

Shine like stars in the world
Philippians 2:15

WESTERN Recorder

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Survey: Less than half link Easter to the Resurrection

Ventura, Calif.—While most Americans describe Easter as a religious holiday, less than half of U.S. adults surveyed link it specifically to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, a Barna Group study shows.

Seven in 10 respondents mentioned religion or spirituality in their response to an open-ended question about how they describe what Easter means to them personally. But just 42 percent tied Easter to Christ's Resurrection.

At 73 percent, baby boomers (ages 45 to 63) were the most likely to describe Easter as a religious holiday, compared to two-thirds of those ages 26 to 44 and Americans 64 and older. The youngest group of adults (ages 18 to 25) were least likely, at 58 percent, to use that kind of description.

Other than the day Christians believe Jesus rose from the dead, respondents described Easter as "a Christian holiday, a celebration of God or Jesus, a celebration of Passover, a holy day" or a special day to go to church, Barna researchers said.

"The Easter holiday in particular still has a distinctly religious connection for people but ... the specifics of it are really fading in a lot of people's minds," said David Kinnaman, president of the Ventura, Calif.-based Barna Group. (RNS)

GPS | God's Plan for Students



Baptist Campus Ministries students statewide got involved in a weeklong spring break missions trip across Kentucky helping local churches with their Find It Here efforts. Northern Kentucky University students (from left) Megan Peek, Jon Raley, Jake Thomas, Katie Juneau and Kim Schuler help distribute Find It Here bags with the gospel message to homes in Louisville. (Photo by Brian Combs)

Spring break is missions time for Baptist Campus Ministries

By Erin Roach
Kentucky Baptist Convention

Louisville—About 500 students from Baptist Campus Ministries in Kentucky spent their spring breaks on mission, including several who assisted local churches and associations in distributing Find It Here evangelism materials.

Missions always has been a central focus for Kentucky's BCM groups, and practice what they are learning for students to put into practice what they are learning, said Keith Inman, director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's collegiate department.

According to Inman, the KBC planned a new type of

GPS missions experience this year that would take students across the state for a variety of missions projects. Inman even was able to incorporate gospel distribution into the trips as part of the KBC's Find It Here evangelism initiative that currently is underway.

"A lot of churches have asked for help with Find It Here distribution, so we decided to mobilize students during spring break because this is right during the time when all of the churches are distributing the gospel bags," Inman explained.

Two groups of about 50 students each were involved in the trips. The details of the expeditions were kept
□ See BCM students fan out ... Page 6

In Haiti and Chile, Southern Baptists making a difference

By Mark Kelly
Baptist Global Response

Port-au-Prince, Haiti—Southern Baptist churches are making a difference in both Haiti and Chile, as they demonstrate the compassion of Christ for survivors of two devastating earthquakes, a key leader of the disaster response effort said.

In Haiti, a tent compound will be created at a facility owned by one of the Haitian Baptist conventions to house volunteer teams that will begin rotating in April 10, said Jim Brown, U.S. director for Baptist Global Response. The volunteer teams will focus alternately on clean-up and medical needs.

Working in Haiti has proven very difficult, with housing and food in limited supply and coordination between relief organizations at a minimum, said David Brown, who with his wife, Jo, directs BGR work in the Americas. Yet volunteers are rising to the challenge and making the



HELPING HANDS
An elderly woman is brought into a makeshift medical clinic held inside the main police station in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. So far, Southern Baptists have donated more than \$3.4 million to earthquake relief efforts in Haiti and Chile.

necessary personal sacrifices.

A medical team from Nebraska working at the Love a Child Orphanage persevered in chaotic conditions and was not only able to provide meaningful health care but also encourage Haitian families about God's love for them in the midst of their crisis, David Brown recalled.

In Chile, the primary Southern Baptist relief emphasis will be feed-

ing consultation and emergency shelter, Jim Brown noted.

The South Carolina Baptist Convention and Southern Baptists of Texas Convention continue to send in teams that specialize in mass feeding operations, Brown noted. Those teams will train Chilean Baptist partners to run the feeding operations themselves, with a goal of completely turning over those oper-

ations to Chileans. Once fully operational, a field kitchen is able to produce as many as 1,000 meals each day.

The Texas and South Carolina conventions were the two states on call with Baptist Global Response when the earthquakes occurred and both conventions have responded quickly with both assessment team members and volunteers, Brown noted. Volunteers from Kentucky, Mississippi, Alabama, California, Florida, Louisiana, Indiana and Wyoming also have recently served in Haiti or are about to go.

