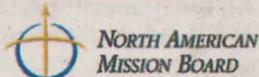


Shine like stars in the world
Philippians 2:15

WESTERN Recorder

March 16, 2010
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FOR THE RECORD



Baptists
North American Mission Board revises data previously given to the GCR Task Force. *Page 6.*



Missions
NAMB interim Harris tells church planters their mission remains 'unchanged.' *Page 7.*



Kentucky
More than 1,500 participate in pair of annual Creative Ministries Festivals. *Pages 8.*



Warren Co. church cancels services for local outreach

By Ken Walker
Kentucky Baptist Convention

Oakland—Twice a year, Oakland Baptist Church shifts worship to a nearby park, but March 21 marks the first time it will cancel Sunday services in order to share the gospel with its neighbors.

That day members will distribute more than 900 Find It Here bags containing gospel brochures in a five-mile radius around the church. Oakland is located about 15 miles north of Bowling Green.

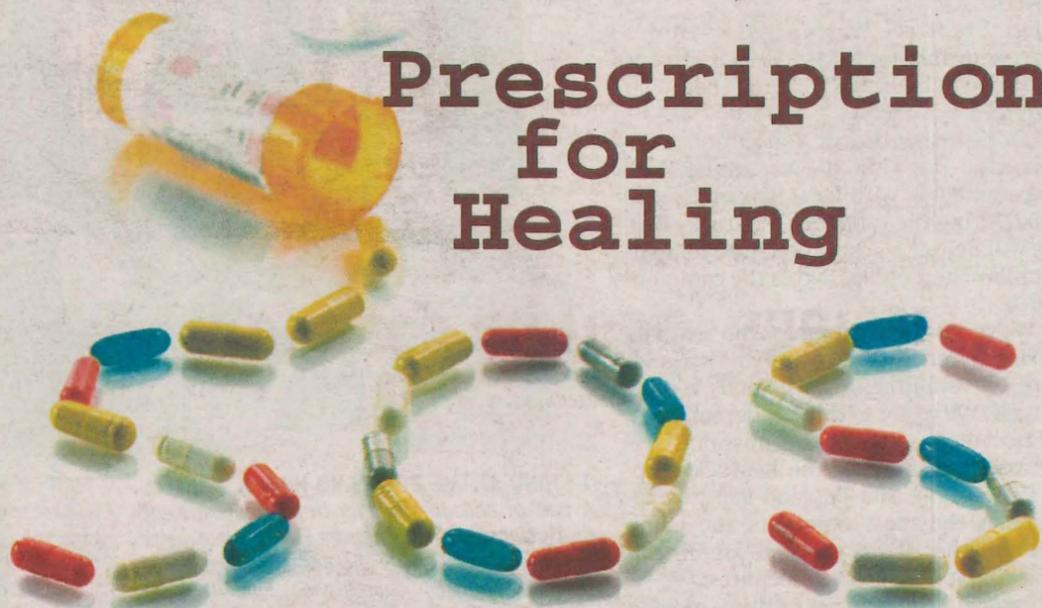
The event is being billed as "A Divine Appointment Opportunity."

"Those who don't know Jesus are probably going to be at home mid-morning on a Sunday," Pastor Tim Colovos said. "We can be the Lord's hands and feet to bring the gospel to them."

The longtime pastor got the idea for the unusual distribution after a meeting about the Find It Here campaign last fall at Warren Baptist Association.

Driving back to the church, Colovos thought of ways to best reach their neighbors. Going door to door on a Sunday or Wednesday night would mean conflicts with dinners, ballgames or other plans—but not Sunday morning, he reflected.

□ See *Find It Here ... Page 2*



Prescription for Healing

Former addict points others to Christ to beat pill addiction

By Dannah Prather
Partnerships Editor

Murray—It was a moment filled with despair, drama and a touch of irony.

A woman with faith as her middle name—literally—sat in a big green easy chair, weary and sin-sick, "praying for God to kill me."

Madea Faith Erickson was a college graduate, a wife of more than 20 years and the mother of two daughters. Most Sundays she and her family could be found attending services at First Baptist Church of Murray where she sang in the choir.

She said few people probably realized she was singing while "high as a kite."

"I couldn't do anything without the pills," Erickson explained.

A 21-year addiction to prescription painkillers brought Erickson to that green chair as an admitted felon on probation with her supply line to Hydro-

codone cut to one doctor and one prescription per month. With an addiction that had escalated to 40 pills per day, Erickson said she maxed out the script pretty quickly.

When she talks about that moment today, Erickson advises those listening: "Don't give up just before the miracle happens."

A Bible verse, perhaps one she memorized as a child or teenager in Sunday school, came to mind: "If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will tell this mountain 'move from here to there,' and it will move" (Matthew 17:20).

Instead of focusing on the mountain, Erickson said, she thought about the mustard seed, and the fact that, years before, she had accepted Christ as her personal Savior.

As she pondered the tiny mustard seed, she thought, "I might have that much faith."

□ See *Addiction recovery ministries ... Page 3*

Chile earthquake relief effort focuses on food, shelter

By Mark Kelly
Baptist Global Response

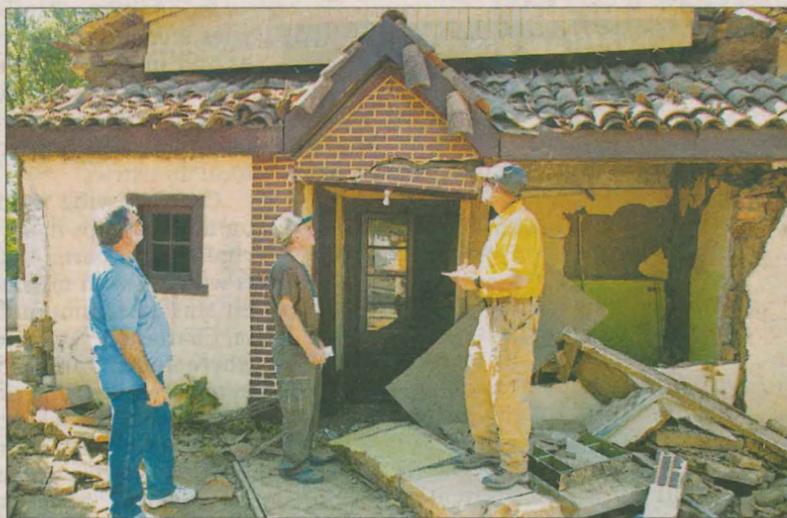
Concepción, Chile—Southern Baptist disaster relief volunteers are on the ground in Chile, partnering with Chilean Baptists to address critical needs in two areas hit hard by the 8.8-magnitude earthquake that struck the country Feb. 27.

A six-member team from the South Carolina Baptist Convention landed in Santiago March 9 and a second team joined them this week. Two teams from the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention arrived over the weekend.

The teams, which specialize in mass feeding operations, will set up kitchens capable of producing as many as 1,000 meals daily.

The South Carolina team began by purchasing equipment for two kitchens, using money provided by Southern Baptist hunger and relief funds, said Charles Clark, an International Mission Board missionary who serves as strategy leader for the part of South America that includes Chile.

The South Carolina and Texas



ASSESSING THE DAMAGE In Chile, Southern Baptist assessment team members (from left) Rick Miller, Jim Howard and Mike Sanders examine earthquake damage to a Baptist church in Cauquenes.

feeding teams will train Chilean Baptist partners to run the kitchens and distribute meals themselves. The approach reflects an overall strategy of assisting Chilean Baptists as they develop and fine tune their own disaster response mech-

anisms.

South Carolina Baptists also are preparing to send a planeload of medical equipment, according to Cliff Satterwhite, director of disaster relief for the South Carolina convention. Five of the 13 hospitals

in the quake region were destroyed and are in dire need of medical equipment and medication. The equipment, which is being donated by Southeastern Medical Supply, will be transported into Chile with the country's military providing logistical support.

In addition to the kitchen units, an initial disbursement of \$150,000 from Southern Baptist relief funds has been used to purchase water, first-aid supplies and other relief materials for distribution in the quake zone, Clark said.

Another immediate need is emergency shelter, he pointed out.

"While some tents and tarps will be used for shelter, another option is a temporary pine-sided, tin-roofed, slatted-floor house that can be put together in a couple of hours," Clark said. "The materials, labor and know-how are readily available locally. The cost is about \$500 to \$600 each to construct."

The possibility of providing 500 to 600 of the shelters, using \$300,000 in disaster relief funds, is being evaluated, he noted. (BP)

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Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, Mar. 17

Find It Here

Oakland Baptist Church to cancel Sunday service in favor of outreach

Continued from page 1

"We'll just state who we are, what we're doing and ask if there's anything we can pray about with them," Colovos noted. He said they want to show their neighbors that "we care enough about them to cancel our services."

Jeff Crabtree, Warren Association's director of missions, said Find It Here is conducive to churches forming their own strategies.

The Kentucky Baptist Convention is coordinating the Find It Here evangelistic campaign along with local Baptist associations. During the campaign, Kentucky Baptists will deliver a gospel brochure to up to 1.4 million households across the commonwealth.

"We've got some churches who are making Find It Here their own and this is a good example," Crabtree said. "It sends a good message. We've got to think differently."

Eric Allen, director of missions service and ministries for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, said Oakland Baptist's approach is the most unique of the many ways churches across the state are distributing Find It Here gospel brochures.

"I applaud their move to think outside the box and try something different, perhaps even risky," Allen said. "They are doing more than just going to church that Sunday—they've chosen to be the church by taking the gospel to their community."

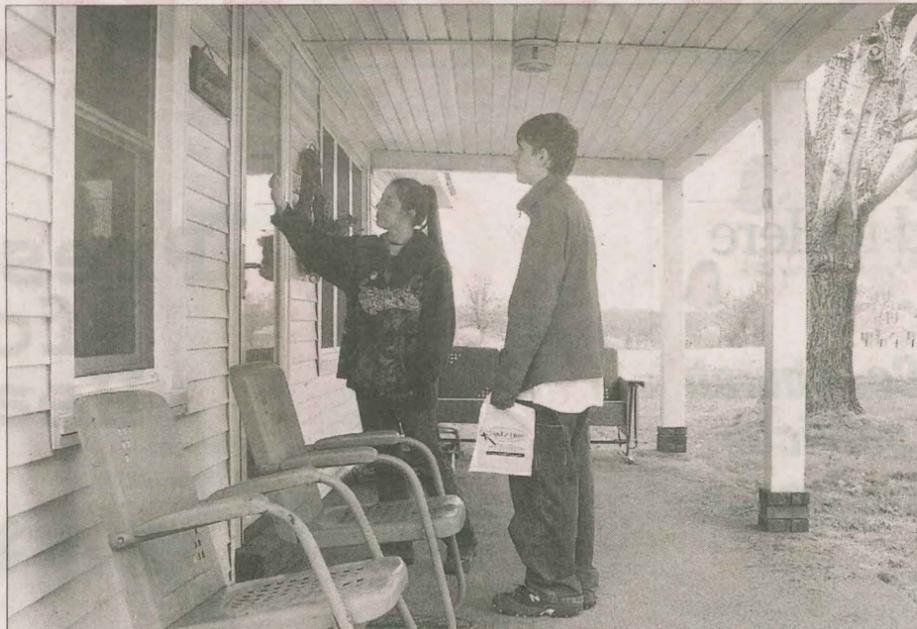
Members will gather at 9:30 a.m. this Sunday for a half hour of prayer and discussion. They then will receive maps and divide into teams of three or four people.

Colovos said he is encouraging parents to bring their school-age children to the project, which will include mixed teams of seniors and teens circulating in neighborhoods closest to the church.

Despite Kentucky's harsh winter, there is no alternative date in case of inclement weather. A phone tree is set up to remind members of the event, which follows on the heels of a March 14-17 revival with evangelist Dale Rose.

"We're going to do it rain, snow or shine," the pastor said. "This is the time we feel the Lord wants us to do this."

In the weeks prior, Oakland Baptist has held witness training and other sessions to



'I STAND AT THE DOOR AND KNOCK' ■Above: A pair of college students from Western Kentucky University help deliver Find It Here bags to Edmonson County homes in advance of Oakland Baptist's church-wide Find It Here effort this Sunday. Kentucky Baptist Campus Ministries students are helping local churches statewide with their Find It Here efforts. ■Right: A Find It Here bag with a gospel presentation and Easter Sunday invitation hangs from a doorknob. (Oakland Baptist Church photos)

prepare members for the effort.

To give those who have never shared their faith a chance to observe others, captains will be appointed for each team to lead presentations.

"This is a way for people to get their feet wet," Colovos explained. "Hopefully they will say, 'This is long overdue in my life; this is something I can do.' This is a good opportunity to get back to the grassroots of soul winning."

Crabtree said Find It Here is helping make the association's churches more sensitive to people around them.

"What I'm hearing is people saying, 'We went out prayerwalking and didn't realize there were that many houses around the church,'" he said. "This is the momentum of this thing—to get people out."



Campbellsville, Cumberlands students spend spring break on mission trips

Campbellsville—This week, students from both Campbellsville University and University of the Cumberlands are spending their spring break week on a variety of mission trips at home and abroad.

In addition, Baptist Campus Ministries students from several state colleges and universities are lending a hand to a number of local churches throughout Kentucky with their Find It Here campaigns, as well as participating in other local ministries.

Campbellsville students are serving on mission trips in several U.S. cities, including Dearborn, Mich., where a group is working with missionaries in the largest Muslim community in the U.S.; Atlanta, Charleston, S.C., and Gainesville, Fla., where students are doing mission work in inner-city areas; and Costa Rica, where a small group is backpacking through the Conte Reservation doing house testimonies and showing Christian movies.

