday. (Photo courtesy of Eastview Baptist Church)* ■ **Below:** *Mary Ruth Cinnamon looks over a map of Lawrenceburg to find out where she will be prayerwalking March 6 along with about 40 other members of Sand Spring Baptist Church. Members fanned out across the church's designated territory to pray over the homes and families in the area prior to delivering the Find It Here bags. (Photo by Drew Nichter)*

Kentucky Baptist teens selected by WMU for Acteens honors

By Drew Nichter
News Director

Birmingham, Ala.—Five Kentucky teenagers have been chosen by national Woman's Missionary Union as Acteens panelists and Top Teens for 2010.

Acteens is the missions organization sponsored by WMU for girls in grades 7-12. The local-church groups offer young girls opportunities to explore missions through weekly lessons and hands-on activities in their communities and elsewhere.

Two Kentucky teens were named as Acteens panelists. Brandie Hagerman of Living Faith Baptist Church in Hartford, and Savannah Hines of South Fork Baptist Church in Hodgenville were given the top Acteens honors.

Three girls, Bethany Bargo from Locust Grove Baptist Church in Girdler, Lynzie Gray of Bethel Baptist Church in Harrodsburg, and Kayla Tomlin, who also attends Living Faith Baptist, were named 2010 Top Teens.

According to the Acteens Web site, panelists are chosen based on their involvement with Acteens in their local churches, leadership abilities and service to their communities. Hagerman and Hines were two of only six girls chosen nationally for the honor.

Acteens panelists "exhibit a missions lifestyle, which means they don't just go to church and talk about it, ... they act it out in their daily lives," said LaRaine Rice, youth and college consultant with Kentucky WMU.

Rice explained that Acteens panelists meet periodically, serve as pages during the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting, are featured at the WMU annual meeting, and contribute articles to "The Mag," the Acteens missions magazine.

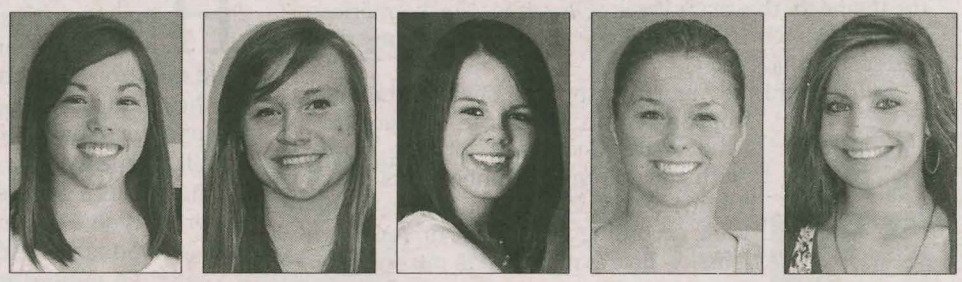
Hagerman, a 17-year-old senior at Ohio County High School, has been involved with Acteens since fourth grade. She said the organization gives her opportunities to witness to others "through the smallest missions," including knitting scarves.

Hagerman's Acteens leader Cathy Chinn said the Living Faith group has crocheted more than 35 scarves that are being given away at a local food pantry.

"You'd be amazed how happy those people were just to get a scarf," Hagerman said. "And it's just the little things you can do that help so much."

Hagerman said she also has served on mission trips to Maryland and Eastern Kentucky and participates each year in Kentucky Changers.

Hagerman will attend Campbellsville University in the fall and plans to study counseling and play for the women's soccer team.



Savannah Hines | Brandie Hagerman | Bethany Bargo | Lynzie Gray | Kayla Tomlin

Hines, a 17-year-old senior at LaRue County High School, has been an Acteen since her seventh-grade year. She said being part of the organization has helped hone her leadership skills and allowed her to participate in several mission projects.

Hines "is a strong leader," noted Tonya Brock, Acteens advisor at South Fork Baptist. "She is one those girls that is rare that you have in a group. ... Anything you ever ask her to do, ... she's right there."

When asked about missions, Hines immediately mentions her trip last summer to Northern Ireland to serve at the Murlough House, a ministry that works with troubled youth and children.

Hines said she wants to attend Georgetown College after graduation to study medicine, noting that she plans to use her training to help those in need at home, abroad or "wherever God calls me to be."

Although the five teenagers from Kentucky may be a record number of Acteens honorees, Rice said the overall number of Acteens groups at local churches statewide is dwindling.

Chinn called the organization a very important part of young Christian girls' lives and urged more women to get involved.

"The problem these days, I think, is that a lot of churches are not able to find leaders," she suggested. "Women are not stepping up and being missions education leaders like they used to be.

"If we don't provide that missions education to our kids, ... how are they going to learn to recognize when God is speaking to them about a call on their lives?" Chinn asked.

Kentucky students look to combat world hunger at 30 Hour Famine

Federal Way, Wash.—An estimated 840 million people worldwide live with hunger every day. Those are the overwhelming numbers according to World Vision, the Christian relief organization that serves in the world's poorest countries.

And for nearly 20 years now, U.S. teenagers have been forgoing meals in order to help those around the world for whom hunger is a daily reality.

Hundreds of Kentucky teenagers recently participated in World Vision's 30 Hour Famine, an effort designed to give students a small taste of what it's like to go hungry, while raising money for world hunger relief in the process.

Several Kentucky Baptist church youth groups took part in the first 30 Hour Famine weekend Feb. 26-27; even more will join in for the April 23-24 event.

Many groups choose to host lock-ins at their churches, do community service projects or perform fundraising activities during the weekends.

Ethiopia is one of the more than a dozen countries which benefit from the hunger relief funds raised by students. That is where the more than $1,000 raised by youth and church members at Fordsville Baptist Church will go.

The Fordsville group recently held their 30 Hour Famine weekend, hosting a lock-in at the church with nine students. Youth leader Ann Brown said she used the entire month of February to prepare the students for the weekend.

She explained that during the month, the students developed a heart for Ethiopia—as well as a desire to serve.

"Right now, they want to serve so bad," Brown noted. "They just realize that God's going to take their little bit (of money) and take care of somebody with it."

John Beach, youth pastor at First Baptist Church of Bowling Green, has been preparing his students for their 30 Hour Famine effort in April. He said that in recent years, it unfortunately has become more about the lock-in and fun than helping the hungry.

"I've really pushed this year that if we're not going to raise money, all we're doing is a lock-in," Beach said, "and that really isn't changing anything."

He said students at First Baptist will set up stations around the church in the coming month to help raise funds for 30 Hour Famine. In the past, the youth have raised as much as $2,000.

Beach said the students have not yet decided for what country they will earmark their funds. But he said he wants his students to understand that even with disasters like the Haiti earthquake, they still can help from thousands of miles away.

"When something happens, everybody (wants to) hop on a plane and rush over there," Beach said. "But there's stuff we can do right here that will make a difference over there."

The youth group at Beaver Dam Baptist Church proved that, raising $1,400 for Haiti relief efforts.

Youth Pastor Doug King said he has done 30 Hour Famine through World Vision since its inception—but opted for a different approach this year.

Keeping the 30 Hour Famine theme and objective, King will send his students' funds to Missions of Love, a medical mission located in Haiti started by Bob Johnson, a retired Ohio County doctor. The ministry is based out of Hartford and has operated a number of ministries in the country for several years.

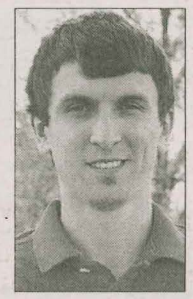
King said that although he chose to work independently of World Vision this year, the 30 Hour Famine emphasis can be a life-changing experience for teens.

"We hear a lot about hungry folks in other countries and our own community, but I think oftentimes our teenagers don't know what it's like to go hungry," King said.

Cumberlands student represents Kentucky, Russian Baptist link

By Daphne Baird
University of the Cumberlands

Williamsburg—Hospitality is a quality that University of the Cumberlands student Sergey Khokhlov understands well. He has shared it with visitors to his own home in Bryansk, Russia, and he has experienced it here in the United States at Oneida Baptist Institute and University of the Cumberlands, as well as through the support of Kentucky Baptist Convention churches.



Sergey Khokhlov

A junior pursuing a major in biology, Khokhlov is the son of the Sergey Khokhlov, pastor of Central Baptist Church in Bryansk. Kentucky Baptists who have participated in a mission trip to Russia in recent years likely will recognize the name Khokhlov.

The family is well known for opening its home to fellow Christians from the U.S., as well as from all over Russia. Since the country has eased restrictions on such travel, the Khokhlovs have hosted many missions teams during the last 10 years. Each year, the family welcomes approximately 30 American Christians who come to Bryansk to serve there.

The relationship between the Khokhlov family and the churches in Eastern Kentucky began in 1999, when David Aker, Cumberlands alumnus and then KBC director of mountain missions, and Jason Pierce, then pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Berea, traveled to Bryansk to meet with Baptist leaders there.

An official partnership agreement between the KBC and Russian Baptists was completed in 1998, and Aker and Pierce wanted to find a way for Eastern Kentucky Baptists to continue working with their Russian brothers and sisters. The senior Khokhlov was one of the leaders who met with them. At that time, he was the pastor of Byezhitsa Baptist Church, where he had established an important ministry to the deaf.

Since the meeting in 1999, the relationship between churches of the KBC and the churches in Bryansk has grown stronger. Most of the 17 KBC associations in Eastern Kentucky, and many others throughout the state, have been part of the ministry to Russia.

The strengthening of such relationships is important to Baptists in Russia, who are part of the Russian Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists, Russia's largest unified Protestant Church, comprising 1,750 congregations and approximately 80,000 members.