Southern Baptists have donated a total of \$3.4 million to Haiti relief through BGR and the International Mission Board and a little more than \$8,200 to the Chile effort, Brown noted. For Haiti, \$405,000 has been released from Southern Baptist world hunger and disaster response funds, and \$550,000 has been released to Chile relief efforts.

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Time of transition can provide time of healing for ministers

KBC-sponsored conferences offer resources for pastors dealing with conflict, tension in churches

By Ken Walker
Kentucky Baptist Convention

Louisville—Although years have passed since they attended, two Kentucky Baptist pastors say they still are benefitting from their experiences at a Ministers in Transition retreat, sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Lynn Traylor, pastor of Buckner Baptist Church, said the sessions helped him realize issues he was facing in 2005 always would be present in ministry. They also enabled him to do a better job of communicating with congregation members today.

"I would encourage them to go," Traylor said of pastors who have been fired or are dealing with congregational tension. "It helps you understand that while no two churches are alike, we all experience times of difficulty. Going didn't necessarily mean my ministry was at an end."

Max Hester, pastor of Stanford Baptist Church since June of 2001, attended the seminar amid conflict in his previous church. The problems led him to leave that congregation after 17 years.

The retreat gave Hester and his wife a new perspective, helping them see that conflict is inevitable when dealing with people.

"I'm more patient," Hester said of his current pastorate. "I realized before I got here that God was already here. What He's doing is part of a much bigger picture."

Held every April and October, the retreat is sponsored by the KBC's leadership development team.

Usually held at a Louisville-area hotel, each session attracts six to 10 pastors and their spouses. The next retreat is April 8-10.

Since it began more than 20 years ago, the KBC has helped more than 300 pastoral couples. Team Leader Karl Babb said though they tend to be low-profile events, the retreats are among the most beneficial.

"It's safe and confidential—we don't give out lists of participants or keep a scrapbook," Babb said. "We deal with issues of change and transition and look at scriptural models of transition. There's a lot of time in small groups to share stories."

The KBC picks up participants' expenses, including travel. In addition, it sometimes provides financial assistance for counseling for pastors in crisis, whether or not they attend the retreat.

The typical reasons for pastor firings or situations that lead to departures remain similar from year to year, Babb noted. Issues of control lead the way, followed by resistance to change, conflict within the church, and leadership styles that either are too strong or too weak.

In Traylor's case, failing to follow through on some ministerial and administrative tasks led to his firing.

"I didn't realize I was on the verge of burnout," Traylor said. "I was doing things that were draining me physically, emotionally and spiritually, and not doing anything to deal with that. I wasn't opening myself up and didn't know how to ask for help."

During Ministers in Transition, the Oldham County pastor examined how he could have done things differently and communicated his own needs better.

It also gave his wife and him time to discuss what was going on, but in a relaxed atmosphere and a neutral setting.

"I came out of the sessions with a de-

sire to see if I could salvage my career," said Traylor, who was out of the pulpit for two years. "I never felt I wouldn't be in ministry somewhere, but I wasn't sure where the Lord was leading us."

God's love at 'pivotal point'

Hester said he made lasting friendships at the retreat and still marks the dates on his calendar so he can pray for pastors and spouses attending each session.

"The most important thing is that they cared for us and loved us," said Hester, who at his previous church got caught in conflict between younger members and older leaders. "Ministers in Transition is more than a conference, it's an opportunity to experience God's love firsthand at a pivotal point in ministry."

The retreat gave the Hesters the tools to make the transition to a new church without animosity and help their previous congregation do that in a more wholesome manner, he said.