All of the groups are sponsored by Campbellsville's BCM. The Costa Rica trip also is commissioned by Campbellsville Baptist Church.

A Campbellsville University team sponsored by Sports Reach, a Christian sports ministry, also is in Florida this week sharing the gospel at prisons around the state through softball.

Meanwhile, University of the Cumberlands students are spending their spring break ministering in New Orleans. The

Kentucky Baptist CP totals remain just behind budget goal through Feb.

Louisville—Halfway through the 2009-10 fiscal year, Cooperative Program totals continue to keep pace with the Kentucky Baptist Convention's working budget of \$23 million for the fiscal year.

Kentucky Baptists gave \$1,727,410 through the Cooperative Program in February, leaving totals for the fiscal year just \$16,110 (0.14 percent) behind pace for the \$23 million working budget, according to Lowell Ashby, KBC's business services team leader.

So far this fiscal year, Kentucky Baptists have given a total of \$11,483,890. The fiscal year began last September and will end Aug. 31. In order to stay on pace for the working budget, an average of \$1,919,352 is needed each month for the remaining six months of the fiscal year, Ashby noted.

CP totals remain behind the original fiscal-year budget of \$24.48 million, Ashby said, now by \$756,110 (6.18 percent). However, because of the challenging national economy, the KBC is operating under the approved working budget of \$23 million for the 2009-10 fiscal year, he pointed out.

"We are thankful for CP gifts are very close to being on target halfway through the fiscal year," said Billy Compton, KBC's executive associate for Cooperative Program and resources. "Even as Kentucky Baptists actively engage in outreach this spring through Find It Here, their sacrificial giving through the Cooperative Program is simultaneously enabling the gospel to be shared across the nation and across the globe."

Churches urged to update online profiles

Louisville—Coordinators for the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Find It Here evangelistic campaign are reminding churches to update their profiles on www.SBC.net if they haven't done so already.

During the campaign, which culminates on Easter Sunday, Kentucky Baptists will deliver a gospel brochure to up to 1.4 million households across the commonwealth. Recipients who want to know more will be directed to www.FindItHere.com, where they also can search for a Southern Baptist church near them.

"It's important for each church to update their profiles so visitors will have the correct information and location for the church," said Ross Bauscher, KBC's evangelism growth team leader. "We want to make it as easy as possible for those in our communities to learn more about the gospel message."

For most KBC churches, delivery of the brochures will be taking place be-

tween March 6-21. A supporting media campaign is slated to run March 15-April 4 and features a 30-second TV spot that will run in all broadcast markets in Kentucky. Radio and Spanish-language billboards also are being used in some areas of the state.

To check the accuracy of a church listing and submit updates, an authorized church leader or staff member should visit ChurchSearch.net and click on the link to edit the church's listing near the bottom of the page.

Identification using the seven-digit Southern Baptist Convention identification number is required. The number is the same one used for the Annual Church Profile. Individuals who need assistance in updating their information should send an e-mail to Webmaster@SBC.net.

The KBC is partnering with the North American Mission Board and Baptist associations to conduct the Find It Here campaign.

Addiction recovery ministries push Christ as source of healing

Continued from page 1

It was in that moment, Erickson said, that the Holy Spirit "let me feel what it would be like if I was 'off' the drugs.

That brief glimpse of freedom and clarity was enough. Erickson said, "I'm done."

Then, she recalled, she got to work letting Christ free her from addiction.

Debbie Gilbert, director of the Celebrate Recovery ministry at Hawk Creek Baptist Church in London, has met people with addictions similar to Erickson's.

"A lot of them have a church background," Gilbert said, noting one woman involved in Celebrate Recovery was "saved when she was 12, extremely involved in church, (who) led her whole family to the Lord." Given painkillers after an injury, the woman became addicted and began buying the drugs illegally.

Gilbert said eventually the woman's children asked a judge to intervene.

Many believers who struggle with addiction "are so ashamed," Gilbert noted. "They can't understand how that can happen to a Christian."

According to Kentucky's Justice and Public Safety Cabinet, addiction to prescription drugs is happening to too many Kentuckians. The cabinet has said the commonwealth has one of the highest rates of prescription drug abuse in the nation.

In a two-year period, prescriptions dispensed for all controlled substances jumped more than 13 percent overall, increasing in all of Kentucky's 120 counties.

Those statistics support Erickson's urgent message to Kentucky's congregations: "You have addicts right there in your church."

In a report released this year, Kentucky's Office of Drug-Control Policy said that in 2009 "a trend ... developed involving hundreds of Kentuckians traveling to South Florida to obtain painkillers."

Another "emerging trend" noted by the office is "prescription drug abuse by teens."

Coupled with the ongoing problem of methamphetamine production and trafficking, "we knew that the (drug) problem was horrendous in our area," Gilbert said.

The Hawk Creek Baptist ministry began three years ago with about 10 people. "Now we'll have a crowd of anywhere from 50 to



UNBOTTLED ANSWERS Recovering prescription medicine addict Madea Faith Erickson shares her story of addiction and subsequent healing through recommitting herself to Jesus Christ to a women's group at Murray State University. (Photo by Dannah Prather)

70," attending each week, Gilbert pointed out.

Some judges in the Laurel County area have seen results in the program and are ordering offenders to Celebrate Recovery, she added.

Developed by Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, Calif., Celebrate Recovery addresses a number of addictions and struggles including eating disorders, pornography, co-dependency and alcoholism, all through a Bible-centered curriculum.

Weekly meetings include large-group worship, testimonies and Bible study. Members then go into small groups—some structured similarly to the 12-step program developed by Alcoholics Anonymous—to address specific issues.

In only three years, Hawk Creek Baptist has helped four other churches in the

London area start Celebrate Recovery ministries. "Now there are five Celebrate Recovery programs in a 14-mile radius," Gilbert said.

Another Kentucky Baptist congregation serving its community through Celebrate Recovery is Edgewood Baptist Church in Hopkinsville. About 100 people participate each week.

Pastor Nick Sandefur said it is a ministry the church was eager to support.

"You've got to meet people where their hurts are," he said.

About 60 Edgewood members help in Celebrate Recovery by cooking and serving a weekly meal, providing child care, leading small groups and in a variety of other ways.

The visibility of an addiction-recovery ministry in a church setting sends an important message, Sandefur explained.

"A lot of times there's an embarrassment factor when someone gets trapped" in addiction, he said. "Their Christian faith almost causes them to hide that instead of dealing with it, (but) until you take it into the light, you're not going to get help."

Such an attitude is exactly what Erickson would like to help other churches develop, because, she said, she knows from experience that the source of real, lasting change comes from Jesus Christ.

"I'm passionate about waking the churches up to this problem," Erickson said.

A few years ago, with the support of her husband, Scott, Erickson began Madea Faith Ministries. She speaks to high-school and college students and entire congregations, incorporating her vocal talents into the presentation.

Her testimony about the transforming power of the gospel is the centerpiece of her message.

"Sin is not more enjoyable than the fulfillment of Christ," she recently told a group of 150 women at Murray State University.

For Erickson, healing occurred when she began her journey to know Christ better.

"This man, Jesus, saved my life ... now I wanted to get to know Him," she quipped.

There was counseling and 12-step meet-

Addiction Recovery Ministry Resources

■ Hawk Creek Baptist Church's Celebrate Recovery team is ready to assist other Baptist congregations in starting a recovery ministry. Connect with them at www.HawkCreekBaptist.com.

■ Learn more about Saddleback Church's Celebrate Recovery approach by visiting www.CelebrateRecovery.com.

■ To contact Madea Faith Ministries, e-mail madeaf@gmail.com.

ings, but Erickson said the thing that brought her the most strength was time in Bible study and prayer. "Jesus became my counselor."

Erickson also has spoken in secular settings, including to men and women in drug enforcement, counseling and social work. She praises the people behind KASPER—the Kentucky All Schedule Prescription Electronic Reporting System—for putting a stop to her "doctor shopping" for prescriptions.

But, she said, her heart remains focused on educating churches to help people struggling with addiction, even if a congregation does not choose to start a formal recovery ministry.

"You have to have a plan in place," she noted. If a person with an addiction contacts the church for assistance, leaders must be prepared.

One day Erickson herself was called upon to help in such a situation. Church staff were unsure how to advise someone who came into the office asking for help with an addiction problem. A friend who knew Erickson's testimony called her. She was able to direct that person to an appropriate community resource.

"You may have only five minutes to act" before the person gives up and leaves the church, Erickson said—and a second opportunity to minister to that person might never come.

Ky. minister, UC alumni among IMB appointees



Cordova, Tenn.—A Bowling Green minister of education and University of the Cumberland graduates were among the 61 newly appointed missionaries recently commissioned by the International Mission Board.

The appointment service was held March 3 at Bellevue Baptist Church in Cordova, Tenn.

Among the appointees was Rob Patterson, minister of education at Eastwood Baptist Church in Bowling Green, and his wife, Jenny, who were commissioned to serve as apprentice missionaries among the American peoples in the areas of evangelism and church planting.

Patterson has served at Eastwood Baptist since 2005. He is a Southern Baptist Theological Seminary graduate and has served churches in Georgia, Indiana and Tennessee.

He and Jenny have two daughters, Hannah, 10, and Haley 7.

Also appointed March 3 was Darius Ward and his wife, Laura, a Somerset native. The Wards both are University of the Cumberland graduates. Darius also is a student at Southern Seminary. The couple currently lives near Knoxville, Tenn.

Like the Pattersons, the Wards will serve as apprentice missionaries to the American peoples through evangelism and church planting.

The couple has two sons, Camden, 4, and Tanner, 3.

ON MISSION ■ Above left: Rob Patterson, minister of education at Eastwood Baptist Church in Bowling Green, and his wife, Jenny, newly appointed missionaries among American peoples, share their testimony during an International Mission Board appointment service March 3 at Bellevue Baptist Church in Cordova, Tenn. ■ Above right: University of the Cumberland alumni Darius and Laura Ward also were appointed as IMB missionaries.

Mathis visits Campbellsville



Kentucky Baptist Convention President Don Mathis autographs a copy of his book "Surviving & Thriving in Today's Ministry" for Campbellsville University student Sean Stengl. Last week, Mathis donated and autographed copies of his book for students at Campbellsville's School of Theology, calling them some of the "brightest and most committed Christian students who have answered God's call." Mathis, a vocational evangelist as well as staff evangelist at Eastwood Baptist Church in Bowling Green, said his book is recommended reading for young ministers in training. He also said he hopes to give away 500 copies of the book to students at Christian colleges who are going into the gospel ministry. (Photo by Joan McKinney/Campbellsville University)

Great Find It Here reports coming in

Great reports are coming in concerning the impact of the "Find It Here" evangelism initiative that kicked off March 6. Our latest count shows 1,669 KBC churches are participating in the gospel distribution to about 1.4 million Kentucky homes.

Partners in the Mission



By Bill Mackey

We have been receiving positive reports about prayerwalking since last September when the "Find It Here" prayer emphasis was launched. Many continue to prayerwalk assigned areas.

Please continue to pray for homes in your community. I believe God wants to do a special work in and through each family.

Now we are also receiving early reports about the distribution of the gospel. First Baptist Church of Salyersville placed 300 packets and saw five new families come to church the next Sunday.

At High Street Baptist Church in Somerset, people called shortly after the distribution of the gospel started to inquire about the church.

St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville enlisted 150 people to distribute 7,000 gospel packets in two hours on a recent Sunday afternoon. Interim Pastor Billy Compton shared how great it was to see all ages involved and excited as they reported at the church.

The "Find it Here" media spots began running March 15 and will continue through Easter. The campaign is primarily on broadcast TV although there is some radio in limited areas. Billboards in Spanish also are up in 14 locations around Kentucky.

The news media is discovering "Find It Here" as well. Stories about the gospel distribution leading up to Easter are appearing in newspapers across the state.

We know that the real discovery will come when individuals respond to the invitations in the packets and experience the power of the gospel through faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

Some churches are launching special ministries and/or Bible studies on topics of interest to the unreached beginning Easter Sunday.

This is a wonderful opportunity for Sunday school leaders and teachers to start new Sunday school classes just for prospects. It is also a grand opportunity for Sunday school classes to reach out to members who have been absent.

In order for spiritual growth to take place, God's people must be faithful in Bible study and private and corporate worship. Church and Sunday school leaders are encouraged to focus on a Sunday school high attendance day on April 18. Resources are available at www.KyBaptist.org/has.

I pray that you and your church will have a record attendance on Easter Sunday and that thousands will come to faith in Jesus Christ. We can each do our part through prayer and by inviting persons to attend with us Easter Sunday and following.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

What are 'they' saying about the GCRTF report?

Since the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force released its progress report in late February, the Southern Baptist Convention cauldron has begun to simmer on its six components. Much of the stewing seems to be concentrated on two ingredients: the demise of the cooperative agreements between the North American Mission Board and state conventions, and lumping Cooperative Program contributions and designated missions offerings under a new heading of Great Commission Giving. Has the task force found the recipe for renewing the SBC's vitality? Well, that depends on who you ask.

Tim Patterson, chairman of the North American Mission Board, appears energized by what he heard. "They walked us through the vision for this and how it would empower NAMB to carry out the Great Commission in North America in a much more effective way," Patterson said. "They really want NAMB to be the lead voice for Southern Baptist church planting, evangelism and missionary strategies in the United States and Canada." Even though the task force is calling for an end to the NAMB's cooperative funding arrangements with state conventions, the NAMB will still work with them as highly valued partners, he assured. "The states will absolutely take on a greater role than ever before," said the Jacksonville, Fla. pastor. "Their responsibilities will increase as NAMB becomes much more of a facilitator than a program provider," he added.