However, of Russia's 140 million citizens, approximately 100 million are affiliated with the Russian Orthodox Church. There has been conflict between the ROC and evangelical groups, but recently there has been hope of some reconciliation between the two groups. Khokhlov has served as a delegate to meetings with the ROC to help improve the relationship.

"It is difficult to be a Baptist in Russia," the younger Khokhlov explained.

It was through the efforts of people like Carlos and Pearl Anderson at First Baptist Church of London that Sergey first came to Oneida Baptist Institute and then to University of the Cumberlands, giving Kentucky Baptists the opportunity to repay to Sergey some of the hospitality they had received in the Khokhlov home. Pearl has traveled to Russia several times, serving on medical missions teams. Sergey received a full scholarship from Oneida, and the Andersons served as his American parents while he was a student there.

Khokhlov has adapted well to living in the U.S., although the town of Williamsburg is much smaller than his hometown of Bryansk. "I like it here," he said.

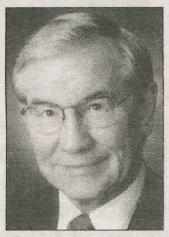
Khokhlov said he is considering becoming a physician assistant, especially now that Cumberlands has initiated its new state-of-the-art PA program. He plans to return to Russia to live and serve, continuing the work that his family has begun.

Live with Urgency

"Live with Urgency: Share God's Transforming Power" is the theme for this year's Week of Prayer for North American Missions, March 7-14, and for the annual Annie Armstrong Easter Offering.

Your gifts to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering help support North American missionaries who share God's transforming power with the 258 million unbelievers in the United States, Canada and their territories. According to the North American Mission Board, most NAMB missions personnel receive support from the offering as well as from their state conventions through the Cooperative Program.

Partners in the Mission



By Bill Mackey

"The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering allows me to spend all of my time working with students, while other campus leaders must spend time raising support," said Mike McQuitty, collegiate evangelism missionary at Syracuse University in New York.

"The offering is vital as we work together to resource and assist our churches to be innovative and creative in reaching our area for the glory of God. One church cannot reach this region, but hundreds of churches working together can," said Bill Lightly, an associational missionary serving in Colorado.

When Kay and I were in Idaho recently for a meeting, we had the opportunity to meet a wonderful pastor, his family and the First Baptist Church family of Bonners Ferry, only 20 miles from the border of Canada. The pastor, Richard Dugger, is passionate about both local and international missions. Even though they average about 125 in attendance, the church already has mission work in India and will launch work in Africa this year.

Dugger expressed gratitude for Rob Lee, executive director for the Utah-Idaho Southern Baptist Convention. Lee is one of the new work state convention executive directors who grew up in the area. He served previously as a missionary at Utah State University, where he met his wife, JeQuita, whose parents have roots in McKee, Ky., and they were involved in church planting in Utah. Rob's parents were involved in church planting in South Dakota. As a native, he understands the culture and challenges of the Northwest and is working strategically to reach the territory.

The Utah-Idaho work is very dependent on the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering and CP funding through NAMB.

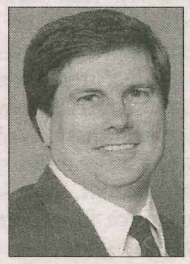
Jimmy Barrentine of Iowa, another new work state convention, shared with me the exciting story of Cornerstone Church. Located near the campus of Iowa State in Ames, Cornerstone plans to start a church near the campus of the University of Iowa, Iowa City. To support the new plant, Cornerstone (1,400 in attendance) will send out 100 students and 12 families, and it also will pay for six staff members.

All of these examples represent an incredible Southern Baptist partnership in missions and church planting that I pray will not be lost in the future.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Helping Kentucky Baptists work together

"How do you see the Western Recorder fulfilling the Great Commission?" Though we believe the answer is obvious, it is still a valid question. Similar ones are being asked of all of the heads of our Kentucky Baptist institutions and agencies these days. For your state Baptist paper, however, it is an easy one.



After Thought

By Todd Deaton

The Western Recorder is not just the primary source of news and information among Kentucky Baptists, it is a missions publication. Each week, we tell the story of how God is at work among Baptists across our state, nation and world. Each week, the state Baptist paper encourages individual Baptists to see their hurting world through the eyes of Jesus and keeps them apprised of how their churches are advancing God's Kingdom in their communities and across the globe. For instance, in this issue, you will find articles about how our disaster relief teams are responding to devastating earthquakes in Haiti and Chile; how youth at Bowling Green First, Beaver Dam and Fordsville churches are raising funds for hunger relief in Haiti and Ethiopia; and how Kentucky Baptists are leading the way in the Buckets of Hope initiative by contributing some 10,000 buckets.

With a mission of encouraging Christians to "shine like the stars" in the world, based on Philippians 2: 15, the Western Recorder provides stories to inform them of the tremendous physical and spiritual needs of those around them and to inspire their hearts for greater service through missions and evangelism. Each week, stories and reports in the state Baptist paper lift up the efforts of individual Baptists and their churches, fostering a missions vision among Kentucky Baptists by enabling them to see a lost world beyond their church doorsteps and calling them to carry the message of hope. For example, in this issue you will find stories about the work of North American Mission Board missionaries in conjunction with its Week of Prayer emphasis and about the efforts of Sand Spring Baptist Church in Lawrenceburg and Columbia Baptist Church to launch the statewide "Find It Here" evangelism campaign in their communities.

Studies have found churches that provide the state Baptist paper to their families not only were better informed about Southern Baptist work, but also there appears to be a relationship with greater giving through the Cooperative Program and other missions offerings. In 2008, among churches that participated in the Western Recorder's church newsletter program—through which churches combine the state Baptist paper with their newsletters and provide it for all of their families at a considerable savings—an average of 10.3 percent of undesignated receipts was contributed toward missions offerings—the Cooperative Program, the Annie Armstrong Offering for North American Missions, the Lottie Moon Offering for International Missions and the Eliza Broadus State Missions Offering. That amount was nearly 1.5 percent higher than the total missions giving among other Kentucky Baptist congregations. And, on average, these congregations gave 7.3 percent of undesignated receipts through the Cooperative Program, surpassing both state and national CP marks.

A missional vision is reflected also in the Annual Church Profile reports of the churches that provide the state Baptist paper to a majority of their families through our newsletter program. The picture emerging is that these churches, which averaged 336 in worship attendance and 289 in Sunday school attendance, recorded 15.6 baptisms and contributed more than $49,800 to the Cooperative Program in 2009. Since a good portion of these could be considered as megachurches with 1,000 or more resident members, a statistical mean may provide a truer measure. Even so, the snapshot of these churches is still impressive: The mean worship attendance was 260 with 175 in Sunday school, and they reported 10 baptisms and gave approximately $29,438 through the Cooperative Program. Interested in church growth? While 10 baptisms may not sound like many, consider that if the 2,113 churches that filed an ACP report last year had all seen 10, Kentucky Baptists would have seen 21,130 baptisms—still short of their "Connect" goal of 25,000, but well above the 15,430 reported.

This statistical analysis is not intended to convey that the state Baptist paper somehow caused the CP and missions giving or the church growth records of any of these churches or of the state convention. That is entirely the work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of God's people. Rather, this analysis is simply a reminder that the Western Recorder plays an instrumental role in helping Kentucky Baptists become better informed of missions needs and opportunities and aware of the importance of our churches working together for the cause of Christ. And, it suggests that among the faithful readers of the Western Recorder, you will find some of Kentucky Baptists' strongest, missions-minded congregations led by church leaders who truly care about fulfilling the Great Commission.

In light of this relationship, now I ask an obvious question: How do you see your church fullfilling the Great Commission? Shouldn't you help your church to capture a missions vision each week by providing the Western Recorder to all of its families? A world awaits.

Western Recorder

Box 43969
Louisville, KY 40253

DR. TODD DEATON
Editor

DREW NICHTER
News Director

THOMAS C. TOWNSEND
Marketing & Business Manager

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

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Diana Davis

■ Form a creative publicity team to motivate every individual and church group to impact VBS attendance.

■ Single adults coordinate an outdoor registration event for the community. The church softball team delivers door hangers to homes within a mile of the church.

■ Middle schoolers prepare a short puppet show, performing in the local mall and the church foyer. The choir and praise team post advertisement signs strategically around the city. Garage sale shoppers share invitations as they look for cowboy hats for a western VBS theme.

■ Teens plan a Celly Party, recruiting dozens of adults to join them for a 60-minute phone blitz. Callers use their cell phones, a script and simple registration form to invite and register kids who visited church last year: Sunday school guests, sports, fall festival, daycare, Awana, mission groups, inactive members. When a child is registered the caller rings a bell and adds the name to a whiteboard. After a fast-paced hour, they pray for the children, enjoy snacks and celebrate.

■ Individuals help. A techie member designs an outdoor banner invitation. A theatrical member wears a VBS mascot costume, such as a cowboy horse inflatable suit, to visit Sunday school classes, and teachers wear bandanas to show VBS enthusiasm. The women's ministry group rents a huge cowboy advertising balloon.

■ Other members design the stage area. Woodworkers build a simple horse chute for children to enter, and some artistic members organize a branding iron design contest to create excitement. The winning design is made into a big rubber stamp to "brand" kids as they enter through the chutes each day.

■ Simplify participation. Provide yard sign invitations for church members' lawns. Give everyone postcard invitations to share with friends and neighbors. Create e-invitations that they can e-mail to friends.

■ The youth group plans a special "Howdy Partner" shindig for fifth graders shortly after VBS to welcome them into the youth department. Continue the cowboy theme with a barn venue, cowboy stew, western games and western style Christian music at a bonfire. Youth are assigned as prayer partners for the fifth graders and encourage them.

Vacation Bible school can open doors to reach lost families for Christ, but only if those children come. Cast a large vision for every church member to help invite children.