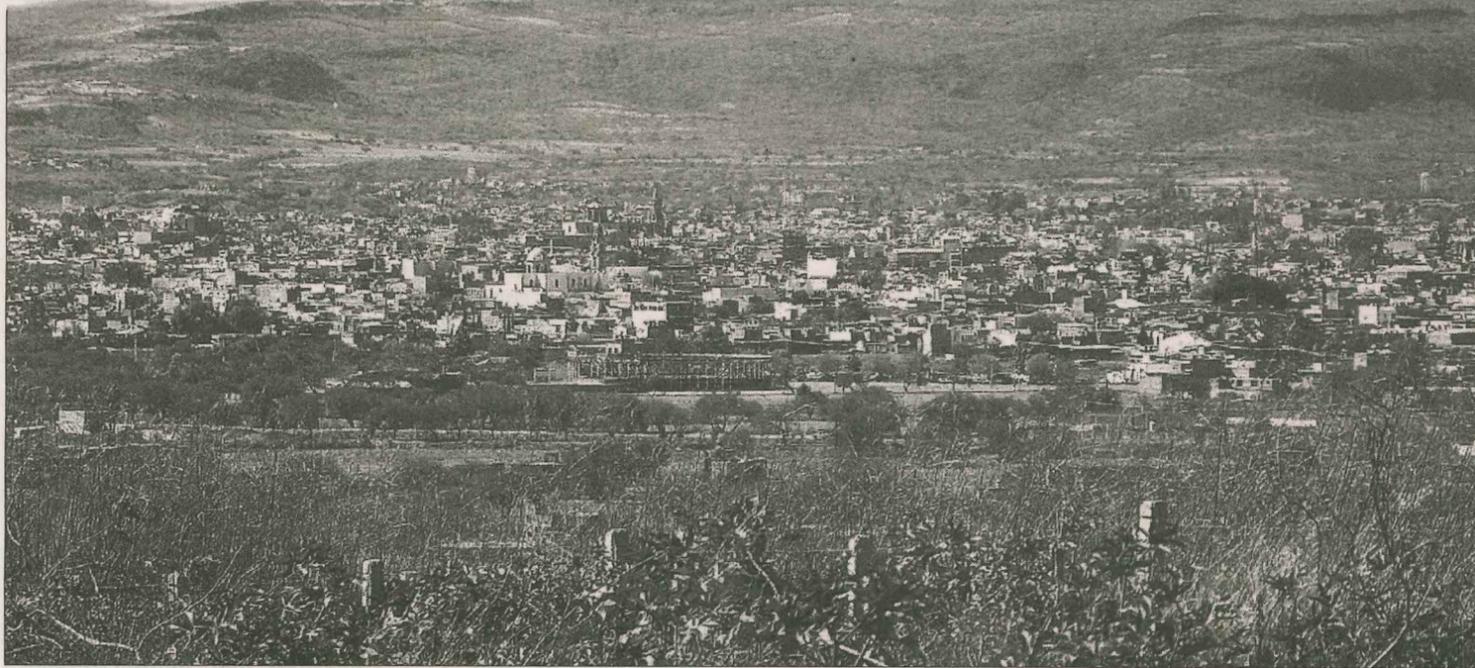
"It gave us a new lease on life," Hester said. "At that point in our journey it was a ministry saver. We returned to our ministry setting and sought to minister to people with a new perspective."

For more information about the Ministers in Transition sessions, call the KBC's leadership development team office at (502) 489-3580, or toll free in Kentucky at (866) 489-3580.

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Lynn Traylor, pastor of Buckner Baptist Church, who attended a Ministers in Transition conference a few years ago

Operation: GO Mexico



Kentucky Baptist missions opportunities now available south of the border

Louisville—Church groups that are interested in short-term mission trip opportunities for this year are encouraged to participate in the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Operation: GO (Gospel Outreach) Mexico initiative.

Coordinated through the KBC's partnership missions department, Operation: GO Mexico is a strategic missions project of the Southern Baptist Convention's International Mission Board.

According to Scott Pittman, partnership missions director for the KBC, those who participate in an Operation: GO Mexico project will be part of a concentrated effort to place the Gospel of John and other evangelistic materials in every home in Mexico.

"The IMB is hopeful that this gospel saturation strategy will bring about a multiplying

church planting movement across Mexico," Pittman said. "The projects are designed to provide opportunities for nationals to form relationships with volunteers, and then those contacts can be followed up by the local missionaries seeking to plant new churches."

Kentucky Baptists interested in Operation: GO Mexico may choose between eight week-long mission trip dates, beginning in April and running through October. Those who wish to participate should book their trips as soon as possible, Pittman urged, in order to have time to adequately prepare.

"This is a great opportunity for Kentucky Baptists who desire to go on a short-term missions trip, but don't have the time or resources to create their own experience," Pittman said.

Kentucky Baptist projects will take place in or near Morelia, in the Mexican state of Michoacan. Target cities include Agauascalientes, Queretaro and San Luis Potosi.

According to Pittman, volunteers will distribute gospel packets, prayerwalk local communities, share their testimonies as opportunities become available, and seek to find non-believers who may be interested in attending a Bible study or learning more about the gospel. Additional opportunities may be available at the discretion of the local church leaders, he added.

The KBC is seeking teams of four to seven Kentucky Baptists for each of the project dates. For more information, visit www.KyBaptist.org/GoMexico, or call (502) 489-3529, or toll free in Kentucky, (866) 489-3529.

Hancock, who led Louisville's Highview Baptist, dies at age 73

Fort Worth, Texas—William Hancock, who led Highview Baptist Church in Louisville for 25 years, died March 10 in Fort Worth, Texas. He was 73.