International Mission Board president **Jerry Rankin** urged Southern Baptists to be "creative and willing to explore new paradigms" for the sake of mobilizing resources to impact a lost world. He highlighted the GCR component that will open the door for IMB personnel and resources to equip churches and entities to work with unreached people groups in the United States. "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," he explained. While grateful for a proposed additional \$2 million in funding, Rankin feels even more must be channeled to reaching thousands of unreached people groups: "Yes, we want to see baptisms increase and America evangelize, but that is comparing 6 billion people to 250 million lost people at home where there are already 45,000 churches working and 97 percent of our financial resources are being applied."

Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary President **Danny Akin**, whose document became the clarion call for the formation of the Great Commission Task Force, said the report has "the potential to revolutionize our convention for the good of our nation and all nations." Acknowledging that the new vision for the NAMB will bring both opportunities and challenges for state conventions and associations, Akin believes "they will rise to the task and do what is needed to usher in an unprecedented day of massive church planting and gospel penetration to the unreached and underserved areas of North America." He praised the report's acknowledgement of the Cooperative Program as the primary giving channel, while celebrating all giving to Southern Baptist causes. "There is so much to celebrate in SBC life," declared Akin, a member of the task force. "If we communicate that well, I believe our people will give well too."

The North American Mission Board is being asked to rethink how it relates to state conventions so it can become "a more focused ministry" of assisting churches to reach North America, explained **Al Mohler**, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Mohler, also a member of the task force, maintained: "We are calling on the North American Mission Board to focus its energies on reaching North America, with a strategic concentration on unreached and underserved people groups, the cities, and the planting of healthy, reproducing churches. There is simply no way that Southern Baptists can be more effective and faithful in this task if we retain the funding mechanisms of the cooperative agreements." Dissolving the cooperative agreements will allow the NAMB to appoint missionaries and church planters who are accountable directly to NAMB and employed according to its priorities, he noted.

Smaller state conventions in new work areas, however, are worried that these changes will mean the loss of significant funding for ministries, forcing them to reduce personnel and possibly spelling the end of their existence. **Joseph Bunce**, executive director of the Baptist Convention of New Mexico, described the dissolving of the cooperative agreements as "a death sentence" for western conventions. In a colorful metaphor, one executive, **Jimmy Barrentine** of Iowa, captured their dilemma: "To ask for my opinion regarding the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force's report is comparable to the cook asking the sheep for his opinion of lamb stew. Neither the sheep nor I could afford to respond dispassionately."

After Thought

By Todd Deaton



Fred Hewett of Montana, which stands to lose all 11 staff members, concurred, "This will put the state convention and associations in Montana out of business." **Glen Land**, former state mission director for the Minnesota-Wisconsin convention, contended that the recommendation is built upon "some seriously flawed premises" that will "effectively destroy" the existing missionary support structure in the least-reached areas of North America. "Over a four year period of uncertainty, many of the most talented and best qualified people will seek other ministry avenues," he asserted. "The net effect will be a setback in our mission work that will be measured in decades, not years. It is by no means certain that we would ever recover from the blow."

Another component receiving attention entails employing "Great Commission Giving" for the combined total of CP gifts and designated giving to causes of the SBC, state conventions and associations. **Robert White**, executive director of the Georgia Baptist Convention and a task force member, heralded its adoption: "The term 'Great Commission Giving' is intended to more clearly define the purpose and destination of our missions gifts." The report makes it clear that the Cooperative Program is the "primary and preferred means" of supporting missions, he reiterated. "While some suggest that the term 'Great Commission Giving' to apply to both the Cooperative Program and designated gifts elevates designations and devalues the Cooperative Program, the term was not conceived to do either, but rather to acknowledge with gratitude all that our churches are giving to Kingdom causes through our convention."

Still, others believe that there is more to it than meets the eye. **Norman Jameson**, editor of North Carolina's Biblical Recorder, charged: "Men in line to be elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention resent when their church's anemic Cooperative Program giving is cited as evidence of paltry SBC support. ... So they point to their thousands of dollars of other mission gifts and say those gifts should 'count' if someone is tallying gifts as a measure of support." Calling the recommendation a "balm for their perceived injury," Jameson countered, "The Cooperative Program as a vehicle for missions support needs national leaders to rise in support, not look for ways to give around it and get 'credit.'" Similarly, **Scott Brewer**, president of the Northwest Baptist Convention, allowed: "For years there have been churches that have chosen to redirect their giving around the CP and directly give to IMB or NAMB, or seminaries, etc. ... A result of that practice was that those churches looked like poor contributors to missions because their CP numbers were low. It seems to me that being able to count a church's CP contributions and designated contributions as the new benchmark of Great Commission Giving better legitimizes those churches with low CP numbers."

But the real issue is one identified by Brewer as "the 'so what?' question." In short, what difference will any of the six GCR components ultimately make to the 40,000-plus SBC churches? For now the jury is still out, but as one Baptist, I choose to line up with **Mark Edmund**, editor of the Rocky Mountain Baptist, who serves in one of the new-work areas that could be affected: "Convince me that the recommendations will accelerate the accomplishment of the Great Commission and I will be its greatest champion." In the meantime, the task force would do well to listen and be sensitive to concerns being raised, and not view them as coming from detractors or antagonists, but rather from "laborers together for Christ." We all want the same goal: the world to hear.

WESTERN Recorder

Box 43969
Louisville, KY 40253

DR. TODD DEATON
Editor

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News Director

THOMAS C. TOWNSEND
Marketing & Business Manager

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

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Transitioning to teen parenting

By Scott Wigginton

Q: How can I, as a father, make the transition to parenting teenagers? While my teenagers stretch and grow, sometimes I feel like I'm being left behind.

A: Being a hero is a high and heady occupation.

With capes flying and dreams of glory, parents of children get to experience for a few all-too-short but intoxicating years the opportunity to walk in rarefied air and awe in unmitigated admiration and awe. Fathers who have never signed an autograph or hit the winning shot are suddenly thrust

into superstardom, only to realize that this "one shining moment" must soon be recalibrated to allow for the growth and personal development of a cape-stealing, kryptonite-bearing teenager who will wound and at least temporarily vanquish Superman.

All drama aside, it is sometimes painful for fathers to watch dependent, loving children morph into teens that increasingly value the peer group and strive for some measure of independence. It can feel as if we have somehow become obsolete and unwelcome, much like an old toy. But fathers need to remember that just as children grow up, we must grow up as well. Getting our feelings hurt, dwelling on the past, and withdrawing from the present only contribute to a self-fulfilling prophecy of increasing distance and detachment.

Stay engaged. Find a weekly ritual with your child that is different from mom. Go fishing. Find a favorite television show or game; meet at a restaurant or enjoy a hobby. My friend Mike restored a Mustang convertible with his daughter Taylor. Her parked car became a moving vehicle ... for a dad and daughter to stay connected. Remember that as your children grow you must find new ways to engage and sometimes surprise them. You don't need to leap tall buildings with a single bound. You just need to give up the phone booth and pick up a cell phone. Little things ... that's what old heroes do.

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

Getting rid of your fear of witnessing to others

What is the biggest single reason people give for not sharing their faith? Out of all the conferences I've done over the many years, there's always one reason that comes up as the main reason for not sharing your faith, and that is the fear of rejection.

Let's take a look at that because it's probably one of the reasons you do not share your faith.

First of all, it is Jesus that's getting rejected, Scripture that's getting rejected. I know it feels like you and it feels like me, but it's never you and it's never me being rejected. Let me make a point. Let's say you go out today and you try to share your faith with someone and they tell you to take a hike. Have you failed? Absolutely not; you've been obedient.

Likewise, let's say you share your faith, and this person becomes God's chosen replacement for Billy Graham. Can you take credit for it? Absolutely not: It is the Holy Spirit who convicts us of our sin, calling us to repentance (John 16:8).

Sharing the gospel is never about success or failure of the messenger. It is about obedience. Success is achieved by sharing your faith and by living your life out for Jesus Christ.

I am not, for you are not, and your pastor is not responsible to cause the conversion in anyone's life. Think about it. If you caused the conversion, the person remains unsaved. If they reject the message, they are not rejecting you, but are rejecting God (1 Samuel 8:7).

The other reason people give for not sharing their faith is the fear of not knowing enough. That usually comes from a Christian who's been a believer for five, 10, 20 years or more ... and I tease them. I say to them, "The problem is you know far too much. You're spiritually constipated and need to get rid of some of this information you've been hanging on to for so long." If the gospel is simple enough for a child to understand it, it will be easy for an adult to share it.

FIRST PERSON



Bill Fay

"How to" share your faith

Remember, this is the one area of your life you cannot fail in.

Even if you share stupidly, unlovingly, tactlessly and with poor timing, God can use it (think "Jonah").

What He can't use is your silence. Sharing the gospel is as easy as talking. So how do you initiate a conversation? I've learned to do it through a series of questions. For instance:

"Do you have any kind of spiritual belief?" I don't ask someone if they believe in God. But if you asked an open-ended question, the person may go on for 10 seconds or two minutes.

The second question I like to ask is, "To you, who is Jesus?"

The next question I like to ask is, "Do you think there's heaven or hell?" They will often say "yes" or "no." It doesn't really matter what they say, because you're not going to respond.

The next question I ask someone is, "If you died right now, where are you

going?" Again, no matter what they say, you don't respond.

Then I ask the key question. "If what you believe is not true, would you want to know?" There are only two possible answers—"yes" or "no." In the thousands of times I've asked these questions, not once, not ever, never have I had a "no" that stuck. Let me elaborate on that. I've asked, "If what you believe isn't true, do you want to know?" And they say "no."

You know what I do next? Nothing.

Before long they'll ask, "Aren't you going to tell me?" They'll say, "Yes I do, want to know." They'll say, "Yes I do," and here we go. Here's the key: If you try to coerce somebody into hearing about your faith, know that their defense is stronger than your ability to force them to hear.

Be doers, not just hearers

Share the gospel and watch God work. Here's your challenge: I want you to test these questions by going to one person this week and say, "I've been given a little homework assignment. May I ask you five questions?" No matter what they reply to these questions, you simply "uh-huh" and watch the Holy Spirit end up giving you permission to share your faith.

Remember, you cannot fail when you choose to be obedient.

I will be praying Paul's prayer that by sharing your faith you will gain "a full understanding of all the good things you have in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Philemon 6).

Bill Fay is an evangelist and author of "Share Jesus without Fear."

Finding and pursuing God's direction in your life

God loves to do astounding things. Most of the time, they are in response to the prayers of His people. Throughout my years as a pastor, a number of people have come to me for counsel on how to find the direction God has set forward for their life. I have to admit, my straightforwardness is not lacking in my response to them: "Have you prayed about it?" More often than not, the reply affirms my suspicions.

Asking God is not only a good place to start, it is the only place to start. I have never understood why anyone would come to me before approaching the Creator of the universe. After all, God has a blueprint plan of our lives, written in the palm of His hand. "See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; your walls are continually before Me" (Isaiah 49:16).

The Bible says we do not have because we do not ask. Therefore, if we don't know God's direction in our lives, we simply ought to try asking Him for guidance. By prayerfully seeking direction, surrendering completely to Him, and listening attentively to His will (whatever it may be), what once seemed mysterious and unrecognizable will become amazingly clear. It's like staring a little cross-eyed at one of these two dimensional computer-generated pictures that suddenly leaps out in three dimensions. Suddenly we begin to see things we couldn't see before.

God our Heavenly Father, loving counselor, peace-giving friend, and gentle shepherd is laden with gifts that will change our lives. However, we must be prayerfully attentive to the direction He has for us and to discern the path He has chosen from the one we have chosen for ourselves.

When we follow God's will and live according to His divine plan, our perspective shifts. Our vision expands and we begin to look at life not in terms of what we can do, but what God can do through us. We soon realize that nothing can distract, destroy, discourage, disappoint or defeat us when we follow God's direction.

For instance, consider distractions. Isn't that when most of us get lost along the way? We start out to accomplish our purpose, then some other good thing comes along and before we know it, we've taken a left turn, landed just a few degrees off target, and lost the goal completely. But when we keep God's purpose in mind, we are empowered by the Spirit of God to accomplish it.

I submit that when you live according to God's plan, not only can nothing distract you, but also nothing can destroy you. Isn't that excit-

ing? Jesus did not fear destruction because He was on target with His plan. He knew what God had prepared for Him and He lived in the confidence and the courage of that understanding without discouragement.

It is often easy to get discouraged. However, when we focus on God's direction as it is laid before us, we can overcome the urge to flee His plan. By doing so, we won't be disappointed and consequently, by living according to God's plan we will not be defeated.

My friends, it is possible to lock onto the goal and purpose that God has for your life. But it takes fervent prayer and a desire to accept His will, whatever direction that may take, to begin to see His direction.

My prayer for you is that you will become convicted to consistently ask God for His direction in your life. When He shows the path for you to follow, then trust Him and His plan with all your heart. Charge down that path with all you've got. Pursue His will with a passion. You'll quickly find that there's no more fulfilling, peaceful and thankful place to be in this life than soundly in the center of God's will.

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

FIRST PERSON



David Jeremiah

We soon realize that nothing can distract, destroy, discourage, disappoint or defeat us when we follow God's direction.

Using life insurance to give

By Laurie Valentine

Using life insurance to fund a charitable gift may allow you to make a larger ultimate gift to charity than you ever thought possible.



While you may not be able to make a gift of thousands of dollars all at once, you may have the financial resources to make gifts of modest amounts on a regular basis to cover the cost of the premiums for a life insurance policy on your life. Or, you may be in a position to give up ownership of a policy you purchased years earlier for a particular financial need that no longer exists.