Diana Davis is the author of Fresh Ideas and the wife of the Indiana Baptist State Convention executive director.

Keep spiritual focus in divorce

By James Stillwell

Q: I'm going through a divorce and need some handle on how to keep my spiritual life intact.

FAMILY FORUM

A: Harold Ivan Smith, in the 1994 LifeWay Support Series book, "A Time for Healing," lists some choices to help chart the path toward spiritual recovery from divorce.

Know that God is not finished with you. Joshua told the Hebrew people that there was much land left to be conquered (Joshua 13:1). Your married life may be over, but your life is not. Jeremiah prophesied to those facing times of dislocation and despair that God knows "the plans I have for you, plans to prosper and not to harm you, plans to give you a future and a hope" (Jeremiah 29:11).

Look more to the future than to the past. "God works in all things together for good to those who love Him" (Romans 8:28) is still true. There is nothing that God cannot redeem and use for His glory.

View life more as opportunity than challenge. Ten spies went into the Promised Land and saw giants. Two saw that God could be victorious no matter what. The wilderness of your experience does not frighten God.

Choose a welcoming stance toward life. Try this affirmation: "I've been to the bottom but I'm happy to report the bottom is solid!" Leave the past behind and face the future that God and you can create together.

Trust the God who never fails. Great is God's faithfulness in every season of our lives. God's everlasting arms are strong enough for you. Sometimes we can't always "fly like an eagle." Sometimes God calls us just to "walk and not faint" (Isaiah 40).

Focus on the Father rather than the crisis. Jesus did that facing the cross. So can you.

Do something! Take positive action. Seize the moment for good. Ask yourself, what is one thing I can do this day to move my life in a positive direction? Ask God for wisdom—God promises to supply. God also promises ever to redeem the paths of our lives.

James Stillwell is minister to singles at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington.

Navigating youth ministry through the stages of life

Youth Ministry Corner

Joe Ball

As I sat the other night at Zaxby's in Bowling Green having dinner with Jordan, our youngest child, who is a freshman at Western Kentucky University, I began to think through stages of family life. As youth ministers we need to be careful to navigate each of these transitions to make them as smooth as possible, and we need to think ahead to the next stage of family life and consider how it will affect how we do ministry.

Stage 1: The Bachelor/Bachelorette.

Many youth ministers get their start in ministry while in college. We stay up late, come and go as we please and live off leftover pizza and Big K cola from the youth events. We think nothing of working late into the night, hanging out at school events, spending money as we want, being gone six nights a week and surviving on little to no sleep.

As God places in our life a spouse to walk with through life, we need to evaluate this insane schedule and realize that we now have to pay attention to doing ministry together. Trusting God to speak truths into their heart that we may need to hear, and from the beginning making date nights—without students—part of our weekly routine.

Stage 2: Romper room

The change from being young and married to married with preschoolers is a huge transition that catches most youth ministry families off guard. Our spouses, who may be used to accompanying us at youth events, teaching Bible studies and hanging out with students regularly, suddenly may have to stay behind and parent while we are off "doing ministry. Many good student ministers are lost at this stage because they didn't prepare for the changes that come.

Stage 3: Married with children

Elementary age children want to come to youth events. They like hanging out with the older students and going to all the fun places that make up youth ministry, such as amusement parks, skiing, hiking and concerts. There may be ways to incorporate them into some activities. Each family has to navigate this stage on their own.

In making our choices here, care should be taken not to spoil the youth ministry experience of our children. Here is what I mean: There ought to be some things that you cannot do until you're old enough to do them. We need to weigh carefully how much fun stuff we incorporate our children into—how many concerts, retreats, ballgames they attend—so it doesn't become passé and lose its excitement before they get their chance to be official participants.

Stage 4: Parent trap

Probably my favorite stage to this point was this one—the stage where our children were a part of the youth group. I got the privilege of being Karen's youth pastor for all seven years of her youth ministry experience and for the first three of Jordan's. It is tricky to navigate. Karen would find it amusing how on youth trips she would have to yell "Joe" for me to hear her. It was what the other students called me and "daddy" didn't seem to get heard in the noise of youth ministry. I had to be careful to not be their parent on youth trips and to give them freedom to be teens. After all I didn't give any other students money or carry their stuff.

Gina and I also decided that some events ought to be optional for our kids. Everyone else's children got to choose if they went on the retreat, to the concert or skiing, why shouldn't ours? After all, the ability to make wise choices is a sign of maturity. In some ways they got short changed; they couldn't come to the youth minister at their church and complain about how rotten their dad was, but we were blessed that others in our church and our youth ministry network stepped up to speak into their lives as well, and church business kept me out some. But I wouldn't trade those years of seeing my own flesh and blood encounter God for anything.

Stage 5: Empty nest

Stay tuned, we're still learning what this one is about.

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

Pitchers and catchers report—will Dads?

By David Prince

FIRST PERSON

Snow recently covered a good portion of the country but I have not felt as warm and vibrant in some time. Pitchers and catchers reported to Major League Baseball Spring Training in mid-February, and for some inexplicable reason that does something good for my soul.

Since 1846, when Alexander Cartwright took the Knickerbockers to play the New York Nine in the first game of organized baseball on the Elysian Fields in Hoboken, N.J., the game has possessed an irresistible and rhythmic hold on our nation. Generations of Americans are linked because of what happened on that green field in New Jersey and has been happening on subsequent diamond-stamped green fields ever since. Those fields have not simply preserved an enduring form of recreation but have helped promote vital traits which are fundamental to our health as a people.

"Without fathers, there is no baseball, only football and basketball" (Diana Schaub, "America at Bat," National Affairs). It was one of those lines that paralyzes you when you read it. As a former high school coach, I began reflecting on just how true that sentence was in my experience. In football it was common for a young man with superior brawn or athletic ability to begin playing the game successfully at an older age with no background or former tutelage in the sport. Height alone can equate to some measure of basketball success at younger ages and skills can be honed in isolation with nothing more than a ball and a hoop. None of this is true with baseball. In most cases, the way a love of baseball is transmitted is through dads.

No boy will love and pass down the game of baseball simply because someone bought him a glove, ball and bat. He cannot play catch with himself, hit himself ground balls, or throw himself batting practice. Much less will he ever figure out on his own what in the world a squeeze, sacrifice, infield fly rule, frozen rope, Texas leaguer or balk means. The mechanics, mystery, nuance and jargon of baseball demand that one be discipled in its craft and patiently taught its excellencies.

Baseball is a sport of fathers and sons. When Willie Mays speaks of his dad teaching him how to walk when he was six months old by enticing him with a rolling baseball, he is telling the story of baseball. My passion and love for the game grew with countless times of catch, ground balls and batting practice with my father.

The soil of little Joe Marshall Field in Montgomery, Ala., will always be more sacred to me than any big league park. As we picked up balls after another round of hitting, those conversations between father and son helped usher me from boyhood to manhood. My dad taught me important lessons like the vileness of the DH (designated hitter) in baseball and many things far more important. I cannot separate those lessons from the game that provided a glorious context to learn them—nor would I want to. There is a reason grown men often cry when "Field of Dreams" ends with Ray playing catch with his dad.

I am excited about the start of another season, but the start signals something far greater for me; Little League baseball games that will take place in every nook and cranny across the nation where someone can stick a baseball diamond. Those games will represent countless games of catch in the backyard between fathers and sons. It takes time, effort, diligence and never-ending conversations to pass the game of baseball from one generation to the next.

As a Christian father, I try to remember to pray every time I drive past a little league baseball park. I thank God for fathers who are intentionally investing time in their sons, and I pray that the game of baseball would remind Christian fathers that calling the next generation to hope in God (Psalm 78:5-7) works in a similar way. It takes time, effort, diligence and never-ending conversations about God and His grace (Deuteronomy 6:4-9).

My three sons have already developed a love for the game and can tell you why the DH is a pervision of the great game. But I pray one day my sons will say they learned far more important lessons about the mystery of the gospel of Jesus Christ while we picked up balls, played catch and watched every baseball game we could find. In fact, I hope they will say, "I cannot separate those eternally important lessons from the game that provided a glorious context to learn them—nor would I want to."

Perhaps it is not so inexplicable why knowing pitchers and catchers report to Spring Training does something good for my soul. (BP)

David Prince is pastor of preaching and vision at Ashland Avenue Baptist Church in Lexington, Ky.

Settling for less than God's best

By Jeremy White

FINANCIAL FORUM

The epitaph read: He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, but not wholeheartedly. Almost, but not quite. Right approach; wrong motives. This is how the Bible describes King Amaziah in 2 Chronicles 25.

Amaziah had defeated an enemy in Seir. In addition to the customary plunder, Amaziah brought back the gods of the defeated country, bowed to them and worshipped. Not surprisingly, God was angry and sent a confrontative prophet who said, "Why do you consult this people's gods, which could not save their own people from your hand?" An insightful, excellent question. Such a good question that Amaziah couldn't answer it. Instead of being teachable, he arrogantly retorted, "Who appointed you as my adviser? Get out of here."

Tragically, many Christians settle for approaches that are proposed solutions from the world—such solutions that don't even work for those without truth. This happens in many areas of life, but permit me, the financial geek, to speak of two financial applications.

A Barna Group survey found that Christians were more likely to buy lottery tickets than atheists or those of non-Christian faiths. Why turn to gambling as a source of solving financial problems when it's a financial wrecking ball to families? As the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission report stated, "Too many people, including Christians, think that money is the key to a satisfying life, and they are turning to gambling in an attempt to get that money." Nevada, where gambling is idolized, has the highest suicide and divorce rate of all 50 states. Why would Christians adopt an approach proven to be wrong, much like Amaziah?