According to multiple news outlets, Hancock was well known as a strong supporter of the conservative shift both in the Southern Baptist Convention and at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

Hancock championed the election of Albert Mohler, a member of Highview Baptist, as president of Southern Seminary in 1993.

During Hancock's 25-year tenure at Highview, the church consistently was recognized as one of the fastest-growing congregations in the SBC. According to the Louisville Courier-Journal, Highview baptized 225 people in 1981, the most of any SBC church.

Hancock resigned as pastor of Highview Baptist in April 1995. He and his family later moved to Texas, where he remained active at Southcliff Baptist Church in Fort Worth.

A native of Christian County, Hancock was a graduate of Austin Peay University in Clarksville, Tenn., and Southern Seminary.

He is survived by his wife, Euna, two sons and seven grandchildren.

Great Commission Resurgence

Task force chair surprised at backlash to report

By Bob Allen

Monroe, Mich.—The head of the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force charged with finding ways to make the Southern Baptist Convention more effective in reaching the lost said March 16 he was surprised by negative reaction to parts of the group's preliminary report.

Speaking with pastors, as well as state and regional leaders, in a teleconference convened by the Network of Baptist Associations, Ronnie Floyd, pastor of First Baptist Church of Springdale, Ark., said the GCR group has received a lot of feedback since unveiling an interim report Feb. 22.

"A lot of people would love for us to do all kinds of things in this denomination right now," Floyd said. "And I'm sure there are many of you who were very disappointed that we did do this or we didn't do that, but the bottom line is we've been commissioned to do one thing, and that is take a look at how we can more faithfully and effectively accomplish the Great Commission."

Floyd noted that much had been said and written about the impact the report could have on various convention entities. For the committee members, he said, "it's really about penetrating lostness." That, he explained, means putting more dollars, personnel and strategy in places "where the gospel has never gone before."

The most-discussed recommendation calls for phasing out cooperative agreements that govern work done jointly by state conventions and the North American Mission Board and move to a comprehensive church planting process that is more strategy driven. That has caused anxiety

about the future of state convention and associational employees whose jobs are jointly funded through the cooperative agreements.

"We want to do what's right," Floyd said. "No one wants to hurt anybody. We did not get in a room and say, 'OK, how are we going to disturb everyone in the SBC?'"

"What we're learning is that we are all committed to the Great Commission," he said. "We're just having a hard time about how to get there together."

At the same time, Floyd added: "There's going to have to be sacrifice. There's going to have to be change."

David Dockery, one of several task-force members in on the

call, elaborated. "We've realized that some things that worked very well for us 50 years ago may not be the most effective ways of addressing the new issues of the 21st century," said Dockery, president of Union University in Jackson, Tenn. "That's what we are trying to figure out, the best way to address those matters."

Floyd said it was never the intent of the task force that NAMB should be turned loose to work independently of local associations and state conventions.

"Our heart is that partnership continues," he noted. "The issue is that that partnership may not look like it looked before. The strategies that may be used may be different than they were before."

Floyd said he anticipated that the basic concept of covenant agreements between local, state and national entities would continue, and even expand since another rec-

ommendation calls for authorizing the International Mission Board to work directly with unreached people groups living in the United States.

"Whether they are called cooperative agreements or not, who knows what they will be called?" Floyd remarked. "But obviously there will be some kind of commitment towards partnership."

Floyd: Need for change

The task force chairman said the group's intent is not to throw out everything that Southern Baptists have done in the past but rather to "see things taken to a different level."

"If I want a different product, I've got to change the process," he said. "Some of the processes in Southern Baptist life need to be addressed."

"These are not good-and-evil choices," he added. "Those would be easy. These are good versus what's best. That's why the struggle is out there. That's why the tension is out there."

Floyd said members of the task force are listening to feedback to the preliminary report and that some of the recommendations could change by release of the final report May 3. After that, the report is to be presented to messengers at the SBC annual meeting June 15-16 in Orlando, Fla.

"We would never want to recommend something that is not going to be more effective ultimately," Floyd noted. "We might debate for a while about which is going to be the most effective, but the bottom line is that our hearts are broken—and I know your hearts are broken—when you've got 70-80 percent of our churches that are plateaued or declining, and we have all of the people in our country that are lost without Christ." (ABP)



Ronnie Floyd

Ga. pastor Wright to be nominated for SBC president

Orlando, Fla.—Georgia pastor Bryant Wright will be nominated for president of the Southern Baptist Convention, a Florida pastor announced March 12.



Bryant Wright

The nomination of Bryant Wright, senior pastor of Johnson Ferry Baptist Church in Marietta, Ga., will be made by David Uth, pastor of First Baptist Church of Orlando, Fla., according to a March 12 report by the Florida Baptist Witness.