The simplest way to set up a gift to charity using life insurance is to designate one or more charities as the beneficiary of a policy on your life. This option provides no current tax benefits to you, but sets up a plan to fund a potentially significant gift to the designated beneficiary cause(s) at your death. You may designate the proceeds to be paid outright to the charitable beneficiaries or to an endowment fund benefiting one or more charitable causes.

Another option is to make an irrevocable transfer of the ownership of an existing policy to charity, or arrange for the charity to purchase a new policy on your life with funds you provide.

A gift of an existing policy will allow you to take a charitable income tax deduction equal to the lesser of the fair market value of the policy (the policy's cash surrender value) or the premiums you have paid prior to making the gift. If the policy is not paid up at the time you give it, your payment of future premiums will entitle you to additional charitable income tax deductions since you have no further obligation to make premium payments after you transfer ownership.

At your death, the charity can collect the proceeds immediately; there is no waiting for the settlement of your estate. The charity will usually incur no expense to collect the death benefit. Best of all, the amount the charity receives is usually far larger than the total premiums paid during your lifetime.

Laurie Valentine is trust counsel for the Kentucky Baptist Foundation.

NAMB revises data previously sent to Resurgence task force

By Will Hall

Alpharetta, Ga.—The North American Mission Board has published a correction to the data it provided the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force and was published in the GCRTF interim report.

NAMB accepted responsibility for the previous incorrect information, saying facts it had provided the task force last summer contained a “significant error.”

NAMB issued the statement subsequent to a report about the task force’s work by religion writer Bob Smietana in The Nashville Tennessean.

In that article, Smietana wrote that the task force “says two-thirds of the mission board’s missionaries and money goes to the South while one-third goes to pioneer states.”

“However, according to the mission board, fewer than half of their missionaries

are in the South. While the board spends \$62 million on cooperative agreements and state programs, more than three-quarters of that money, \$48 million, goes to pioneer states,” Smietana wrote.

NAMB said the misunderstanding was created by information contained on page 19 of the task force report, depicting how Southern Baptist resources are distributed throughout the U.S., and that shows only 33 percent of its missionaries are assigned outside “the 14 states most often considered to be the area where Southern Baptists are the strongest.”

In actuality, NAMB said there are 2,733 missionaries serving in the 36 states outside the “old-line” region in the southern U.S. and another 133 serving in Canada for a total of 53 percent deployed in North America where there are not large numbers of Southern Baptists. NAMB attributed the

discrepancy to double counting of missionaries in Virginia and Texas which each have two state conventions.

In a statement on its Web site, NAMB also clarified that more than three-fourths of the \$62 million it disperses in cooperative agreements goes to the 36 pioneer states and Canada. NAMB said the \$48 million goes to support work “where Southern Baptist church presence is the least.” Although referred to as “pioneer” areas for the SBC, these states and Canada contain several of the largest urban and metropolitan areas in North America.

Richard Harris, NAMB’s interim president, said NAMB immediately took action when the error was discovered.

“We found the error ... while in the process of gathering data for a media inquiry,” Harris said. “As soon as we discovered the mistake, we notified the GCR Task Force.”

Harris added, “We will leave it to the GCR Task Force members and others to determine the significance of these new numbers, we just wanted to provide this information as soon as we discovered it so the rest of the discussion can include the correct data.”

Ronnie Floyd, task force chairman and pastor of First Baptist Church of Springdale Ark., said the change in missionary numbers did not alter the major concern of the task force.

“We spend two-thirds of the Cooperative Program dollars on one-third of the population and conversely spend only one-third of the Cooperative Program dollars on two-thirds of the population in the United States.”

Floyd said the online manuscript of the progress report has been updated with the corrected NAMB information. (BP)

IMB president questions Chapman’s commitment to Great Commission

Richmond, Va.—In an undated blog, Jerry Rankin, president of the International Mission Board, said Morris Chapman, president of the Southern Baptist Convention’s Executive Committee, does not believe the Great Commission is the purpose of the SBC.

Citing a Feb. 12 Baptist Press story about the Fellowship of State Executive Directors annual meeting, Rankin, who was not present, said: “Chapman found a receptive audience ... in passionately pointing out that the purpose of our denomination is not the Great Commission but cooperation.”

Chapman, in a March 9 statement, said Rankin has mischaracterized his convictions about cooperation among Southern Baptists.

Rankin, in his blog, wrote: “Watch for those who stand to lose entitlements of a system that hasn’t been moving us toward effective engagement of the lost,” referencing proposals by the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force in their progress report released Feb. 22.

“Apparently it doesn’t matter whether we impact a lost world or accomplish anything else as long as we cooperate together,” Rankin wrote. “In fact, it was said that



Jerry Rankin



Morris Chapman

the formula for Cooperative Program allocations must not change. I now understand why for 17 years I and my staff have been meeting with the budget workgroup of the Executive Committee, presenting our required report on funding needs, but nothing is ever done. It is just a meaningless exercise of denominational bureaucracy.”

Among the task force’s proposals is allocating to the IMB an additional 1 percent of SBC Cooperative Program funding, for 51 percent of the convention’s CP budget. The additional percentage would be transferred from the Executive Committee’s 3.4 per-

cent of CP funding for its various facilitating ministries on behalf of the SBC.

Broadening his comments, Rankin said: “What our convoluted priorities are practically saying is, ‘It is better to let the lost multitudes never hear the gospel and go to hell, than change the way our denomination functions.’”

“One of my exasperations in working cooperatively with other convention entities has been the difficulty in nailing down the purpose of what is being done,” Rankin added, citing On Mission Celebrations, formerly called World Mission Conferences, as an example. Local Baptist associations host representatives from the IMB, North American Mission Board, Woman’s Missionary Union and state conventions to report “on what we are all doing in missions, supposedly to enhance mission awareness,” Rankin observed.

“Pressing to know if there is an outcome that is supposed to result from this event; I am usually told that the event is an end in itself. Nothing is done that actually enlists and equips the church for missions involvement once the week is over.”

Rankin wrote that God is “honored by anything we do cooperatively for His sake.

But not to the neglect of His mission. Cooperation is the means through which we work together, not an end in itself. Why couldn’t our cooperation be for the purpose of fulfilling the Great Commission?”

Last week, Chapman said, “I am saddened that Jerry so blatantly misrepresented my comments. The men who heard me speak know what I said, what I think of Christ and His commands, and where I think cooperation falls in any list of priorities. I would never say that cooperation is the purpose of our convention. It is only a means to an end—to assist Southern Baptists in working together for the common purpose of furthering the kingdom of God.”

Concerning his Feb. 10 comments at a luncheon during the Fellowship of State Executive Directors annual meeting, Chapman also told Baptist Press, “I have never seen allocation of CP funds as an ‘entitlement’ for any of our entities. However, I stand by what I said about the current SBC CP allocation budget. I simply do not see the reallocation of dwindling contributions as any sort of solution, nor do I see adding a category to tally direct (societal) giving as helpful.” (BP)

Haiti judge releases ninth Baptist volunteer, group’s leader remains behind bars

Port-au-Prince, Haiti—A Haitian judge freed one of two remaining Baptist volunteers March 8 but kept the group’s leader in jail pending further investigation.

Judge Bernard Saint-Vil allowed Charisa Coulter to be released, more than five weeks after she and nine others were arrested for trying to take 33 children out of the earthquake-ravaged country to a makeshift orphanage in the Dominican Republic.

Saint-Vil kept the group’s leader, Laura Silsby, in jail, Reuters reported. The other eight members of the group were released Feb. 18.

Meanwhile, an expert on Haiti’s legal system said unless new charges are filed against Silsby, she will have to be released.

Mayra Joli of Coral Gables, Fla., told the Idaho Statesman newspaper that under Haiti’s legal system influenced by the Napoleonic Code, it would be unconstitutional for Silsby to be held on the same charges after all others have been released. Joli, who is licensed to practice law both in the U.S. and the Dominican Republic, also said if Haiti asked for any of the Baptists who already have been released to be returned, they would have to ask the United States government to extradite them back to the jurisdiction of the Haitian courts. Lacking any concrete evidence that the Americans were seeking to harm and not help the children, Joli said that is highly unlikely.

Compiled from reporting by Baptist Press and Associated Baptist Press

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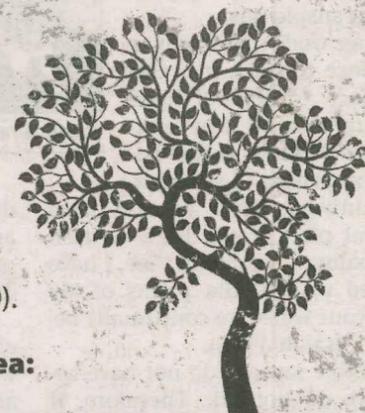
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2010 Church Planting Missionary Forum

Harris: Church planters' task 'unchanged'

By Mickey Noah
North American Mission Board

Atlanta—A sobering state-of-North America message was voiced to 320 church planting missionaries by the North American Mission Board's interim president during the recent 2010 Church Planting Missionary Forum.

"We have to ask ourselves is what we're doing working?" Richard Harris suggested. "Are we reaching North America? The answer is no. We have 258 million lost people. That's three out of every four."

While the North American population is growing by 3 million people every year, Harris told the church planting missionaries that "we're not keeping up." Among Southern Baptists in particular, more than 70 percent of churches are either plateaued or declining, Harris said, referencing research from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Harris noted the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force's progress report released during the SBC Executive Committee's Feb. 22-23

meeting. The GCRTF proposals are expected to spur a significant makeover of NAMB if they are embraced by Southern Baptist Convention messengers, but Harris told the missionaries they must "live in faith, not in fear."

Harris cited the only words spoken during the changing of the guard at The Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery: "Orders remain unchanged."

"Missionaries, I say to you that regardless of what the GCR recommendations are or are not, our orders from Christ remain unchanged: go, teach, baptize and make disciples," Harris said.

"We've got to get our churches healthy and reproducing again. Churches that are healthy reproduce. Healthy Christians, empowered by the Holy Spirit, reach new believers. Yet only a small percent of our churches are involved in church planting."

Harris told the missionaries that much of what Southern Baptists do is not kingdom-minded.

"I've been talking to folks recently about faithfulness versus fruitfulness," he noted. "Jesus said, 'Abide in me and you will bear much fruit.' We need to change the markers for success in what we are doing. Too many people are satisfied to say that they travel so many miles, teach so many classes or attend so many meetings and, therefore, are successful."

"Let's go past faithfulness, although we need to be faithful in reading the Bible, singing the hymns, attending services, loving the pastor, etc.," Harris continued. "But that's not the definition of a fruitful church. We need to get out of the church building into the culture and into the world. Are we penetrating the culture and lostness, pushing back the darkness, transforming the world?"

Harris said he agrees with what Saddleback Church pastor Rick Warren has preached for years: "Success in the church is not how many you gather, but how many you scatter." (BP)

Orlando SBC theme announced, registration open



Orlando, Fla.—Registration for messengers and local hotels is open for the June 15-16 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Orlando, Fla.

SBC President Johnny Hunt has selected "LoveLoud through the Great Commission" (1 John 3:18) as the theme for this year's sessions.

Registration for the annual meeting once again will provide churches with the opportunity to register messengers online at www.SBC.net to avoid waiting at the counter upon arrival at the convention.

For more information about registration and hotels for the annual meeting, visit www.SBC.net. (BP)

BAPTIST DIGEST

GuideStone funds yield positive returns—GuideStone trustees, meeting March 1-2 in Dallas, received a financial status report from Chief Operating Officer John Jones. He updated trustees on GuideStone's program areas, which include investments, retirement, insurance, financial assistance and developmental initiatives. "While the beginning of 2009 continued one of the most tumultuous financial markets in our nation's history, by mid-March we began to see some improvements in the markets and some measure of stability," Jones said as he reviewed GuideStone's investment funds' performance for 2009. Turning to GuideStone's medical plans, Jones said 42 new groups were added throughout the year representing more than 1,400 additional lives. Group enrollment overall was up 3.2 percent for the year. However, personal enrollment was down 3.6 percent, due largely to the uncertain economic conditions felt by many churches and smaller ministries as many had to downsize their staffs or reduce benefits in order to remain viable.

Barnes leaving Nevada convention—Thane Barnes has resigned as executive director of the Nevada Baptist Convention to accept a call as senior pastor of Faith Baptist Church in Glen Burnie, Md. He has led the state's Baptists since 2002. Prior to leading the state convention, Barnes had served as senior pastor of Green Valley Baptist Church in Henderson, Nev., and two other churches in Arizona and Colorado. He is a graduate of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary and Grand Canyon University in Arizona.

SWBTS professor E. Earle Ellis dies—E. Earle Ellis, a longtime New Testament professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary died March 2. He was 83. Ellis, research professor of theology emeritus, served at the seminary from 1985 until his death, which came only two weeks before his 84th birthday. Ellis' conservative views stood out at a time when the Southern Baptist Convention's conservative shift had just begun. Throughout his career, Ellis wrote numerous articles and several books that have made a significant impact in the field of biblical studies. Before his death, he was working to complete a commentary of 1 Corinthians for the New International Critical Commentary series. Ellis is survived by a sister, two nephews and a niece. Funeral services were held at Southwestern Seminary March 10.

Union University presents Rankin with award—Jerry Rankin, president of the International Mission Board, received Union University's M.E. Dodd Denominational Service Award March 2. Rankin, who will retire July 31 after 17 years at the IMB's helm, was the featured speaker at the West Tennessee Pastors Conference, held in Union's Carl Grant Events Center in Jackson, Tenn. The Dodd Award is named for the Union alumnus who served as president of the Southern Baptist Convention and was the father of today's Cooperative Program. The award is given annually to a leader within the SBC who displays excellence and leadership in Southern Baptist life, as well as friendship and commitment to Union University. Union trustees select the award's recipient each year.