Another financial example is the abuse of credit cards. You're abusing them if you're regularly paying interest. Why turn to paying interest on credit cards and the resultant bondage instead of following biblical principles of spending less than you earn and having emergency savings? You can't serve your Master and MasterCard at the same time.

Jeremy White is a CPA with Blythe, White and Associates in Paducah.

WESTERN www.Recorder.org
March 9, 2010

NAMB church planter does God's work for 'one life, one soul'

Continued from page 1

When Luis and Lourdes arrived at the small church for the prayer service, only one other couple had come to intercede for God's work there—but a couple with a very special need.

"With great sorrow in our hearts, we found brother Carlos Santiago and his wife, Andrea, who was kneeling in prayer," Rodríguez recalled. Andrea's hair had fallen out due to the chemotherapy she was undergoing to fight her cancer.

"I looked at my wife, she looked at me, and the Lord spoke to my heart, saying, 'For the love of that solitary life I'm sending you to Coamo. It's one life, one soul. Don't worry about the ones who made excuses and didn't come.'"

Because of Andrea's commitment, Luis and Lourdes were motivated to press on with God's challenge of planting a church in Coamo. The result was the start of Raham Baptist Church in Coamo.

The name of the church, "Raham," is the Hebrew word for "God has shown compassion." This is precisely the spiritual gift that continues to be one of the driving forces behind Rodríguez's work in Coamo.

Supported by Annie Armstrong

Luis and Lourdes Rodríguez are North American Mission Board missionaries, responsible for planting churches in Puerto Rico. They are two of the some 5,300 missionaries in the United States, Canada and their territories supported by the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions. They also are among the NAMB missionaries featured as part of the annual Week of Prayer, March 7-14. This year's theme is "Live with Urgency: Share God's Transforming Power." The 2010 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering goal is $70 million, 100 percent of which benefits missionaries like Rodríguez.

Luis, 46, was ordained as a Southern Baptist pastor in 2001 by his church at that time, Raham First Baptist Church of Santa Isabel, Puerto Rico. He came from a background in business, with a concentration in accounting—working up to a vice president position at the company where he worked for more than 20 years.

Since becoming a missionary three years ago, he has completed coursework at Luther Rice Seminary in Puerto Rico, and is planning to continue his studies at the Baptist Seminary of Puerto Rico, through Virginia's Liberty University.

"My decision to become a missionary wasn't an easy decision. I faced all sorts of difficulties," Luis said. "I quit a job with great benefits. Temptations came, uncertainty, good advice and bad advice. But God, who is rich in mercy, sustained me. My wife's support was unconditional and awesome. I simply couldn't resist what God wanted to do with me.

"One day in a prayer meeting I began asking God, 'Lord, what do you want to do with me?'" Luis continued. "After several months went by without the slightest involvement in the ministry, without a desire to continue pastoring, God sent us to Raham in Coamo, where, with a group of 15 people, we planted a church."

Although the most predominant religious group in Puerto Rico is Roman Catholicism—about 85 percent of the population—the remaining 15 percent is made up various groups like Southern Baptists, who impact the culture through schools and universities, among other means.

Coamo is a city of approximately 39,500, located in the southern region of Puerto Rico. Three years ago, Luis Rodríguez and his church planting team also started a bilingual, Christian school—Coamo Christian Academy—to minister to local children and their parents.

The school has met with great approval in the community. Beginning with only four students in 2006, it now has more than 40 enrolled.

Luis admitted he couldn't do the work he does in Coamo without the support of Southern Baptists.

"Contributions given to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering support me as a missionary in the work we are doing and help us support the church to reach children and the parents who participate in this ministry. To God be the glory."

Adalberto Muñoz, a member of Luis' ministry team, spoke of Luis' commitment and passion for the lost.

"When you talk to Luis and see him carry out his duties, when you see the fruit this ministry is bearing, there is no doubt that God really called Luis to serve.

"Pastor Luis and members of Raham Baptist Church in Coamo have a genuine calling from God to the ministry, a sincere love for the word, integrity and commitment towards the community," Muñoz added. "It's a church that inspires a lot of love. You feel you are in a wholesome environment full of love for God and for people."

Commitment to prayer and keeping God's word also have inspired door-to-door evangelism, prayerwalks, interactive team sports with non-Christians, radio talk shows, Bible studies in neighboring towns and the capital, and other activities such as "One Night with Christ," during which sister churches interact to impact the Coamo community.

Rodríguez said his ministry's most pressing need is adequate facilities and more space.

"The current facilities aren't sufficient," he noted. "We have limited space, and if we don't do something about it soon, the growth of our ministry will be adversely affected."

2010 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering Fact Sheet

Why Give to Annie Armstrong?

To support our missionary team in their efforts to reach for Christ an estimated 258 million North Americans who do not have a personal relationship with Jesus; that's three out of four people.

Annie Armstrong By the Numbers

AAEO national goal for 2010: **$70 million**
Amount given to AAEO in 2009: **$56 million**
Amount of AAEO used to support missionaries and their work: **100 percent**
Number of NAMB missionaries: **More than 5,300**
Total 2010 NAMB budget: **$126 million**
Amount of NAMB budget that comes from AAEO: **45 percent**
Amount of NAMB budget that comes from Cooperative Program: **36 percent**
Year the offering was started by WMU: **1895**
Amount given in 1895: **More than $5,000**
Year the offering was named for Annie Armstrong: **1934**

What are ways Annie Armstrong-supported missionaries use those funds?

- Start new churches.
- Evangelize students on college campuses.
- Serve the physical and spiritual needs of people through evangelism ministries.
- Serve in Baptist associations as associational missionaries or missions staff.
- Provide training and ministry in interfaith witness evangelism.
- Minister in resort settings such as lakes, campgrounds and ski areas

Who was Annie Armstrong?

- She was a native of Baltimore.
- She lived from 1850 to 1938.
- She was an advocate for Southern Baptist missions.
- She helped form Woman's Missionary Union in 1888, for which she served as the first corresponding secretary and worked without pay in that position.
- She was a passionate letter writer for the cause of missions.
- She was a good friend of Lottie Moon and helped start the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

FIRED UP FOR THE LORD ■ Left: *A fiery preacher, North American Mission Board missionary Luis Rodríguez, featured as part of the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering Week of Prayer, is pastor of a church plant, Raham Baptist Church, in Coamo, Puerto Rico.* **■ Above:** *Luis and his wife, Lourdes, accepted God's call to be missionaries three years ago, planting Raham Baptist in Coamo, a city of about 40,000 people in Puerto Rico's southern region. Luis since has helped found a Christian, bilingual school in the area which has grown from four students in 2006 to 40 today. (Photos by James Gregg/NAMB)*

Talk of GCR holds sway over IMB, NAMB trustee meetings

New paradigms, creative thinking needed to reach lost world, Rankin says

Memphis, Tenn.—The Feb. 21 preliminary report of the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force deals with some of the areas where Southern Baptists "are languishing in the task of the Great Commission," International Mission Board President Jerry Rankin told the entity's trustees March 3.

While much more needs to be done to focus the denomination on evangelizing a lost world, Southern Baptists "must be creative and willing to explore new paradigms ... for the sake of mobilizing the resources impacting a lost world," Rankin said.

The comments, which came on the second day of the IMB's two-day meeting in Memphis, Tenn., specifically addressed proposals to allow the IMB to work directly with unreached people groups present in the United States, to shift 1 percent of the SBC budget from the Executive Committee to the IMB, and to create a new category of giving called "Great Commission Giving."

Rankin said he sees significance in the door being opened for the IMB to work directly with unreached people groups in the United States.

The geographic restriction in the IMB's ministry assignment "has created a debilitating dichotomy in our denominational strategy," Rankin explained.

"Reaching these ethnic people groups, many of which are from areas that are closed or restricted to a Christian witness overseas, represents a potential for engaging their language and society with the gospel as it invariably flows from those reached in America to relatives in their homeland," Rankin told the trustees.

At the same time, however, such a change would not result in the IMB assigning missionary personnel to the United States, he said. Pulling a missionary away from an unreached people group of 10 million people would not make sense just to engage a few of those people in an American city.

"If this recommendation is adopted by the convention, I anticipate we will organize to make a concerted effort to work with (the North American Mission Board), state conventions, local associations and in response to requests of local churches, to identify unreached ethnic people groups and utilize our personnel and resources to train stateside entities to understand and witness to those with other cultural worldviews," Rankin said.

Whether the task force recommendations are adopted or not, "it is a new day for Southern Baptists," Rankin added.

"These initiatives cannot be put back in the can; they will be the incentives for new paradigms created by a new and younger generation of leadership," he noted.

"We must be creative and willing to explore new paradigms for serving Southern Baptists for the sake of mobilizing the resources impacting a lost world." (BP)

NAMB president search to ramp up now with GCR preliminary report

Alpharetta, Ga.—The search for the next North American Mission Board president will accelerate now that the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force has issued its preliminary report to the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee.

That word came from Ted Traylor, chairman of NAMB's presidential search committee, during the quarterly meeting of the mission board's trustees last month. Traylor also serves on the GCR Task Force.

"Our team has been working slowly because of the GCR team's study of the Great Commission and Southern Baptist life," noted Traylor, pastor of Olive Baptist Church in Pensacola, Fla.

"At our next search committee meeting in March, we'll start looking high and low for God's man for NAMB," Traylor said. "It's a key time in the life of the convention—with a new CEO coming in Nashville (at the Executive Committee), a new IMB president, a new NAMB president and a new president of the convention (to be elected in June). If we can get the right four men lined up, we hope to catch a fresh wind of God."

Meanwhile, NAMB Chief Financial Officer Carlos Ferrer, told trustees that "despite 2009 being a very tough year, revenues of $133.8 million were down only 7.12 percent."