No other nominees for SBC offices have been announced to date; the SBC annual meeting will convene June 15-16 in Orlando.

Wright is the founding pastor of Johnson Ferry Baptist Church, which began in 1981 and now reports average weekly worship attendance of 4,383 and a resident membership of 6,121. The church reported 459 baptisms in 2009. Wright was president of the SBC Pastors' Conference in 2006.

The church gave \$638,992 (3.9 percent) of its undesignated receipts through the Cooperative Program in 2009, according to the Georgia Baptist Convention's Annual Church Profile, a decrease from 4.9 percent of undesignated giving in 2008 and 5.1 percent in 2007, according to the Georgia Christian Index.

In a recent meeting with Georgia Baptist Convention leadership, Wright indicated the church's CP gifts would be further reduced in 2010 to 2.5 percent, with additional funds being allocated directly to the International Mission Board, the Georgia newspaper reported.

Wright, in comments to Christian Index Editor Gerald Harris March 12, said he wants to see "a greater percentage of our dollars (going) to the IMB, NAMB (North American Mission Board) and our seminaries."

David Uth, the Orlando pastor who announced his intention to nominate Wright for SBC president, told the Florida Baptist Witness that Wright is "uniquely positioned to continue the much-needed focus on the Great Commission as set forth by John Hunt and the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force."

Wright "has been a consistent leader among Southern Baptists who acknowledges and appreciates our traditional heritage while embracing some of the creative and innovative methods of reaching today's generation for Christ," Uth told the Florida newspaper.

Wright holds a master of divinity degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, and a bachelor of arts in English from the University of South Carolina. After earning his M.Div., he was minister to single adults at Second Baptist Church of Houston before accepting the pastorate of the fledgling Johnson Ferry Baptist Church in December 1981.

Wright and his wife, Anne, have three children and three grandchildren. (BP)

Remaining Baptist volunteer Silsby faces new charge in kidnapping case

Port-au-Prince, Haiti—Laura Silsby, the last of 10 Baptist missions volunteers detained in Haiti on suspicion of kidnapping, now faces a new charge.

Silsby, who led the team, now is accused of attempting to take 40 children out of Haiti without proper paperwork on Jan. 26, three days before the 10-member team was prevented from crossing the border into the Dominican Republic with 33 children.

Haitian Judge Bernard Saint-Vil announced the additional charge of "organizing irregular travel" March 12. He had released the ninth team member, Charisa Coulter, March 8 after more than five weeks in jail. The other team members were freed Feb. 18.

The new charge is based on information provided by a Haitian official who said he prevented the Jan. 26 incident after being alerted by a concerned citizen about a bus loaded with Haitian children, news services reported.

The new charge is based on a 1980 travel law implemented by Haiti's dictator at the time, Jean-Claude Duvalier, the Associated Press reported. It carries a penalty of three to six years imprisonment. The judge said he has until early May to decide whether to release Silsby or order a trial. (BP)

Rankin apologizes to Chapman for doubting Great Commission loyalty

Richmond, Va.—International Mission Board President Jerry Rankin has apologized to Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee President Morris Chapman for stating that Chapman viewed cooperation among Southern Baptists as more important than fulfilling the Great Commission.

Rankin, in a blog post March 15, wrote that "I made a major mistake" in an earlier blog that "insinuated (Chapman) was not committed to the Great Commission."

"I apologize and accept full responsibility for this egregious implication due to letting my passion for this topic not only erode objectivity in writing, but to personalize the issue as a perceived attack on a friend and colleague," Rankin wrote. "There is no question about Morris' commitment to the Great Commission. He has always been a strong supporter of the IMB."

Rankin also stated that Chapman's

"passionate appeal" in his retirement announcement in February "for a renewed impetus on evangelism in the local church characterized what has been the priority of his life and leadership."

Chapman, in a statement to Baptist Press last week, said, "I have known Jerry for many years and am grateful for his faithful service to Southern Baptists with the International Mission Board. In reading his most recent blog entry, I appreciate that he retracted the personal critique he had made in an earlier posting."

Rankin, in the blog containing his apology, noted that "the point of the post" had been "whatever is priority determines what we do and whether or not we are willing to change what we do" to "reflect kingdom priorities." The "primary issue," Rankin wrote, is "how can we do more to reach a lost world at home and abroad unless we are willing to make some changes in how things are done." (BP)

BGCT takes action against Dallas church

Dallas—The Baptist General Convention of Texas said last week it has asked Royal Lane Baptist Church in Dallas to remove mention of its affiliation with the state convention from church publications and would hold any funds received by the church in escrow until the church clarifies its position on homosexuality.