Uzbek Baptist gets 10 years in jail—Uzbekistan has sentenced a Baptist arrested in January to 10 years in prison on drug charges that fellow Baptists insist are fabricated. Forum 18, a Norwegian news service that tracks stories about abuses of religious freedom, reported that Tohar Haydarov, 27, was sentenced March 9 for selling "large quantities" of illicit drugs. He was arrested Jan. 18 in the region of Syrdarya in central Uzbekistan. Authorities accused him of producing and storing drugs. Fellow church members described Haydarov as "a man with a pure conscience and an honest Christian" and claimed he was set up for arrest because of his religious convictions. Baptists who spoke to Forum 18 said after his arrest, Haydarov was taken to a police station and pressured to renounce his faith. When he refused, the Baptists said, police planted a matchbox containing drugs in his coat pocket and placed him under arrest. Church members reported that at his initial court appearance, Haydarov's face appeared swollen as if he had been beaten and that he could hardly walk.

New BWA director begins appointment—Raimundo César Barreto Jr. of Brazil assumed the position of Baptist World Alliance director of Freedom and Justice March 1. He is the first person to fill the post, which was created in 2008 following a decision by the BWA General Council. An ordained Baptist pastor since 1993, Barreto has conducted research on Christian and social justice issues in Latin America. He has a special interest in working with organizations in human rights, and in advocating for those who have special needs.

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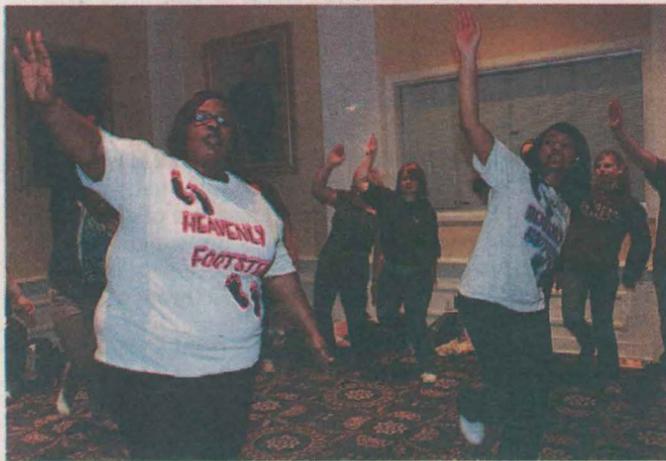
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Creative Ministries Festival 2010



One of the most popular events among students each year, the recent Creative Ministries Festival drew more than 1,500 participants to a pair of events on back-to-back weekends. The first festival was held March 5-6 at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville; the second took place last weekend at First Baptist Church of Bowling Green. The festivals, sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention and Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union, drew participants from 130 churches

from several states to learn more about how to creatively share the gospel with others. Participants had the opportunity to hone their creative skills at more than 70 different workshops in a variety of areas, including drama, puppets, balloon making and youth missions work.

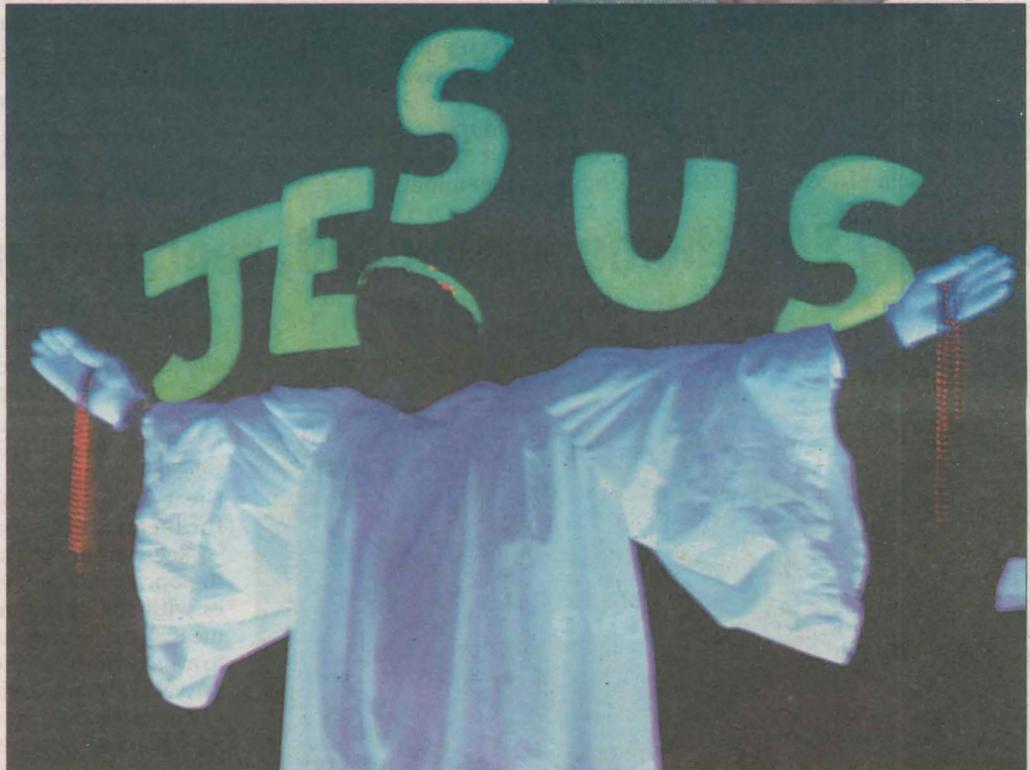
■ **Above left:** Felicia Bland (left) teaches a workshop on step dancing and how to incorporate it into a musical routine in order to share the gospel.

■ **Right:** The group from South Fork Baptist Church in Hodgenville performs during the festival's church performance session on Friday night. The group used black light to create a glowing representation of Jesus Christ. ■ **Below:** Christian magician David Garrard and his assistant perform a "fire in the glass" trick during the Closing Celebration at the Creative Ministries Festival in Louisville. Garrard, a world-renowned magician who's been performing for more than 40 years, also is children's minister at St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville and a columnist for the Western Recorder's Family Forum.

■ **Left:** The group from Greater Norris Chapel Baptist Church in Henderson performs a dance routine during the Friday night church performance session at the Louisville festival. (Photos by Mandi Buckner)



Well-known Christian mime/clown Dr. Tom performs during the Closing Celebration of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's recent Creative Ministries Festival in Louisville.



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Colorado Springs not Christian 'mecca' after all

By Mickey Noah
North American Mission Board

Colorado Springs, Colo.—What could be better than serving as a North American Mission Board missionary in picturesque Colorado Springs? After all, the city of 380,000 backs up to the base of snow-capped, 14,000-foot-tall Pikes Peak on the edge of the Rocky Mountains.

Money and Outside magazines have both deemed it as No. 1 on the list of the best places to live in the United States. It's perceived as a Christian "mecca" and nicknamed "The Evangelical Vatican" because so many evangelical Christian organizations are headquartered there—Focus on the Family, The Navigators, the International Bible Society and Young Life, just to name a few.

But, the Colorado Springs area also is a vast wilderness of "lost" souls. Just ask Bill and Carol Lighty.

Bill, 53, serves as a NAMB national missionary and director of missions for Pikes Peak Baptist Association, which includes about 50 Southern Baptist churches and church plants. In a metro area of more than 600,000, 83 percent—some 500,000—never darken the door of a church—any church.

"God really broke my heart over the loss of the Pikes Peak region," said Lighty, who—with his wife, Carol—has worked in his current assignment two and a half years. Prior to that, he spent more than 20 years as pastor of Chapel Hills Baptist Church in Colorado Springs.

Lighty is one of some 5,300 missionaries in the United States, Canada and their territories supported by the Annie Armstrong

Easter Offering for North American Missions. The 2010 offering goal is \$70 million, 100 percent of which benefits missionaries like Bill Lighty.

Although Lighty points out that Mormonism and Catholicism both are strongly entrenched in the Colorado Springs area, "there's half a million people here who don't know Christ."

In addition to Pikes Peak, another of Colorado Springs' famous landmarks is the "Garden of the Gods." It got its name in 1859 when it was described as a "place fit for the assembling of the gods." Lighty said this focus on the mythical gods—but not on the one true God—is symptomatic of many of the residents in the Colorado Springs area.

"In a very real sense, Colorado Springs is not godless because the people here have a lot of gods they worship," he noted. "Some worship nature and the mountains. Some worship skiing. Some worship the metaphysical. Spiritualism is a big element of our culture, and we have a strong Wiccan movement."

"So our challenge is competing with all these other gods plus the mountains—where there's something to do 12 months out of the year—in order to help people worship the one true God versus their multiple gods."

Lighty said he wears different hats in his job—church planting strategist, a coach to pastors and a consultant to churches.

"I have now come to the realization that one church cannot reach the Pikes Peak region for the kingdom of God," he acknowledged. "If one church could have, it would have been done 100 years ago. I don't think one denomination can do it, but that it's going to take hundreds and hundreds of churches to reach these people significantly for God."

One of Lighty's "hot buttons" and key church planting strategies centers on multi-housing ministry, especially in nearby Manitou Springs. He said 50-60 percent of families living in the U.S. (citizens and non-citizens) reside in apartment complexes or mobile home communities. But 95 percent of these people do not associate with a local church, and only four percent say they actually attend a church.

"We use a variety of strategies to impact the multi-housing communities," Lighty explained. "Many multi-housing communities are extremely multi-ethnic. In Colorado Springs, we have about 6,000 Russian-speaking people and a significant Romanian population. The world is coming here and many of them live in multi-housing communities."

"So, one thing we're trying to communicate to pastors is that these people may never come to your church building, but perhaps we can plant a church in that multi-housing community."

But Lighty said the challenge to reach Colorado Springs is intensifying because the percentage of unchurched in the Colorado Springs metro area is going up, not down.

"In the '90s, our local newspaper took a survey and discovered that at that time, only 25 percent of the people went to church on a given Sunday. Ten years lat-

"Our challenge is competing with all these other gods plus the mountains ... in order to help people worship the one true God versus their multiple gods."

Bill Lighty, NAMB missionary and director of missions for Pikes Peak Baptist Association

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er, they repeated the exact same survey and found that now only 20 percent go to church," Lighty said.

At the same time, Colorado Springs continues to grow by leaps and bounds as it has for the past 30 years.

"To the best of my knowledge, there has never been a revival west of the Mississippi River," Lighty noted. "I've been praying for 25 years that God would bring us a revival and that we would see a fresh movement of God in this region, whether it's along the I-25 corridor, in Denver, Colorado Springs, Fort Collins or wherever."

So, why is the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering important to Lighty's ministry?

"It's critical because so much of what we do is mission-driven. Our new churches are oftentimes very small, and many of the pastors are bivocational or their wives work full time so they can pastor part time," he pointed out. "Without 'Annie,' probably one-third of our churches would go under, especially in this economy."

Lighty sums up the challenge like this: "It seems as if God has said, 'OK, if you won't go to the mission field, I'll bring the mission field to you.' So now, the mission field is here and it's right in our backyards. All local churches have to do is go into these communities, be what God has asked us to be and do the work He has asked us to do. We have no excuses."



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NAMB missionary Bill Lighty (right) and church planter Chris Nason sit in front of Black Cat Books, a popular bookstore catering to the spiritually eclectic community of Manitou Springs, Colo. Nason facilitates an open spiritual discussion in the bookstore in order to make relationships with people from other belief systems, opening the door for the gospel to be shared. (Photo by Erik Stenbakken/NAMB)

NATIONAL NOTES

School board settles First Amendment lawsuit—A Tennessee school board voted March 1 to settle a lawsuit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union last fall alleging a pattern of unconstitutional promotion of religion. The Cheatham County Board of Education voted 5-1 to accept a settlement agreement with the ACLU of Tennessee, ending negotiations that had been ongoing since January. Under terms of the agreement, school officials no longer will encourage prayer or promote their personal religious beliefs to students in class or in conjunction with school activities and events. Invocations no longer will be permitted at graduation ceremonies or school functions, and speakers no longer will be selected because of their religious affiliations. In addition, school officials will no longer permit non-student third parties, such as members of The Gideons International, to distribute Bibles during school activities or instructional times.

Tennessee approves Bible course—The Tennessee Board of Education in late January approved guidelines on how to teach the Bible in public high schools, enabling students to “acquire an understanding and appreciation of the Bible’s major ideas, historical/geographical contexts and literary forms.” The move came in response to legislation passed in 2008 supporting the adoption of state curriculum standards for teaching about the Bible at the high-school level. Students who choose the elective class will be allowed to use the biblical translation of their choice as a text, and they will study the Bible in its historical, sociological and cultural contexts, as well as its impact on later cultures, societies and religions. Teachers, the guidelines say, must be “cognizant of student rights to their personal views,” and all lessons should be planned “with attention to helping students develop a greater sense of their civic roles as responsible citizens.”

Social studies standards reviewed in Texas—The Texas Board of Education is addressing social studies standards this month, possibly meaning the rest of the nation’s public schools could teach more about the influence of Christianity on the nation’s history. As The New York Times Magazine noted in a recent article, Texas has been influential in the textbook market because the state buys or distributes 48 million books annually, and textbook publishers cater to the specifics set by the board. Last year the 15-member board of education drew criticism when it dealt with science standards because some board members wanted to require teachers to cover “strengths and weaknesses” of the theory of evolution. Conservatives were one vote short of that goal, but The Times said the finished document “nonetheless allows inroads to creationism.” Next the board will take up the adoption of new social studies standards for the state’s public schools—guidelines that could affect students around the country from kindergarten to 12th grade for the next decade.