"Because of the economy, this was a miracle, a blessing of God," Ferrer said. Revenue from the Cooperative Program was 5.27 percent off budget for 2009, but down only 1.2 percent compared to 2008 actual results. Annie Armstrong Easter Offering revenue was 7.2 percent off budget, but only 2.7 percent compared to actual 2008 giving. NAMB expenses were down 9.57 percent in 2009 due to staff belt-tightening measures.

The 2010 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering has a goal of $70 million, all of which goes to support more than 5,300 NAMB missionaries throughout North America.

Trustees also heard an update on GPS (God's Plan for Sharing), a massive evangelization initiative preceding Easter. GPS is a cooperative effort by NAMB, state Baptist conventions, local associations and churches.

With a joint budget of $1.7 million—$1.2 million from NAMB and $500,000 from the states—the GPS Find It Here campaign will blanket the United States and Puerto Rico with 25,000 television spots, radio spots, newspaper ads, banners, billboards and yard signs.

The unprecedented effort also will include personal door-to-door evangelism throughout the country, including the placement of some 17 million Find It Here door hangers on residential front doors. Kentucky Baptist churches and associations plan to reach more than 1.4 million households in the state during the Find It Here campaign. (BP)

Former youth group members charged in church fire case

Tyler, Texas—Two young men suspected of setting 10 East Texas churches on fire were active in the youth group of a Southern Baptist congregation before drifting away from church after the mother of one of them died three years ago.

David McAllister, father of 21-year-old Daniel George McAllister, one of two men arrested Feb. 21 on an arson charge, told the Tyler Morning Telegraph he had struggled with keeping his son on the right track since his wife, who home-schooled the boy and kept him active at First Baptist Church of Ben Wheeler, Texas, died from a heart attack and stroke.

Carlton Young, pastor of the Baptist General Convention of Texas-affiliated church, remembered Wanda McAllister as the "spiritual anchor" of the family.

"I knew her death affected him tremendously, but I hadn't seen him enough since his mother died to know how much," Young told the Tyler newspaper. "It was a really traumatic experience for their family."

Young said neither McAllister nor the other suspect, 19-year-old Jason Robert Bourque, had attended the church for a year and a half. He said their attendance fell off after McAllister's mother died and Bourque's family moved from Ben Wheeler to Lindale, Texas, about 20 miles away.

Police arrested Bourque in Van Zandt County, Texas, and McAllister in San Antonio. Both arrests were without incident and both suspects were taken to Smith County to face charges of arson in the Feb. 8 blaze that destroyed Dover Baptist Church in Tyler, Texas.

Authorities believe the duo is responsible for nine church fires set between Jan. 1 and Feb. 8 in four East Texas communities. They also are suspected in three attempted church break-ins during the rash of arsons. Additional charges are expected to be filed. (ABP)

Haiti earthquake relief effort

Buckets of Hope: 150,000 expected

Alpharetta, Ga.—Organizers of the Buckets of Hope initiative for Haiti relief estimate that 150,000 food buckets will be shipped to Port-au-Prince to help combat hunger in the earthquake-devastated country.

Several state conventions have announced a goal for the number of buckets their state's church members will contribute. Kentucky leads the way with 10,000 buckets; Tennessee expects 7,000 buckets; the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia has 6,000 buckets; Louisiana, Georgia and South Carolina each anticipate 5,000 buckets; Arkansas with 4,000; and New Mexico predicts 2,100.

"Exciting things are happening to the Buckets of Hope campaign in Colorado," Mike Gaines, disaster relief director for the Colorado Baptist General Convention, said, adding that churches there are turning Buckets of Hope into outreach efforts.

Walmart, the world's largest retailer, also is supporting the project by encouraging individual store managers to cooperate with Southern Baptists who come in to buy buckets and the items to go in them.

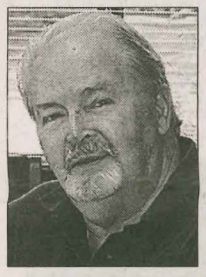
Under Buckets of Hope, which was launched in January, Southern Baptists can purchase five-gallon, plastic buckets and pack them with required foodstuffs for $30 each. The food in a single bucket can feed a Haitian family for a week.

Baptists also are asked to include a $10 cash contribution, placed in an envelope and attached to the bucket's lid, to help with the cost of shipping the buckets to Haiti.

Each state convention is developing a collection process and delivery deadline. States will be responsible for delivering the buckets to a warehouse in Hialeah, Fla., for placement in cargo containers for immediate shipment to Haiti by the end of March.

Each of the buckets will include a label in French Creole indicating that the Bucket of Hope is a gift of Christian love and support from Southern Baptists. Once the buckets arrive in Haiti, they will be distributed by Haitian Baptist churches. (BP)

Longtime Baptist editor Allen, 78, served papers in Tenn., Md. and S.C.


Fletcher Allen

Franklin, Tenn.—A retired denominational journalist who worked three decades for Baptist newspapers in three states died Feb. 27 after a long battle with cancer.

Fletcher Allen, 78, of Franklin, Tenn., worked 17 years as associate editor of the Baptist Courier in South Carolina before being named editor in 1983 of the Maryland Baptist, news journal of the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware. The paper was renamed the Baptist True Union during his editorship. It now is called Baptist Life.

In 1987, Allen became editor of The Baptist & Reflector, the news journal of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. He held the post just more than 10 years before retiring in 1998, ending a career in Baptist journalism that spanned more than 31 years.

In 2008, Allen began treatment after a recurrence of prostate cancer was found to have spread to his bones.

A native of Hartsville, S.C., Allen graduated from Furman University in 1954. He also worked six years as news director and alumni editor at the school.

Allen worked as a reporter and sports editor at the Florence (S.C.) Morning News following Army service in Germany. Before joining the Baptist Courier staff, he worked briefly in public relations for Sonoco, a manufacturing company that supplies industrial packaging products.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Betty. He is survived by four daughters and nine grandchildren. Funeral services were held March 8 at ClearView Baptist Church in Franklin, Tenn. (ABP)

A great opportunity and big responsibility

Ministering to international students is how OBI fulfills the Great Commission

This is Oneida


W.F. Underwood

Those who are familiar with the Oneida ministry know that we serve students from around the world. OBI's early ministry was primarily to our "Jerusalem"—children up the creeks and hollows around Oneida. A few years later, the ministry expanded to include boys and girls miles from our campus, thus the need to build dormitories to house those who came from "Judea."

In the 1930s and '40s, we began to serve students from other states—"Samaria"—completing yet another command from our Lord. In the mid-'50s, Oneida began to receive students from other countries, which completed the command to share the gospel to the "uttermost parts of the earth."

Having students from around the world is a great opportunity, but it also brings big responsibilities. Think about sending your middle-school or high-school child halfway around the world to a school you have never visited and to people you have never met. Often hours are spent preparing the documents and travel arrangements to come to the U.S. We always agree to have someone meet those students at the airport and bring them to our campus.

Just like U.S. students, many international students get homesick—but our international students are a lot farther from home. It can be a very anxious time for the parents when they know their child is homesick. I am sure it is a great comfort to those parents when our staff assures them that we will take care of their children.

It often is difficult to comprehend that in this day and age there still are people who have never heard about Jesus. They have never seen a church building, much less attended a church service. This provides us with a great opportunity to share the gospel. The English language skills of our international students often are limited. Our internationals attend daily chapel services and Sunday worship just like the rest of our students. But how much do they really comprehend?

The "JESUS" film has proven to be a very useful tool to millions around the world. This past weekend, some of our staff and our church WMU invited several of our international students to view the "JESUS" film in their own languages. This invitation was extended to some of our international students now, and it will be offered to the others right after spring break.

In addition to viewing the film, the students were provided with some special food native to their countries and a table full of American "sweets." We were extremely pleased that of our 24 Korean students, 22 chose to view the film. We only have one student from Japan and she watched the film, as well as all four of our Chinese students, each in their own languages.

It is difficult for many of us to realize how challenging it can be to understand something in a foreign language. Last year, one of our Chinese students who was considering becoming a Christian told us how wonderful it was to listen to a church service in her own language while visiting another Chinese student during the Christmas break. That other student was an Oneida graduate and the valedictorian of her class who became a Christian while on our campus.

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

Age is not a factor

No matter how old, Jacobs just wants to follow Christ

Clear Creek Chronicle


Donnie Fox

Don't use your age as an excuse when you talk to Paul Jacobs about following God's call. Paul is one of our new students from Berea who surrendered to God's call on his life at the age of 62.

"I got saved when I was 23," Paul said. "I was active in church up until 1989 when I let some life experiences take me out of church. I ended up moving to Berea and some people invited me to church at Liberty Avenue Baptist Church. That is where I became active once again in church, and that is where I surrendered to God's call to ministry."

Paul's journey to Clear Creek is an interesting one. "I retired from the electric company after 35 years of service," he said. "I love being around young people and got involved in college ministry at Berea College. I was working in food services at the college and got involved ministering to the baseball and basketball teams. I would travel with the teams to some of their games.

"We started a campus ministry at our church and we tied it in with the one at the college where I was serving," Paul noted. "At the time, two students at Berea got involved in our church and surrendered to God's call to ministry. They felt led to visit Clear Creek to see about transferring there.

"When they came back from visiting Clear Creek they brought me an admissions packet. I asked them why they brought it to me and they told me that God had told them to bring it to me. Well, I couldn't lay the packet down. I struggled with it for about a month. I finally told God, 'I don't know what you want with a 62-year-old man at Clear Creek, but if that is where you want me, I will go—and here I am.

"I don't know exactly what the future holds for me when I am finished at Clear Creek," Paul said. "I do know that wherever God says for me to go, I am willing to follow Him."