BGCT Executive Director Randel Everett said in a statement that while the church has taken no official action on welcom-

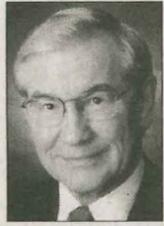
ing and affirming gays, public remarks by church leaders suggest a position "clearly different from the historic theological position" of the state convention.

Questions about the church's views stem from a March 6 newspaper article about the congregation changing its Web site to describe itself as a "vibrant mosaic of varied racial identities, ethnicities, sexual orientations, and denominational backgrounds." (ABP)

A time for urgent prayer

As we approach the final days of Find It Here leading up to Easter and the follow up through Sunday school classes, we must be more focused in prayer than ever before.

Partners in the Mission



By Bill Mackey

In Ephesians 6:19-20, Paul asked the believers to pray for him so that "I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel" In Colossians 4:2-6, Paul requested prayer "that God may open a door for our message, so that I may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains." And Paul requested prayer that he would "make the most of every opportunity."

We have reached a very important time in the Find It Here process when the gospel packets are being delivered, the media spots are being viewed, people are responding, preparation for Easter worship is being made and plans for follow up are being put in place.

These days leading up to Easter are "golden moments" in God's special timing that we do not want to miss. It is a special time to seek the Lord (Isaiah 55:6-7). It is a special time of sowing the seed of the gospel.

It is a special time to claim the promise of Isaiah 55:11: "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it."

The theme of sowing is linked to the harvest in Psalms 126:6: "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

Jesus said, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest" (Matt. 9:37-38).

Find It Here is primarily a sowing process, but all aspects of God's Plan for Sharing are being experienced: praying, equipping, sowing and harvesting.

Although there is a process for involvement, we know that the results depend on God, as Paul made it clear, "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase."

The sowing continued recently when 30 KBC staff persons joined five pastors and lay persons in Henry County to distribute gospel presentations to 5,000 households. When Pleasureville and Campbellsburg churches complete their distribution, 95 percent of the 7,000 households there will have received the gospel presentation. Even in the early days of distribution, more than 350 response cards have been received.

Please continue to pray for openness and receptivity to the gospel as the seed is sown house to house, person to person, and through the media spots across Kentucky.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

After they 'find it here,' start a church

For many Southern Baptists, church planting may seem as daunting a challenge as navigating the "Road to the Final Four." With bracket-busting losses by seemingly sure "Sweet Sixteen" teams such as Georgetown and Kansas and show-stopping victories by Murray State, Saint Mary's and Cornell, the prediction-defying outcomes of this year's NCAA basketball tournament certainly merit being described as "madness." But a successful church launch doesn't have to be maddening. For if Acts 1:8 tells us anything, it is that every disciple is to be on mission for Christ, and as Henry Blackaby asserts, "If the 'laypeople' ever catch God's pattern for using them in church planting, the nation and world could come to hear God's Good News in our generation!"

Starting churches is apparently something we often hear about, but few of us actually do. According to the North American Mission Board, less than five percent of all Southern Baptist churches have been involved in starting a church. That's one statistic we must change. With an estimated 254 million people who are unchurched, the United States is now the third largest mission field in the world.

Because the majority of our churches are plateaued or declining, a worthy case could be made that small, struggling congregations need help growing, and that stronger healthier churches are essential. Yet, while it is true that plenty of existing churches have empty pews that need to be filled, it is also true that new churches generally are more effective in reaching new generations, new residents and new people groups, such as those defined by language, ethnicity, culture or affinity. Statistics tell us that churches 10 years old or younger typically baptize about 11 people for every 100 members while older churches baptize only 2.5. Furthermore, this growth is mainly from the harvest, not by transfer, suggesting that most previously did not attend church regularly.

So, the crucial issue is for us to identify a group of people who are not currently being reached and ask God to show how we can best reach them. In addition to people groups, consider opportunities in under-churched towns, planned communities, apartment complexes, condominiums or transitional neighborhoods. Affinity groups—cowboys, bikers or medical communities—may provide natural clusters for Bible studies that could grow into a church. Ways to generate interest are limited only by your creativity. For example, one might organize a prayer journey—walking, biking, roller blading, skateboarding or driving.