Louisiana lawmaker wants to allow guns in churches—A Louisiana lawmaker wants to allow people who are legally qualified to carry concealed weapons to bring them to houses of worship as long as the pastor or church board approves. Louisiana Rep. Henry Burns, a Republican, filed a bill to let a church, temple, mosque or other religious institution authorize “any person issued a valid concealed handgun permit” to carry it into a place of worship. State law prohibits concealed weapons in prisons, courthouses, government buildings, the State Capitol, airports and houses of worship. The bill also would give congregations the authority to hire armed security guards or off-duty police officers. Burns said that whatever plan is devised, it must have the approval of the officials in charge of the religious facility.

Census will allow gay couples to register relationships—In a policy shift experts say could radically reshape demographic profiles of the gay community, the U.S. Census this year will let same-sex couples label themselves as husband or wife, even if their relationships are not recognized by state or federal law. The change will appear on Census forms to be mailed out this week. The forms do not explicitly recognize domestic partnerships, civil unions or same-sex marriages. Instead, the documents offer one of two boxes for same-sex couples—“husband or wife” or “unmarried partners.” The census bureau plans to leave it to responders to characterize their own relationships. The new policy took effect last summer, when the Commerce Department released a legal opinion that argued the federal government could tabulate and release same-sex marriage data under the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act.

Supreme Court accepts Westboro case

Justices to debate limits of free speech rights

By Bob Allen

Washington—The U.S. Supreme Court has decided to wade into what is expected to be one of the most-watched cases in the court’s 2010-11 term—whether the privacy rights of grieving families trump the free-speech rights of a controversial Baptist church infamous for picketing military funerals to protest society’s growing acceptance of homosexuality.

The high court said last week it would review a lower-court decision voiding a \$5 million judgment against members of Westboro Baptist Church in Topeka, Kan., a small, independent congregation notorious for picketing military funerals.

In 2007, a Maryland jury awarded \$10 million in compensatory and punitive damages for intrusion upon seclusion, intentional infliction of emotional distress and civil conspiracy to Albert Snyder of York, Pa., father of Lance Cpl. Matthew Snyder, a 20-year-old Marine killed in Iraq. A judge later reduced the amount of damages to \$5 million.

Snyder had sued Phelps and other members of the Westboro church af-

ter they showed up outside his son’s funeral at a Catholic church in Westminster, Md., in March 2006. The protestors stood in a designated area not within direct view of the church holding placards bearing messages such as “America is Doomed” and “Thank God for IEDs.”

Last September, a federal appeals court threw out the judgment against the church members, ruling that while “distasteful and repugnant,” the signs were protected as free speech by the U.S. Constitution.

By agreeing to review the decision favoring the church members by the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, the high court sparked debate about what are proper limits of free speech guaranteed by the First Amendment.

The Supreme Court said justices would answer three constitutional questions:

■ Whether a 1988 decision involving Hustler magazine and Baptist preacher Jerry Falwell that a public figure cannot recover damages for infliction of emotional distress as result of a parody applies to private citizens.

■ Whether the First Amendment’s freedom of speech tenet protecting the protesters’ rights trumps guarantees of freedom of religion and peaceful assembly extended to mourners at a funeral service.

■ Whether an individual attending a funeral service of a family member constitutes a “captive audience” entitled to state protection from unwanted communication.

In striking down the original verdict the appeals court said language used by the protesters was “imaginative and hyperbolic rhetoric intended to spark debate” that could not be interpreted as “objectively verifiable facts” about Snyder or his son.

Even an article on a Westboro Baptist Church Web site that the father had taught his son to be an “idolater” by raising him as a Catholic, the judges ruled, was not a subject of “purely private concern,” but rather an issue “of social, political or other interest to the community.”

Paraphrasing a ruling in another case invoking the First Amendment, the appeals court said judges defending the Constitution “must sometimes share their foxhole with scoundrels of every sort, but to abandon the post because of the poor company is to sell freedom cheaply.” (ABP)

College grads: Ten Commandments ‘irrelevant’

Wilmington, Del.—College graduates are more likely to consider the Ten Commandments irrelevant, and reject the Bible as the word of God, than those with no college degree, according to a recent study.

A “distinct shift” occurs after college regarding beliefs and opinion, said Richard Brake, director of university studies at the Intercollegiate Studies Institute.

The ISI surveyed 2,508 Americans on questions intended to measure the impact of a college degree on people’s beliefs. The Wilmington, Del.-based ISI has administered the survey for the past three years.

The study also found that people with college degrees were more likely to support same-sex marriage, as well as abortion available at any stage of pregnancy and for any reason. Graduates also were more likely to believe that public-school teachers should not be allowed to lead

prayers in schools.

In addition, the more academic degrees a person acquires, the more extreme his or her beliefs land on the spectrum. For example, 57 percent of high-school graduates agree that public-school teachers should be allowed to lead prayers in schools, compared to only 39.4 percent of college graduates, 30.3 percent of those holding a master’s degree, and 17 percent of those with a Ph.D.

The shift may be attributed to the unpopularity of strong religious views in academia, Brake said. “I think one of the reasons you see this shift is the people that work in academia share these same views.”

Professors also were more likely than the general population to support co-ed dormitories and to agree that educators should “instill more doubt in students and reject certainty,” according to the study. (RNS)



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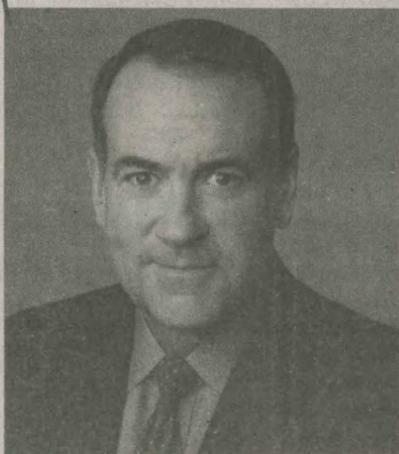


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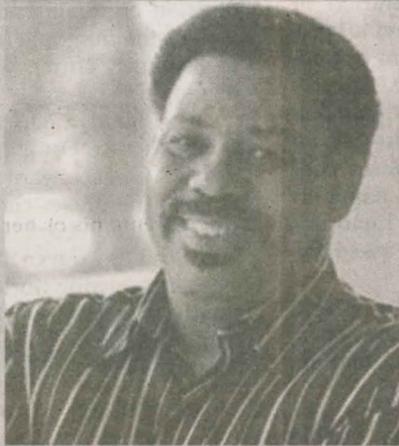
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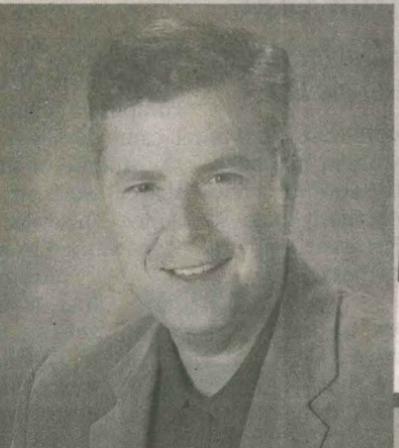
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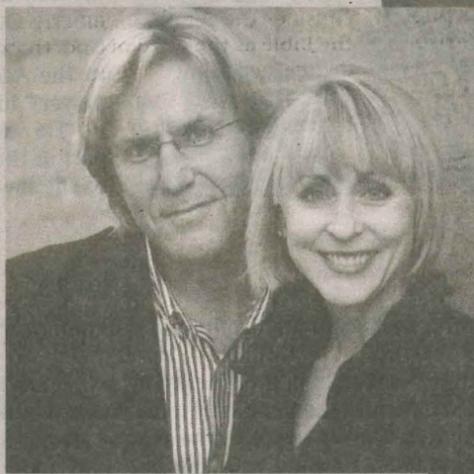


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Trading Card Twist

Encouraging prayer for 'ultraliberal' politicians, newsmakers, conservatives now can 'Adopt a Liberal'

By Adelle Banks

Orlando, Fla.—Attention Californians: Your governor has just been adopted. Next up: your bleeding-heart senator, Barbara Boxer, and not far behind, her Democratic colleague, Dianne Feinstein.

Not by a new set of parents, mind you, but rather an army of conservative prayer warriors committed to restoring "poor leaders to right thinking."

The Republican governor's alleged sins? Supporting abortion funding and "imposing same-sex marriage" on the Golden State while allowing "out-of-control liberal spending."

Boxer, a Democrat, is cited as a "radical environmentalist" and embracing "ultraliberal" positions. Feinstein "encourages closing Guantanamo" and shipping terror suspects to California.

And that's not even mentioning San Francisco's Nancy Pelosi, the House speaker.

Or Oprah Winfrey's sit-down interview with a transgender man who had a baby, Hillary Clinton's support of global abortion rights, Warren Buffet's "open marriage," or New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg's support of gun control.

For the influential Christian law firm Liberty Counsel, the new "Adopt a Liberal" trading cards puts the power of prayer—quite literally—in the palm of conservatives' hands.

Last fall, the Florida-based firm posted a list of about a dozen liberals with similar transgressions on its Web site. But founder Mathew Staver and his colleagues thought there were enough to, well, make trades.

Now, for a mere \$20, you can swap former Vice President Al Gore for HBO's Bill Maher. Or Huffington Post founder Ari-

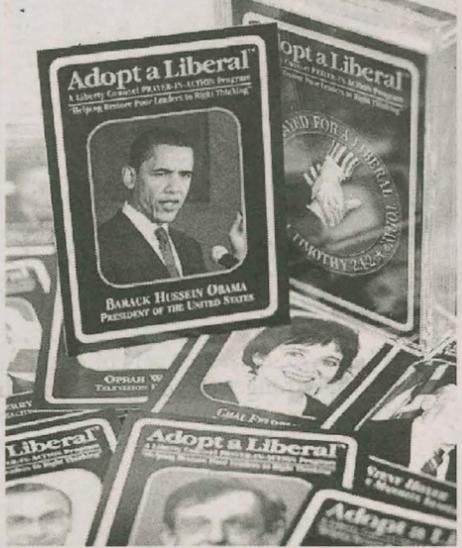
anna Huffington for the now-Democratic Sen. Arlen Specter.

"We created the card deck with 51 cards so it's one card short of a full deck," Staver said, only half joking. The 52nd features a question mark for the "Unknown Liberal" in government, media, higher education or "other liberals of your choice."

It may be a gimmick that gets people talking, said pop culture expert Robert Thompson, but liberals should think twice before countering with their own "Adopt a Conservative" cards.

"You're putting that person in a position of ... being in this childlike need to be enlightened," said the Syracuse University professor. "There's a certain unmitigated arrogance and hubris involved."

The 51 standing in the need of prayer range from the Obama administration (Presi-



dent "Barack Hussein Obama" and chief of staff Rahm Emanuel) to members of Congress (House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid) to Hollywood types (Anne Hathaway and Michael Moore) and pundits (MSNBC's trinity of Chris Matthews, Keith Olbermann and Rachel Maddow).

Just four of the 51 are known Republicans (Schwarzenegger, Maine Senators Olympia Snowe and Susan Collins and Illinois Senate candidate Mark Kirk, who's misidentified as an already elected senator).

"We encourage you to seek the Lord's guidance on how to pray for your liberal(s), always allowing God to temper your prayer with His love and mercy," the cards say. "... In fact, we fully expect that many of our adoptees will 'graduate' from this prayer program with vivid testimonies of God having changed their lives and world-views!"

Some of the designated liberals in the "prayer-in-action" program actually welcomed the designation, though some cautioned to be careful what you pray for.

"I like to stay up late," Barry Lynn of Americans United for Separation of Church and State warned any and all prospective prayer parents, "and I'm not doing any chores around the house."

When veteran political pundit Alan Colmes learned of the campaign last fall, he actually asked to be included, Staver said. Liberty Counsel was more than happy to make room. "Actually requested inclusion in the Adopt a Liberal list and asked for prayer!" his card says.

"He was disappointed that he wasn't part of the original list," said Staver, dean of the law school at Liberty University in

Lynchburg, Va. "He looked at it as a badge of honor to be on the liberal list."

The card deck is certainly a kinder, gentler alternative to prayer initiatives of more extreme conservatives who have prayed, among other things, for God to smite the president and his congressional allies.

Along with the deck of cards, donors get a free "Have you adopted a liberal today?" bumper sticker, although Staver cautioned that praying for liberals is not for the faint of heart.

"The Scriptures don't say to pray for those who you agree with only," Staver noted, "but to pray for those in leadership." (RNS)

Beliefnet announces film award winners

New York—The 2010 Beliefnet awards for best spiritual films mirrored many of this year's Oscar nominees.

Each category had two winners, one chosen by Beliefnet users and one by a panel of judges. The panel based their decision on quality and spiritual impact of the films and included editors of Beliefnet, critics, writers and academics.

"The Blind Side," nominated for a Best Picture Oscar, won Beliefnet's People's Choice Award for best spiritual film. The judges chose "The Road." Based on a novel by Cormac McCarthy, "The Road" portrays a father and son in a post-apocalyptic world, struggling to survive and carry out the hope for humanity. (RNS)

It's that time of year again

With graduation nearing, OBI soon will offer students opportunities to reflect

Our students have gone home for spring break. When they return, we will only be weeks away from graduation. This is Oneida's 111th year of ministry and the Class of 2010 will be the school's 102nd graduating class. Having been actively involved in the admissions process over the years, I have interviewed several hundred—possibly a few thousand—students.

While sitting in a chair across from my desk, some students obviously were nervous and afraid. After all, leaving home for the first time, especially as a middle- or high-school student, can be a very emotional time. Others were eager to move into the dorms and begin their new journey.