One thing is for sure; Paul knows that age will not be a factor or an excuse.

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

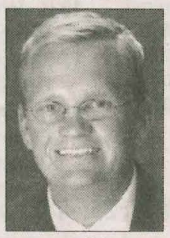
Too many 'irons in the fire'?

Life's challenges require digging deep into Scripture

From time to time I find myself thinking that I have too many "irons in the fire." Perhaps this feeling is not too uncommon as life certainly brings new challenges each day to all of us.

Recently, it seems as though our schedules with work and family all aligned and we found ourselves thinking that something must be eliminated—we have to find some relief. What are we to do when that happens? What is the wise thing to do in that case?

Ky. Baptist Assemblies



David Melber

I am reminded that wisdom is gentle as stated in the book of James. I typically do not respond to challenges in a gentle manner, so I must confess that I need to return to Scripture for guidance on how to handle our irons in the fire.

As believers we are promised that we have all things relating to life and godliness. You simply cannot read this without taking time to ponder what the Bible is saying—all things.

Since that is true, it should radically change how we respond; more specifically, how I am to respond. The pressures of life are allowed by God so that His power is made perfect in our weakness. Circumstances that are beyond our control and beyond our human means to fix will lead us to a brokenness that is critical to the Christian life.

While it is easy to be thankful for trials when we are not facing them, the true test is to thank God for them in the midst of them. As we prepare for camp this summer, the trials certainly are upon us unlike any time before.

I also am reminded that each of our guests in the coming summer also is facing very real and personal trials. But many of these students do not know Christ personally, therefore they are powerless to experience relief from the pressure.

Our prayer is that students and adults each day will cross from death into life this summer and experience peace from God in the midst of a lost and dying world that is full of challenges.

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

Health care reform debate

Overlooked aspect of health care bill could mean abortion funding

By Michael Foust

Washington—As Democrats prepare for their latest push for a health care bill, pro-life groups are targeting several aspects of the proposal, including billions of dollars in new funding for community health centers that the groups say could go to fund abortions.

Funding for the community health centers largely has been overlooked in past months, often overshadowed by debates over whether public and private insurance plans that receive federal money will be allowed to cover abortions. But the controversy over community health centers—and what restrictions they would have—is just as significant, the groups claim.

> *"In short, the Senate bill would allow direct federal funding of abortion on demand through community health centers."*
> Douglas Johnson, National Right to Life Committee legislative director

The Senate passed its version of health care reform on Christmas Eve, but only after adopting a last-hour "manager's amendment" that included, among other things, $7 billion in additional funding for the nation's 1,200-plus community health centers, which provide health care for the uninsured and underserved. Some of the centers are run by Planned Parenthood, the nation's largest abortion provider.

President Obama's proposal last month went even further than the Senate bill and provided for $11 billion in CHC funding. The House bill that passed in November had $12 billion in CHC funding, but that bill included tough pro-life language championed by Democratic Rep. Bart Stupak of Michigan that prevented CHCs from using tax dollars to cover elective abortions. The Senate bill had no such language and Obama's proposal mentioned nothing about abortion.

The controversial abortion compromise backed by Democratic Sen. Ben Nelson of Nebraska—language criticized by pro-lifers—did not cover CHCs, according to the National Right to Life Committee.

Douglas Johnson, NRLC legislative director, said his group's concern is not "merely hypothetical."

"Two pro-abortion groups ... are already actively campaigning for community health centers to perform elective abortions," Johnson wrote in a Feb. 22 analysis. "In short, the Senate bill would allow direct federal funding of abortion on demand through community health centers."

Other pro-life groups—including the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, Concerned Women for America and Americans United for Life—have expressed similar concerns.

Johnson said the Senate bill's funding of CHCs would not be restricted by the much-debated Hyde Amendment, which must be renewed each year and which applies only to the Department of Health and Human Services' annual appropriations bill and prevents Medicaid from covering elective abortions. The $7 billion for CHCs in the Senate bill "would not flow through that pipeline" and therefore would be unrestricted, Johnson pointed out.

As a general principle, if a health procedure is to be restricted, specific language must be present in the bill. But there is no language in the Senate bill that would prevent "the use of the new funds to pay for abortions performed at community health centers," Johnson said.

Johnson indicated that the Senate's pro-choice language would face opposition in the House.

"A substantial number of pro-life Democrats in the House ... have told their constituents that they are not going to vote for the Senate-passed bill because of the abortion problems," he noted. "For pro-life Democrats, President Obama's proposal only makes matter worse. The only thing that would fix the Senate bill on abortion is permanent, bill-wide language that is functionally identical to the Stupak-Pitts Amendment adopted in the House." (BP)

Defense Secretary Gates implements review of Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy

Washington—Defense Secretary Robert Gates March 2 released guidelines for a 10-month review of the military's policy prohibiting homosexuals from serving openly—a policy that he opposes but one that apparently has the support of some, if not most, of the members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Gates released the guidelines exactly one month after appearing before a Senate committee and saying he backs President Obama's goal of overturning the so-called Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy. Admiral Michael Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said at the same hearing that he, too, personally would like to see the policy reversed, something only Congress can do.

But none of the representatives of the four Armed Forces branches who serve on the Joint Chiefs of Staff sided with Gates or Mullen during testimony before House and Senate committees Feb. 23-25. In fact, three of them—representatives of the Army, Air Force and Marines—expressed reservations about overturning the current policy.

Gates said in his memo last week that the review from the working group would be due Dec. 1. It began its work last month.

"To be successful," Gates wrote, "we must understand all issues and potential impacts associated with repeal of the law and how to manage implementation in a way that minimizes disruption to a force engaged in combat operations and other demanding military activities around the globe."

"Should Congress take this action, strong, engaged and informed leadership will be required at every level to properly and effectively implement a legislative change."

The study, Gates said, will involve troops and their families, and will "consider the impacts, if any, a change in the law would have on military readiness, military effectiveness and unit cohesion."

Army General Carter Ham, commander of U.S. Army Europe, and Jeh Johnson, the Pentagon's top lawyer, are leading the study.

Congress passed the law in 1993 prohibiting homosexuals from openly serving in the military. The law said "there is no constitutional right to serve in the armed forces" and that the policy is necessary because "living conditions and working conditions" in the military—particularly in combat—"are often spartan, primitive, and characterized by forced intimacy with little or no privacy." It further stated, "The prohibition against homosexual conduct is a longstanding element of military law that continues to be necessary in the unique circumstances of military service." (BP)

DISASTER RELIEF IN AMERICAN SAMOA ■ **Left:** *Kentucky Baptist Larry Koch (left) purifies water for American Samoa residents. With him is fellow Southern Baptist disaster relief workers James Newman (center) and Terry Henderson.* ■ **Right:** *Mike Sio, an American Samoa native, teaches Elaine Koch to make a basket out of coconut leaves. The Kochs are coordinating volunteer teams from Southern Baptist state conventions for the North American Mission Board and assessing the remaining needs on the South Pacific island devastated by an earthquake and tsunami last September. (Photos courtesy of Elaine Koch)*

Kentucky Baptists take part in ongoing disaster relief work in American Samoa

Happy Valley, American Samoa—The Kentucky Baptist Convention recently sent a group of five volunteers to American Samoa to help the island recover from the tsunami that caused severe damage there last fall.

The team arrived on the island Feb. 26 and will return later this week. Four of the volunteers are Kentucky Baptists from Stanford; the fifth volunteer is an Indiana Baptist.

According to the KBC's Disaster Relief Associate Coy Webb, the team is doing assessment and reconstruction work, as well as training American Samoan natives to continue the reconstruction work long after the volunteers are gone.

Webb said the team is part of the larger Southern Baptist disaster relief effort that started soon after the tsunami hit American Samoa last September.

"American Samoa suffered significant damage during the tsunami. Southern Baptist disaster relief responded very quickly to the need and made the decision to be involved in the recovery for a longer period of time," Webb said. "Though we are only able to send small teams, we have made a firm commitment to help with the rebuilding of the island."

The KBC team is working in coordination with Larry and Elaine Koch, a Kentucky Baptist couple who have been providing leadership to the rebuild effort since January. The Kochs are scheduled to conclude their volunteer service in mid-April.

If funding allows, another Southern Baptist couple will take their place and continue the work, Webb noted, but donations have been slow as recovery in Haiti has occupied media attention and volunteer resources.

"Certainly the lack of funding and resources is limiting the disaster relief rebuild on the island. It seems that in many ways, American Samoa has been forgotten," he said. "The need there is not on the scale of Haiti but is just as urgent. Many are still living in tents because they were left homeless."

Kentucky Baptists who wish to help financially with the rebuild effort in American Samoa can mail donations directly to the Hawaii Baptist Convention, Samoa Disaster Relief Fund, 2042 Vancouver Drive, Honolulu, HI, 96822.

UC, Crossings Camps team up for spring break

By Daphne Baird
University of the Cumberlands

Williamsburg—It's that time of year as mid-term approaches and the snow melts, most students begin to think about one thing in particular—spring break.

While many students think of exotic locations and fun in the sun, those who are part of Mountain Outreach, a volunteer construction ministry at University of the Cumberlands, look at spring break in a completely different way.

While their counterparts from hundreds of colleges and universities around the country are packing their swimsuits, members of Cumberlands' Mountain Outreach are packing their oldest jeans, work boots and Mountain Outreach T-shirts.

One special shirt they will pack displays the acronym S.P.O.T.S.—Special Projects Other Than Summer—and the Bible verse the students have chosen for the year, Matthew 9:37: "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few."