One doesn't necessarily have to be a vocational minister to be a successful church planter. In Luke 19:10, Jesus reminds us that His mission was "to seek and to save what was lost" and, as His disciples, we should be on mission to tell others, too. The real question is, "Are we willing to change and embrace new ideas to be more effective in reaching others?" "Who Me? Help start a church?"—one of the NAMB's many helpful resources available online at churchplantingvillage.com—confronts laypersons with an awareness that starting churches is everyone's responsibility: "Just as the sun warms the soil and the seedlings, evangelism stirs believers into action ... it stirs within a passion to want to see others come to Christ ...

it moves Christians out of the comfort zone of their pews and into God's mission field—the world."

Starting a church, though, can be like putting together a puzzle; it's easier if you know what it looks like. "Who Me?" provides a picture: "All it takes to begin a new church is to have a call from God and a place to meet. You don't have to have a large budget, a new building, or a paid staff. All you need is an open Bible, an open heart, and a place to sit down and teach others about Christ. Churches can meet in the open air, in city parks, or in homes." Some meet in schools, stores, gymnasiums, theaters or restaurants. The strategy is simple: "Make yourself available to God. Look around you to see which groups are not being reached by a church," the booklet urges.

What does it take? Among the key character traits listed in "New Churches Needed," a step-by-step handbook, are a passion for seeing the lost being won, an ability to relate well to others, flexibility, strength of faith and resilience. And, "Who Me?" adds, "A lay church planter is a facilitator, a leader, a visionary, a dedicated student of the Bible, a self-starter, a team-builder, and much more—but not necessarily a pastor." However, forming a church-planting team is highly recommended: "A new church start should be a congregational-wide effort where all spiritual gifts are enlisted to reach the lost. ... Imagine what would be the impact of the church in today's world if every mother, carpenter, accountant, teacher, student and factory worker could be freed to use their giftedness and pursue their passion and calling in ministry."

On March 28, SBC churches will be observing "Start-a-Church" Sunday. With the culmination of the Find It Here evangelism campaign on Easter—the following Sunday—a good follow-up might be to consider starting a church to reach even more for Christ.

After Thought

By Todd Deaton



The 'Es' of effective Sunday school leaders

By David Francis

Sunday school leaders have different specialties. Some primarily teach, others primarily administer. Regardless of each primary role, all effective Sunday school leaders must develop some organizational competencies. I believe there are five key "Competence E's," if you will:

Enlisting. This is an endless task of a Sunday school leader whether he is a pastor enlisting a Sunday school director, Sunday school director enlisting department directors or teachers, teacher enlisting class leaders, outreach leader enlisting people to take visitation assignments, or group leader enlisting members to take food to a bereaved classmate.

Enlisting can be a joyous task. Effective leaders don't view enlisting as an imposition, but as an invitation to serve God and neighbor by communicating a) this job is impor-

tant, b) God has put your name on my heart and c) a need to pray about the task.

Equipping. Once a person is enlisted, he or she must be trained to do the job. Consider making the training fun. I've heard of a church using a point system and presenting awards to workers who accumulate a particular number of points. They earn points for attending training seminars, participating in special outreach events, reading books, listening to CDs, or viewing DVDs and other online training. Remember, the starting point for equipping is a clear job description.

Encouraging. All of us appreciate a pat on the back, a kind word, an appreciative nod, or a sincere smile. My wife and I teach a preschool class. Our division director occasionally comes by with a piece of candy attached to a brief note that just says, "Thank you." It's such a little thing, and we don't even eat the

candy, but it makes us feel special.

Evaluating. John Kramp, vice president of LifeWay's church resources division, reminds those of us who work for him that the No. 1 job for an effective leader is to accurately define the current reality. How is it going right now? What's going well? What could be going better? What are our plans for accomplishing our strategic objectives? What changes do we need to make? How do we measure success?

Envisioning. Evaluation is about assessing current reality; envisioning is about what could be. Stand outside your church building, in the educational building hallway or at the door of your classroom and ask God to give you a vision for what it could look, sound and smell like if you got serious about doing excellent Sunday school work. Ask Him to give you a goal, and then start communicating that exciting future to others. (BP) David Francis is director of Sunday School at LifeWay Christian Resources.

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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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Easter acrostic for children

By David Garrard

Easter will be here soon. In the midst of the candy, the clothes and the commercialism, Christian parents will be looking for ways to help their children remember and celebrate the true meaning of the season. Here's an idea for an Easter activity that might be helpful to help that end.



Print each letter of the word Easter on an index card or piece of paper, or down one side of a dry erase board. With older children, mix the

letters and let the child unscramble them to discover the word "Easter."

Read Matthew 21:6-9 to your child—the story of Palm Sunday and Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Then, use this acrostic to help your child understand what happened in the story.

E is for the excitement that must have been in the air as Jesus approached the city.

A is for the animal that Jesus rode—a little donkey.