Before the interview, our admissions staff gathers information needed for us to believe OBI can meet the needs of a student. The interview gives us a chance to see if a student matches this information. We often are surprised to discover someone quite different than we expected.

I still am old fashioned enough to appreciate it when a young man removes his hat when he enters my office. I notice if the answers are "yeah" or "nah" instead of "yes sir" or "no sir." Does he slump or sit up straight?

Most of the time I believe Oneida is a good match for a student. His or her needs can be met with the environment OBI provides, including a caring faculty and staff. It is an opportunity to work with students that brings our staff to Oneida. They are dedicated people who put aside material things and accept a modest salary. It is the satisfaction that comes from working with our

students that keeps our faculty and staff here year after year.

Over the years, many of the young people who enrolled in our school not only found success and happiness, they also excelled far beyond anyone's expectations. Nothing saddens our staff more than to lose a student who has not taken advantage of the opportunities we offer or has refused to accept the acts of kindness by our staff. My wife and I were recipients of that kindness countless times as students here in the early '60s.

During the next several weeks, I am going to profile some of the students who will be graduating in May. Some have only been here a short time; others have been with us since sixth grade. One of the more difficult things we deal with is saying goodbye to students we have come to know and love. Our faculty and staff have made a tremendous investment of time, energy and patience in these students.

Many will come back from time to time, but often distance will prevent us from ever seeing some of these students again.

I will share the profiles of these students for two primary reasons. First, we want you to know how your investment in Oneida is being used and what it accomplishes. We hope that you will be as proud of these students as we are. Second, our friends know that OBI rarely asks for financial help. It is our belief that if we share with our friends what we are doing, they will support our efforts. I trust you will be pleased with the return on your Oneida investment.

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

This is Oneida



W.F. Underwood

Running from God

Zagaruyka thankful for God's continued call on his life

I often tell people that the typical Clear Creek student had been "running" from the Lord for a few years before they actually make it to our campus. First-year student Eric Zagaruyka fits that description.

"I literally grew up in church," Eric recalled. "My parents took me every week whether I wanted to go or not."

"I remember early in my teen years I got involved with the wrong crowd and the Lord convicted me of my sin in my life. I remember being so convicted by the Holy Spirit that I woke my Mom up one night and started talking to her about salvation. The next morning at church, I publicly confessed Jesus Christ as my Savior."

"I am originally from Kansas City, Mo.," Eric said. "My family moved to Georgetown when my father got a job at the Toyota plant. I enrolled at Berea College when it was time for me to go to college."

"This is where my life got interesting," he said. "I knew I had received a call from God into full-time ministry in my teen years, but I did not want the responsibility. I ran as hard and as fast as

I could.

"At Berea, I was majoring in computer science. Right before I came to Clear Creek, I was in the middle of undergraduate research work in artificial intelligence. This was a field I had always wanted to work in."

"Around this time I had a friend who was getting ready to come to Clear Creek, and we were taking 'Experiencing God' together. I had always wondered up to this point if God would still want to use me. He reaffirmed His calling on my life through that study and then just literally took away all my desire to do anything in the

field of study I was involved in at Berea.

"Suddenly the dream that I once had to work in the field of intelligence was no longer there. I now had to drag myself to class. I knew it was time to surrender fully to God's call on my life—and now here I am at Clear Creek."

Clear Creek Chronicle



Donnie Fox

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

Why give through the KBF?

There are plenty of reasons to trust KBF—here are 10

On March 8, 2010, the Kentucky Baptist Foundation completed its 65th year of serving Kentucky Baptists. As we begin our 66th year as Kentucky Baptists' only trust agency, I wanted to share with you the top 10 reasons people give through the KBF for kingdom advancement.

- We have a proven record of prudence and trust in the administration of the funds entrusted to us.

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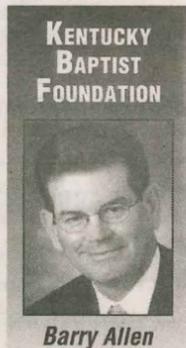
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Oliver Wendell Holmes once said "put not your trust in money; rather put your money in trust." What better trust than

one that honors Christ and provides a perpetual benefit for His mission in this world through one or more of your favorite Baptist and other charitable causes?

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



Barry Allen



One Year Later ...

Cindy Winters accepts the inaugural Holman Christian Study Bible Award for her slain husband Fred Winters, who was pastor at First Baptist Church of Maryville, Ill., at last year's Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Louisville. On the one-year anniversary of Fred Winters' murder, Cindy shared her experience of that day. (Photo by Kent Harville/LifeWay Christian Resources)

Widow shares experience on anniversary of pastor's slaying

By Bob Allen

Maryville, Ill.—March 8, 2009, started out as a fairly normal Sunday for Cindy Winters. Her husband, Fred, got up early to preach the 8:15 a.m. service at First Baptist Church of Maryville, Ill. One of their daughters rode with her father because she was working in the nursery that morning. Cindy and their other daughter came later.

Then the nightmare began.

As she neared the church where her husband had ministered for 22 years, the entrance was blocked by emergency vehicles. A man directing traffic told her to pull off the road, and her cell phone rang. It was a friend from another part of the state who told her everything was going to be OK. Then another call, from a church member: "Cindy, what's going on?" She encountered a couple, and the woman remarked, "She doesn't know." Finally, she asked a man she knew well what happened. He sighed deeply and told her, "Fred's been shot."

Even after hearing how serious her husband's injuries were, she assumed he was going to be OK until she was allowed to see him in a hospital emergency room. As she entered, a nurse told her they had just declared him dead.

"The only thing I really know to compare that kind of panic and sense of helplessness to is it's sort of like being in a haunted house where you just are terrified and you can't find an exit sign or the nightmare you just can't wake up from," Winters said at a church service marking the one-year anniversary of the slaying. "I had never been so afraid in my entire life."

After being directed to a room for families, Winters described being overwhelmed by feelings of helplessness, panic and thinking that the one person she needed the most at that time couldn't be there.

After a while, she said, there came a point when God spoke to her. "God said, 'Cindy, what happened here was sheer evil, and it was orchestrated by Satan.' And I said out loud—and I could have very well sounded pretty crazy to whoever was in that room at the time—but I said out loud, 'Then Satan will not win.'" She described the moment as a building block to help put her life back together.

It was hard telling her children their father wasn't coming home, she said, and surreal to see people she knew at a press conference and her own family pictured on CNN.

The first real comfort came that night, when she and the girls crawled into bed and read two chapters from 90 Minutes in Heaven. The book had so moved her husband when he read it two years earlier that he scheduled author Don Piper to come to First Baptist to give his testimony about his own near-death experience and vision of heaven.

"Focusing on heaven doesn't take away our pain for the here and now, but it sure does put things in proper perspective," she noted.

As a new widow and the mother of two fatherless children, Winters said she realized several things very quickly in the days that followed.

"Life can end for any of us without warning," she said. "None of us are guaranteed tomorrow, or even the rest of today. No matter how long of a life we are blessed with, each of us will one day die and have to face our eternal destination."

"I also became vividly aware that our circumstances in life can change drastically and without any kind of warning," Winters said. "Even though my circumstances changed, the God that I know did not change. In my profound darkness I still felt His goodness and His love, and I saw His faithfulness. I went to the pit. God was in that pit."

"There is hope in chaos," she continued. "There is peace in the middle of the storm, and there is joy in spite of our circumstances. I was always taught this, and I did believe it—but now I know it."

Winters said she experienced trials before that tested her faith, but nothing compared to the murder of her husband and what she has had to endure since then. "When my life-storm came, and it was my tragedy that made the headlines, I had to determine one thing," she recalled. "Was knowing Jesus enough? It is."

"The strength that I draw on doesn't come from religion," Winters said. "It doesn't come from believing a set of facts about God. It doesn't come from doing good things. It comes simply from having an intimate, trusting relationship with God's Son, Jesus Christ. That's what faith is. It's trust. It's trusting Him when life doesn't seem fair, when nothing is going right. It's trusting Him when your world is seemingly falling apart."

"A relationship with Jesus is the one thing that makes sense when nothing else does."

Winters said one thing for which she is grateful is how tragedy puts other things in perspective. "Many of the things that I thought were so important in life, well, they weren't," she noted.

"March 8 was a horrible day for me and for many others, ... but it wasn't for Fred," she explained. "What happened to him was wrong and it shouldn't have happened, but he is more alive than any of us sitting here right now in this room."

"And one day I am going to meet him at the gate of heaven. And it's my hope and it's my prayer that I'll meet you there, too."

The man who fired the shots that killed Fred Winters, Terry Sedlacek, was charged with first-degree murder but found mentally unfit to stand trial. He is being held in a state mental-health facility. Police do not know what prompted Sedlacek to target the pastor, but March 8 was marked "death day" on a calendar found at his home. (ABP)

Do you know me?

I'm just one of thousands of children in Kentucky who suffer daily from abuse or neglect.

You can make a difference!

Sunrise Children's Services provides care to approximately 400 children each day through our foster care, residential treatment centers and counseling services. Through Sunrise, children are given stability, support and hope for a brighter future - all in a Christ-centered atmosphere that emphasizes love and self-worth.



SUNRISE CHILDREN'S SERVICES
www.SUNRISE.org
 1-800-456-1386

Find It Here

The Kentucky Baptist Convention has reported that 1,669 churches (75 percent of Kentucky Baptists) are participating in the Find It Here campaign. Among them is DeHaven Baptist Church in LaGrange. They will host a Find It Here Friends Breakfast March 21, 8:30 a.m. with Kentucky Derby-winning jockey **Pat Day** as guest speaker. The legendary rider will attend the breakfast, spend Sunday school with the church's students, then speak to the church at 10:45 a.m. For more information, call (502) 222-1535.

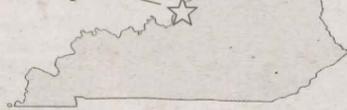
MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

- **BENTON**—Briensburg Church recently called **Brad Walker** as pastor. He previously was youth pastor at Bellview Church in Paducah.
- Sharpe Missionary Church recently called **Jason Medley** as associate pastor. **Chris Moore** is pastor.
- **GREENSBURG**—**Duane Southwood** recently resigned as pastor of Pleasant Ridge Church.
- **LOUISVILLE**—Deer Park Church ordained **Jeremy Shoulta**, minister to children, youth and families, to the gospel ministry March 14. **David Platt** is pastor.
- Westport Road Church recently called **David Buckner** as student minister. He previously was a staff member at Phos Church in Buckner. **Chip Pendleton** is pastor.
- **MACKVILLE**—Mackville Church ordained Pastor **Tim Hawkins** to the gospel ministry March 14.
- **OLMSTEAD**—Dripping Spring Church will hold revival services March 21-25 with **Curtis McGehee** as evangelist. **Jeff Noffsinger** is pastor.
- **OWENSBORO**—First Church will host the Moody Chorale from Moody Bible Institute in Chicago in concert March 18, 7-p.m. The event is free and open to the public. For more information, call (270) 683-2505. **Paul Strahan** is pastor.

Spotlight on ...

Prospect



First Church will host a "To the Ends of the Earth" missions emphasis weekend March 19-21 featuring **Brian Vickers**, associate professor of New Testament Interpretation at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and an unidentified missionary to North Africa as guest speakers. For more information, call (502) 228-3286. **Jon Cyrus** is pastor.

- **PADUCAH**—Bellview Church will hold revival services March 21, 10 a.m. & 6 p.m.; March 22-24, 7 p.m. with **Harold Hunter** as evangelist and **Chad Davidson**, minister of music at Mount Zion Church in Paducah, as music leader. **E. Lee James** is pastor.
- **PIKEVILLE**—Mayflower Unity Church ordained Associate Pastor **Kenneth Childers** to the gospel ministry March 14. **Tim McClanahan** is pastor.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March

- 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.
- 19 Region 6 RA Congress, Harrodsburg Baptist Church.
- 20 Hispanic Evangelism Conference and Women's Event, First Baptist Church, Shelbyville.
- 20 Region 7 RA Congress, Elk Spring Valley Baptist Church, Monticello.
- 25-28 Adult Kentucky Changers, Jonathan Creek Camp and Conference Center, Hardin.
- 30 Iron Sharpening Iron, My Old Kentucky Home State Park, Bardstown.

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

Baptist Foundation of Illinois seeking Executive Director

The Baptist Foundation of Illinois (BFI), located in Springfield, Ill, is seeking an Executive Director. The Foundation is a nonprofit organization with a 21-member Board of Trustees.



The ideal candidate will have fund raising experience, be committed to the BFI mission and vision and be an active member of a Southern Baptist church.

For more information, visit BSA.org/bfi.

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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.

RESOURCES: Do you need a church pianist? We have piano CDs for congregations to sing by—hymns, gospel, choruses, Easter, praise, etc. Free demo. Special church pricing. Call Worship Service Resources, (877) 977-6800; www.pianocds.org.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Oak Hill Baptist Church. Located on Hwy 1517 in LaRue County, central Kentucky, the church is affiliated with Lynn Association. Send resumé to: Pulpit Committee, 4240 Oak Hill Road, Sonora, KY 42776; oakhillbaptistchurch@hotmail.com.

SEEKING: Full-time children's pastor for Campbellsville Baptist Church, located in central Kentucky, to reach our children (birth-6th grade) and their families for Christ. Must be visionary, team player, highly relational and passionate about seeing young families come to Christ. Please send resumé to Discipleship Pastor Brad Lauer, bradl@villebaptist.com; or 420 N Central Ave., Campbellsville, KY 42718.