Typically, Mountain Outreach volunteers travel to an Eastern Kentucky community where they work in teams to complete several home improvement projects. However, this year, in keeping with the group's theme, the students have chosen to work in partnership with the Kentucky Baptist Assemblies and head to Western Kentucky to Jonathan Creek, one of the two homes for Crossings Camps.

"They will be virtually working to bring in the harvest as they prepare the camp for the thousands who will come to Jonathan Creek this year," said Mountain Outreach Director Marc Hensley.

The major project for the group is the installation of new theater seating in the A.M. Johnson Worship Center, which will increase seating capacity from 500 to 650. They also will build a partition to create new classroom space. Also on the groups to-do list for the week is construction of porches and steps for the two buildings that will house camp staff members. Additional projects include refurbishing bathrooms and installing water fountains. The group of 30 volunteers, working in teams, will accomplish as many of the projects as possible during the week.

In addition to the physical work, the Mountain Outreach students will participate in morning services at Four Rivers Community Church in Paducah March 14. That evening, they will lead the evening service at Hopkinsville's Trinity Baptist Church.

The students said they are looking forward to taking their ministry from the mountains to new fields in what they see as a wider opportunity to reach thousands of individuals who will experience life-changing events at Jonathan Creek. Those who will benefit from their efforts include many Cumberlands students who will work as Crossings staff members this summer, as well as many campers who may become Cumberlands students.

Mountain Outreach is a student-led volunteer construction ministry that, in 26 years has built 132 homes for families in Southeast Kentucky. In addition, they have built hundreds of wheelchair ramps and made countless home improvements for families and individuals, who for physical or economic reasons are unable to perform the work themselves.

KBC Calendar of Events

KENTUCKY BAPTIST CONVENTION

March

12-13 Creative Ministries Festival, First Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

12-13 Women on Mission Regional Retreat, Camp Schafer, Hawesville.

12-19 GPS Find It Here Spring Break, various locations.

13 All-State Youth Choir and Orchestra Auditions, First Baptist Church, Bowling Green; First Baptist Church, Walton; First Baptist Church, Mount Sterling; Lewis Lane Baptist Church, Owensboro; Lone Oak First Baptist Church, Paducah; Parkland Baptist Church, Louisville.

13 State Vacation Bible School Clinic—West, Edgewood Baptist Church, Hopkinsville.

13 Region 2 RA Congress, Nortonville Baptist Church.

13 Region 3 RA Congress, Bethany Baptist Church, Alvaton.

15-16 Welcome to Kentucky, Hilton Garden Inn & Baptist Building, Louisville.

16 Understanding Other Beliefs, Parkway Baptist Church, Bardstown.

17-20 National Ministry Conference, First Baptist Church, Leesburg, Fla.

18-21 Adult Kentucky Changers, Cedarmore Camp and Conference Center, Bagdad.

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

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by staff

■ **BEAVER DAM**—Ridgecrest Church recently called **Greg Hillard** as pastor. He previously was pastor at New Harmony Church in Beaver Dam.

■ **BREEDING**—**Stoney McKinney** recently resigned as pastor of Harrod's Fork Church.

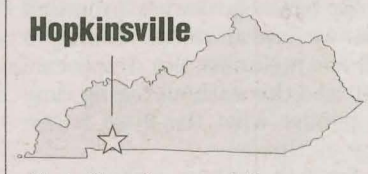
■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Beech Grove Church recently called **Larry Rowell** as pastor.

Campbellsville University will host country music star **Vince Gill** in concert March 26, 7 p.m. at the school's Ransdell Chapel. The event is a fundraiser to purchase turf and lighting for the Campbellsville football and baseball fields. Tickets are $50 for reserved seats and $35 for general admission. To purchase tickets, call the school's office of development at (270) 789-5211.

■ **INEZ**—First Church recently called **Brian Owens** as pastor. He previously was pastor at Pigeon Fork Church in Waddy.

Spotlight on ...

Hopkinsville



First Church named former pastor **Rodney Travis** its pastor emeritus Feb. 21. Travis served the church from 2000-07. He retired in 2007 after more than 40 years in ministry.

■ **PADUCAH**—Bellview Church recently honored Pastor **E. Lee James** on his 18 years of service to the church.

■ **VERSAILLES**—Versailles Church recently honored **John Brandon** on his 20 years of service to the church.

■ **WESTPORT**—**Evert Staib** recently resigned as pastor of Covington Church.

Classified Ads

FOR RENT: South Carolina beach townhouse. Very affordable rental; 2BR, 2Bath, beautiful décor. Wild Dunes Resort on Isle of Palms, minutes from historic Charleston. Call (502) 228-5912; or e-mail jeffandbecky @bellsouth.net.

SEEKING: Part-time youth minister. All inquiries to chairman of youth minister search committee, Garry Zook, 762 Lakehill Beach Estates, Springville, TN 38252.

SEEKING: Bivocational SBC pastor for Karns Grove Baptist Church, located between Philpot and Whitesville, Ky. Send resumés to: Pastor Search Committee, Karns Grove Baptist Church, 6371 Karns Grove Road, Philpot, KY 42366.

SEEKING: Senior pastor for First Baptist Church of Florence, Ala. Masters-level seminary degree (SBC) or above, and five years experience as a pastor preferred. Send resumé to: fbcfpastor search@gmail.com; or mail to: 209 N Walnut Street, Florence, AL 35630.

SEEKING: Church secretary, proficient in Microsoft Office and church office procedures. 25-32 hours/week. Submit resumé by Apr. 1 to Farmdale Baptist Church, 1238 Durrett Lane, Louisville, KY 40213; or fbclou @bellsouth.net.

SEEKING: Part-time music minister for Brookside Baptist Church. Responsible for blended-style congregational worship, praise and choir discipleship. Send resumés to Pastor DeWayne L. Brewer, 1351 Wilmore Road, Nicholasville, KY 40356; or e-mail to dewayne@brookside-baptist.org.

SEEKING: Full-time Southern Baptist pastor for The Potter's House Baptist Worship Center in Smithland, Ky., a member of Ohio River Baptist Association of Southern Baptists. Submit resumé to PO Box 3520, Paducah, KY 42003-3520. Resumés will be accepted through 5-15-2010. www.PottersHouseBWC.org.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of music. Prefer degree in music and experience in leading music for all ages. Will have additional ministry duties. Send resumés by mail to: Search Committee, Calvary Baptist Church, 121 Kentucky Ave., Princeton, KY 42445.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music for growing church. Primary duties include leading choir and congregational singing; preparing seasonal cantatas; and coordinating music programs. Please send resumé to Minister of Music Search Committee, New Bethel Baptist Church, 2022 Verona Mudlick Road, Verona, KY 41092; or e-mail to nbbc2003@aol.com with "Minister of Music" for the subject.

Pastor Porpoise's Play

By Todd and Michelle Deaton

One Sunday at Surfside Church, Pastor Porpoise asked the Cove Kids to put on a play for the other members.

"You will need to choose a director, a star and a cast, someone to make props and costumes, a cue card holder, and someone to work the lights and sound equipment," Pastor Porpoise suggested.

"Ooh, ooh, I want to be the star!" exclaimed Syd Squid.

"Pick me! Pick me!" Lenny Lobster pleaded.

"I think Sunny should be the star. After all, she is a star-fish," said Seamore Seahorse.

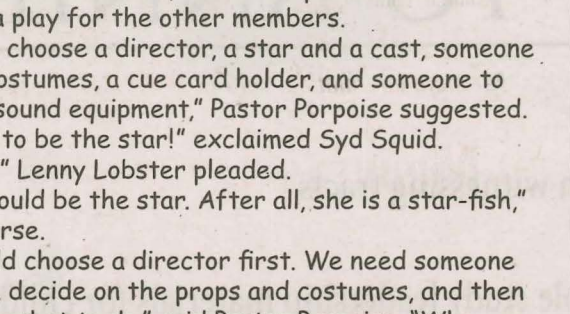
"Perhaps we should choose a director first. We need someone to find a good script, decide on the props and costumes, and then help the actors know what to do," said Pastor Porpoise. "Who wants to be the director?"

"Sounds like a lot of work!" whined Craig Crab.

"Seamore, why don't you be the director?" suggested Pastor Porpoise. "For now, we will make Sunny the star."

Seamore nodded and Sunny beamed. But Syd walked to the corner of the stage and began pouting. Lenny and Craig decided to build the props together, while Clarice Clam and Ollie Oyster made the costumes.

"Great," said Pastor Porpoise. "That leaves holding the cue cards and working the lights and sound equipment for Syd. How does that sound, Syd?"



Syd didn't reply.

"You would be perfect. You can use all those arms of yours," Pastor Porpoise added. But Syd ignored him.

A few days later at play practice, things were not going well. Lenny was busy building props, while Craig sat around and played video games.

"Building props is too much work," complained Craig.

"How would you know?" snapped Lenny. "I'm the one who is doing it all."

Meanwhile, Syd, who was jealous of Sunny, was causing some problems. She held the cue cards upside down and kept mixing them up. She opened and closed the curtains at the wrong times, and she turned the lights on and off while Sunny was speaking.

Seamore had grown tired of Syd's bad behavior and of Craig and Lenny bickering. Frustrated, he began bossing Sunny around, telling her how to do her part better.

When Pastor Porpoise stopped by two days before they were to perform, he saw a disaster. "What's going on?" he asked.

They all complained at once about how the others were acting.

"Kids, I think you are forgetting what our purpose is here and who is the star," Pastor Porpoise said.

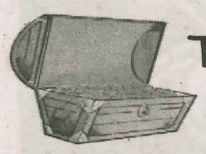
"That's right," Sunny interrupted. "I'm the star."

"No, Sunny, that's not what I meant," replied Pastor Porpoise. "Jesus is the real star. The reason we're doing this play is to tell others about Him."