SEEKING: Energetic individual desiring a long-term ministry with our church family to serve as minister to youth, with oversight of children's ministry. Full-time or part-time, with parsonage available. Located 45 minutes from Louisville. Contact Cheryl Clark, Pleasureville Baptist Church, (502) 551-4638; (502) 878-4307; cclark6573@yahoo.com.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for First Baptist Church of Clinton, Ky. Resumes, accompanied by CD/DVD, may be sent to Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 320 Mayfield Road, Clinton, KY 42031; or e-mail resumé/link to pastor4fbc@yahoo.com.

SEEKING: Full-time preschool/children's director. Bachelor's degree required; seminary or equivalent preferred. Minimum two years experience in church with more than 300 in attendance. Send resumé to: Preschool/Children's Director Search, PO Box 1391, Hixson, TN 37343; or e-mail hfbsearch@att.net.

SEEKING: Senior pastor for Pleasant View Baptist Church, Waynesburg, Ky. Send resumé to Pastor Search Team, 13571 Kentucky Highway 1247, Waynesburg, KY 40489; or e-mail resumé to pastorsearch@pvbclincoln.org.

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 resumé 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: fbcfpastorsearch@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 resumé 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. Resumes will be accepted through 5-15-2010. www.PottersHouseBWC.org.

KBC senior celebrations slated for April

Lawrenceburg—Kentucky Baptist senior adults from across the state will gather for a time of worship, instruction and fellowship at two upcoming Senior Living Celebrations next month.

Primarily designed to encourage and equip senior adults for ministry, the first event will be held April 20 at Sand Spring Baptist Church in Lawrenceburg. A second, identical event will be held April 22 at Second Baptist Church of Greenville.

Both events are sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention and will feature the same speakers and follow the same schedule, according to Shelly Johns, women's and senior adult ministry associate for the KBC.

"We want seniors to remember that they are still in the mix when it comes to sharing Christ. Seniors have so many experiences and gifts to share, and we want to continue to use those in spreading the good news of Jesus Christ," Johns said. "This event will be a time of worship, fellow-

ship and hopefully, a lot of laughter."

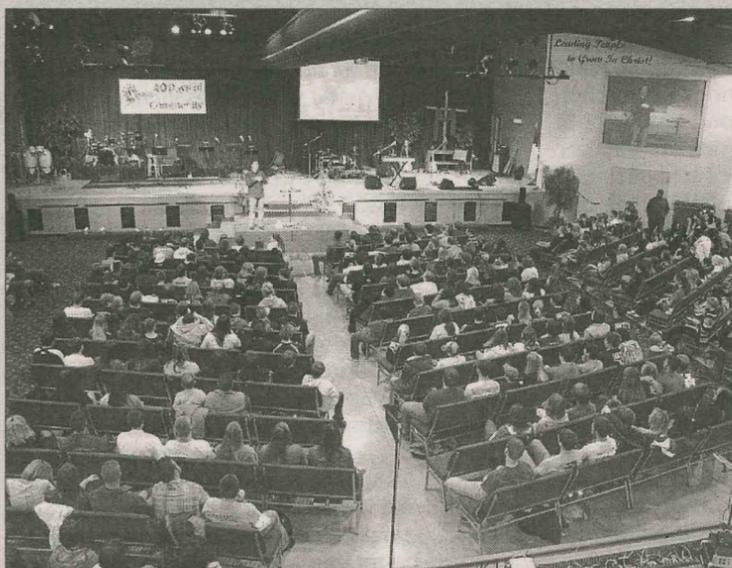
Keith Inman, director of the KBC's collegiate/young adult ministry department, will be the featured speaker at both events. Music will be provided by Carl Herrgesell, pianist/keyboardist for award-winning Christian recording artist Kathy Troccoli, and vocal impressionist Michael Kelley will provide entertainment for both events.

Participants also may choose to attend two workshops during the event. Workshop topics include computers, disaster relief, estate planning, evangelism, missions, music, single seniors, wellness and more. Free blood pressure checks also will be available at both events.

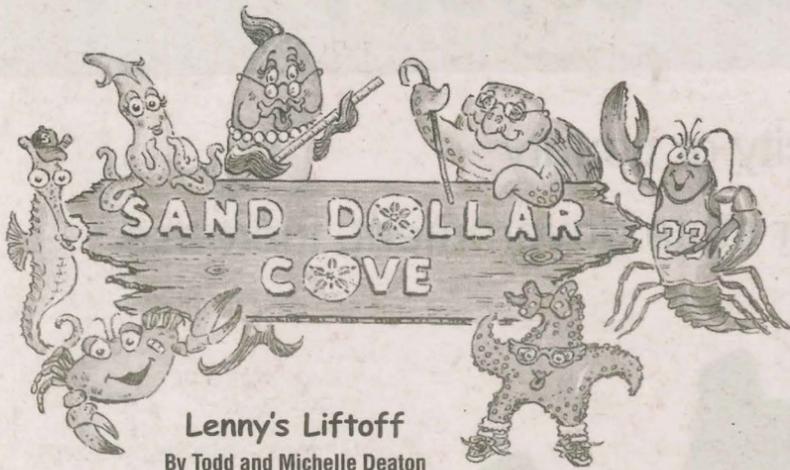
Additional support for the workshops is provided by the Kentucky Baptist Foundation.

Registration for the event is \$15 by April 5 and \$20 after that date and at the door. To register, visit www.KyBaptist.org/SeniorCelebration, or call (502) 489-3580, or toll free in Kentucky at (866) 489-3580.

D-Now XPRNZ LYF



Around 600 students from 16 churches in Logan-Todd Baptist Association gather for an association-wide Disciple Now weekend at Crossroads Church in Russellville Feb. 26-27. With the theme XPRNZ LYF (which translates to Experience Life in textese), students gathered for worship on Friday and Saturday nights, and participated in a number of community missions projects Saturday morning and afternoon. John Nix, head of Vertical Purpose Ministries in Memphis, Tenn., was the speaker for the weekend. Nashville-based musician Danya Powell led worship. (Photo courtesy of Jonathan Hughes)



Lenny's Liftoff

By Todd and Michelle Deaton

One school day, Mrs. Tuna Tidewater asked her class, "If you could be anything when you grow up, what would you be?"

"I'd be a movie star," said Sunny Starfish.

"Being a police officer would be cool," said Seamore Seahorse.

"I like helping people feel better. I'll be a nurse," said Clarice Clam.

"Math is fun," Syd Squid said. "Being a teacher would be great."

"Come on," said Craig Crab, "She said anything, and you pick a policeman, a nurse and a teacher?"

"All right, Craig, let's hear your idea," said Mrs. Tidewater.

"That's easy: a pirate's life for me," Craig said.

"I don't think there are pirates anymore," said Seamore.

"But, Craig, you could be a sailor," suggested Mrs. Tidewater.

Lenny Lobster was the last one to speak.

"We all know what Lenny will say," Seamore said.

"Big surprise," Craig agreed.

"He'll be a basketball player."

But Lenny had another idea. "I want to be an astronaut," he said.

"That's silly," said Craig. "Who ever heard of a lobster becoming an astronaut?"

"That certainly sounds very interesting," Mrs. Tidewater commented. "Now, here's your assignment. This week, each of you must find a way to live your dream for a day. Then, on Friday, we will all report to the class."

For most of the Cove Kids, this was easy. Seamore volunteered to be a school crossing guard. Syd offered to help teach a math lesson. Clarice made a first aid kit and patched up "boo-boos" during recess. Craig asked Fisherman John to take him along on boat rides. Sunny wore golden, star-shaped glasses and a pearl necklace, and Ollie Oyster pulled her around in a wagon as she waved.

But becoming an astronaut for a day seemed impossible to Lenny. "How can a lobster fly?" he asked Mrs. Tidewater.

"I'm sure you'll think of something," his teacher encouraged.

"Even a tuna has been known to jump once in a while," she winked.

"I know," Lenny said. "Dolphins are great jumpers. Maybe Pastor Porpoise will help me."

"I'd love to help, but I haven't jumped in years," Pastor Porpoise said. "Let's ask God to help you find an answer," he suggested.

As he left Surfside Church, Lenny saw a sea gull soaring above the waves. "That's it!" he exclaimed. "All I need is some wings."

Lenny found two palm branches, climbed onto a high rock, and waited for a strong breeze. He didn't fly, but he did have a great splashdown. As he swam back to the rock, a sea gull who had been watching him burst out laughing. "What are you doing? Lobsters can't fly," she chuckled.

"I have to be an astronaut for a school assignment," whined Lenny.

"Well, if you are going to fly, you're going to need help," the sea gull smiled. "Who would be better to help you fly, than a bird?"

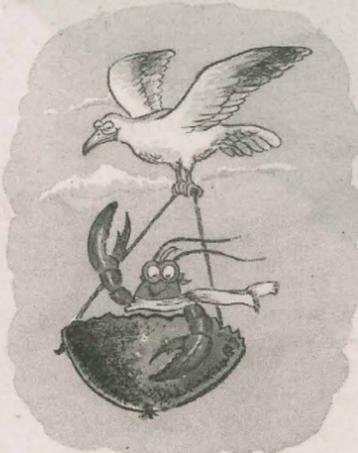
"Super!" exclaimed Lenny. "How do we do it?"

That Friday at school, the Cove Kids had a big surprise.



Treasure Hunt

What are some jobs the Cove Kids want to do when they grow up? What was Lenny's problem? What did Pastor Porpoise suggest? What should you do when you need an answer to a hard problem? Read Isaiah 40:31 together.



"Where's Lenny?" asked Mrs. Tidewater.

"Look," said Seamore, pointing out the window.

Up in the sky, Lenny was waving to them as he rode in an empty coconut shell that was being pulled by a sea gull.

"Sand Dollar Cove, we have liftoff," Lenny yelled to the Cove Kids below.

For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



Preacher's Kids

David Ayers



Bible Crosswords

By Evelyn M. Boyinton

Across

- 1 Cut
- 7 "He fell into a ____" (Acts 10:10)
- 13 Declares
- 14 "The son of Geber, in ____-gilead" (1 Kings 4:13)
- 15 Jesus' birthplace
- 17 Exist
- 19 The number of commandments God gave Moses
- 20 "____, every one that thirsteth" (Isaiah 55:1)
- 22 Animal that Christ rode on Palm Sunday
- 24 Depend on others' money
- 26 "Whether it be good or ____" (2 Corinthians 5:10)
- 27 Activity
- 29 "Then an ____ cried aloud" (Daniel 3:4)
- 31 Pertaining to air, prefix
- 32 "God hath given ____ unto your brethren" (Joshua 22:4)
- 33 Hastens
- 35 "The seed is ____ under their clods" (Joel 1:17)
- 37 Vigor
- 38 "____ died without children" (1 Chronicles 2:30)
- 40 When you think you'll get there, abbr.
- 41 Three feet, abbr.
- 43 Relative, abbr.
- 45 Part of the blood that carries iron, abbr.
- 46 "The Lord fulfil all thy ____" (Psalms 20:5)
- 50 "This Agar is Mount Sinai in ____" (Galatians 4:25)

1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11	12
13								14				
			15				16					
17	18					19					20	21
22		23		24				25		26		
27			28				29		30			
		31							32			
33					34		35					36
37				38		39				40		
41			42		43				44		45	
		46		47				48		49		
50	51							52			53	54
55								56				

- 52 "We have had ____ to eat" (2 Chronicles 31:10)
- 55 "The ____ is not dead, but sleepeth" (Mark 5:39)
- 56 "Thou shalt utterly ____ it" (Deuteronomy 7:26)

- 23 Sharply inclined
- 24 Emotions
- 25 "They should not return to ____" (Matthew 2:12)
- 26 Sew quickly
- 28 Anger
- 30 Return, abbr.
- 33 "Who came in privily to ____ out our liberty" (Galatians 2:4)
- 34 Appearing in consecutive parts
- 35 "They ____ upon the Lord God of their fathers" (2 Chronicles 13:18)
- 36 Seize for arrest
- 39 "I will ____ you go" (Exodus 8:28)
- 42 "Their ____ shall not become garments" (Isaiah 59:6)
- 44 Nautical mile
- 46 Girl's nickname
- 47 "____ them about thy neck" (Proverbs 6:21)
- 48 "The Lord our God is ____ Lord" (Mark 12:29)
- 49 "If any man will ____ thee at the law" (Matthew 5:40)
- 50 Commercial, abbr.
- 51 Radium, chem. symbol
- 53 Organization for young females, abbr.
- 54 Altitude, abbr.

Last week's solution

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

Who do you call?

- When alcohol threatens to invade your city or county
- When gambling threatens to corrupt your state government, increase crime, and victimize the poor



Call the Kentucky League on Alcohol and Gambling Problems

In 2009, concerned Christians from Bardstown, Danville, Irvine, Leitchfield, Louisville, Murray, Paintsville, Pikeville, and Stanford; and Kenton and Trigg Counties called the Kentucky League for help on alcohol issues. The League provided information, guidance, encouragement, and support to help these citizens fight alcohol's invasion into their communities.

The Kentucky League on Alcohol and Gambling Problems is a statewide, faith-based organization that seeks to prevent the moral, economic, and social problems caused by alcohol and gambling. This is done through advocacy and lobbying in the state legislature. In addition, our sister organization, The Kentucky Ethics League, Inc. seeks to raise public awareness of alcohol and gambling issues by distributing educational materials and through speaking engagements. To continue this important mission we must have the financial support of many more individuals and churches. Please help. We need your gifts and prayers. Donations to the Kentucky Ethics League, a 501(c)3 corporation are tax deductible.

Kentucky League on Alcohol and Gambling Problems
2722 Crittenden Drive ♦ Louisville, KY 40209-1114
Phone (502) 635-0002 ♦ <http://www.kentuckyleague.org>



"Let Your Light Shine Before Men"

Matt 5:16