"I guess we forgot," agreed Seamore.

"You all need to work together," suggested Pastor Porpoise. "Everyone has an important part. If this play is going to be successful, then we all must do our part well."

On the night of the play, the Cove Kids did well, and they all received a standing ovation.



Treasure Hunt

What problems did the Cove Kids have at play practice?

What did Pastor Porpoise suggest?

What was the purpose of the play?

How are actors in a play similar to parts of a body?

How do church members work together to share Christ with others?

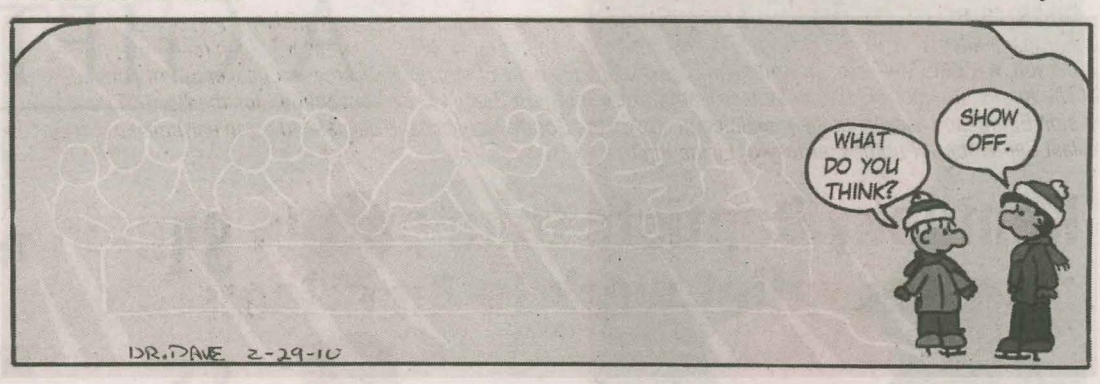
Read 1 Corinthians 12:18 together.

For Heaven's Sake

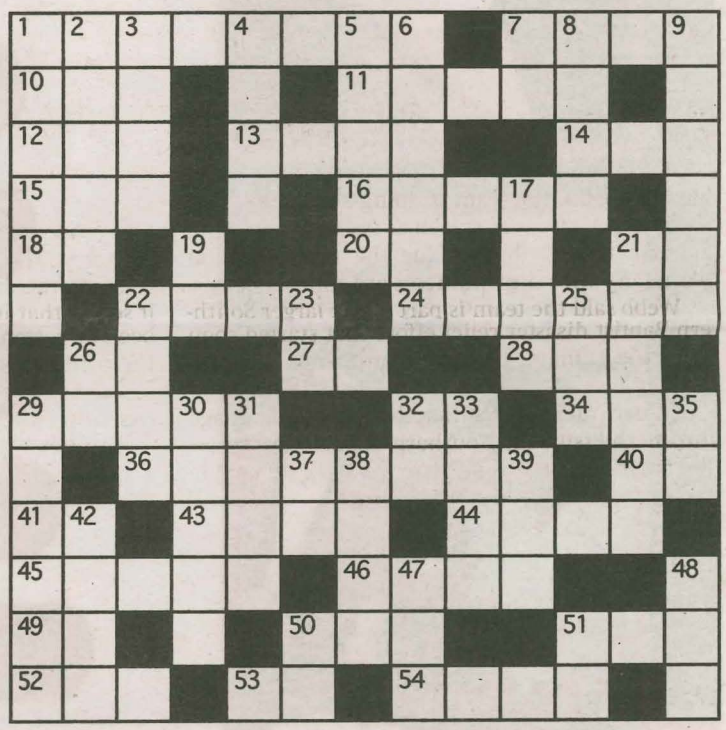
Mike Morgan

Preacher's Kids

David Ayers



Bible Crosswords



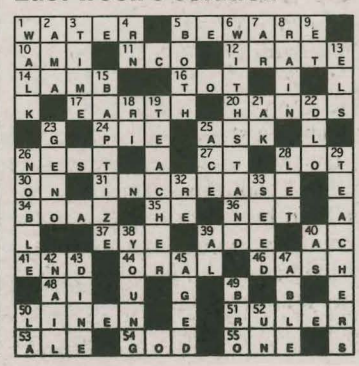
Across

1 "Receive his mark in his ____, or in his hand" (Revelation 14:9)
7 "If the foot shall say, Because I am not the ____, I am not of the body" (1 Corinthians 12:15)
10 Imperial Chemical Industries, abbr.
11 "In the day thou wast born thy ____ was not cut" (Ezekiel 16:4)
12 Bird's beak
13 "Let ____ esteem other better than themselves" (Philippians 2:3)
14 Speed measurement, abbr.
15 Car fuel
16 Peruvian beast of burden
18 The letter that follows "em"
20 East Indies, abbr.
21 Either
22 "Fall by the ____ of the sword" (Luke 21:24)
24 Activity or movement
26 Preposition
27 Fifteen, Romans num.
28 Wing of a building
29 "I am escaped with the skin of my ____" (Job 19:20)
32 The letter that precedes "em"
34 "A man's pride shall bring him ____" (Proverbs 29:23)
36 "The government shall be upon his ____" (Isaiah 9:6)
40 Midwest state, abbr.
41 Negative
43 Last, prefix
44 Violent group
45 Sticky
46 "God ... spake in time ____ unto the fathers by the prophets" (Hebrews 1:1)
49 First person plural pronoun
50 Female, suffix
51 Sheep's noise
52 And so on, Lat. abbr.
53 Verb of being
54 "The ____ of every man is Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:3)

Down

1 "Jesus ... with his ____ wrote on the ground" (John 8:6)
2 The Atlantic or Pacific
3 "The Lord God ... took one of his ____ , and closed up the flesh" (Genesis 2:21)
4 "Thou shalt bruise his ____" (Genesis 3:15)
5 "Immediately his feet and ____ bones received strength" (Acts 3:7 O.E. spelling)
6 Flower
7 Fifth letter of the Hebrew alphabet
8 Soul, Lat.
9 Remove horns
17 The widow's ____
19 Edward, for short
21 Kind of tea
22 "Having ____, see ye not?" (Mark 8:18)
23 Used-to-be, prefix
25 "Love worketh no ____ to his neighbour" (Romans 13:10)
26 Exist
29 "The ____ is a little member" (James 3:5)
30 "Take of his blood ... upon the ____ of their right hand" (Exodus 29:20)
31 "____, is the Lord of Hosts" (Isaiah 6:3)
32 Word reviser, abbr.
33 "They brake not his ____" (John 19:33)
35 First person plural pronoun
37 Arizona's neighbor, abbr.
38 "Only her ____ moved, but her voice was not heard" (1 Samuel 1:13)
39 Rodent
42 To drive out
47 The remains of burned wood
48 "With the ____ bone of an ass ... have I slain a thousand men" (Judges 15:16)
50 Printer's measure
51 Minister's undergraduate degree, abbr.

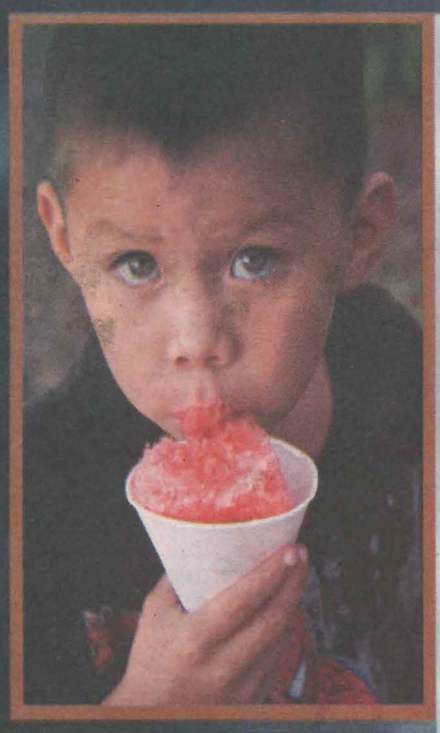
Last week's solution

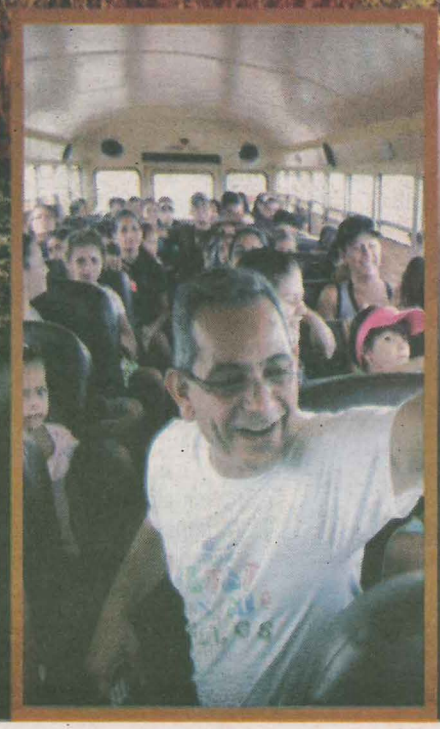


LIVE WITH URGENCY

SHARE GOD'S TRANSFORMING POWER

ROMANS 1:16





A GIFT TO ANNIE

$1	Ten witnessing tracts
$5	Bible study leadership materials for children's on-site weekly Bible lesson
$10	Gas gift card for GED student to attend class and mentoring session in a ministry meeting
$25	Sports Bible for athletes at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs
$50	Provides food for a Family Movie Night outreach in an apartment community
$100	Reusable promotional signs advertising a multi-housing church plant
$250	Summer camp scholarship for an unchurched child to attend camp for the first time
$500	Food, materials, and promotion needed to conduct a Christmas program in a manufactured home community

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