S is for the shouts of praise that came from the people as Jesus rode by. "Hosanna," they said. "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"

T is for the tree branches the people waved and tossed in front of Jesus.

E is for each boy and girl that was there that day. Jesus loved them very much and Jesus loves you, too!

R is for the resurrection! That's what Easter is all about. Jesus is alive. He died on a cross, but three days later, He rose from the grave.

Pray with your child, thanking God for the story of Easter and that Jesus is alive.

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

Protecting the least among us in health care reform

By Joni Eareckson

A few years ago, I helped write a book, "How to Be a Christian in a Brave New World," about the bioethical challenges in the 21st century. Today, one of our foremost ethical challenges is how to accomplish health care reform in a way that respects most Americans' traditional religious values.

As a quadriplegic for the past 43 years, I have had more than my fair share of doctors' visits. I know the difference between good care and bad care, and I can tell when a physician has my best interests at heart. I am thankful that, for the most part, my doctors have always treated me as the individual I am, rather than another patient in a wheelchair.

For these reasons—my faith and my experience with medical care—I was very concerned about two specific items in any health care legislation:

- Federal funding of abortions.
- Rationing of care.

Both the House and Senate health care bills would have set up a health insurance marketplace to benefit small businesses and people buying coverage on their own, with the promise of some subsidies to keep premiums affordable. The difference, however, is that the House bill would prohibit government-subsidized health plans from covering abortions, and the Senate bill did not.

A major concern I have is the \$11 billion that President Obama has earmarked for community health centers to serve low-income people and the

uninsured. Providing access to medical care for the poor is a good thing. However, those funds are not covered by the Hyde Amendment, which prohibits most federal funding of abortions.

FIRST PERSON

(According to Associated Press reports, this obstacle to passing a health care reform bill was believed to have been cleared March 21 when the White House announced President Obama would issue an executive order pledging that no federal funds would be used for elective abortions.)

Why is this issue of abortion important to me? Given my experience with quadriplegia and other forms of disability, I have a special concern to protect and value life in every aspect. I know of countless individuals who have been injured far more gravely than I was when I took that fateful dive back in 1967. For those whose disabilities keep them bedridden or unable to communicate, are their lives of any less value than mine? I should say not! The infant who is developing inside its mother's womb, and who at just a few weeks' gestation already has more mobility than I do, is a human life and a real person, and therefore we must give our all to protect that life.

On the question of rationing care, I understand that all health care systems ration care to some extent, but the real question is whether health care decisions are made by the government using ethical criteria, or by insurance plans where limitations would be based on ability to pay.

If decisions are made by government-created Comparative Effective-

ness Research boards, decisions on who gets treatment (and who doesn't) could mean life or death for many, especially the elderly and those with disabilities.

The proposed Comparative Effectiveness Research program could put the government in the position of determining how to implement the boards' decisions, and such boards could review quality of care based on providing for those who will benefit most. Unfortunately, this could leave those who require specialized, long-term care—people like me—way down on the list of priorities.

These issues recently led me to sign the Manhattan Declaration, which supports the sanctity of life and the rights of conscience and religious freedom. "Although the protection of the weak and vulnerable is the first obligation of government," the document says, "the power of government is today often enlisted in the cause of promoting what Pope John Paul II called 'the culture of death.'"

Let me be clear: there are positive aspects about health care reform, such as prohibiting insurance companies' discrimination against pre-existing conditions and revamping the Medicaid program to offer community-based alternatives to institutionalization.

But there are concerns—not just for disabled people like me, but for all who care about and uphold the value of human life. Health care reform cannot, and must not, be allowed to negatively affect the least among us. (RNS)

Joni Eareckson Tada is an author, disability advocate and the founder of Joni and Friends

Reaching the nations among our college students

By Mark Whitt

On any given day on the campus of Murray State University, you will find Baptist Campus Ministry students engaged in conversation with international students in one of the coffee shops, playing soccer with a group of internationals on one of the intramural fields, or taking internationals to the grocery store so they can buy some food for the week. The world has come to Murray.

On a campus of slightly more than 10,000 students

FAITH ON CAMPUS

and have had countless conversations about faith and a relationship with Jesus. Recently, at a weekly international student Bible study, Chris prayed to accept Christ as his Lord and acknowledged his excitement about sharing this good news with so many people when he returns home.

Chris was convinced that his good friend, Robert*, also from China, needed to hear about Christ and called him immediately to ask him to come have Jason explain the message of Jesus.

Robert also believed and is now walking with Christ.

These two international students came to the Murray State campus with the intention of getting a degree, making some friends and going home with the American experience. Instead they will be going home eternally changed because of Jesus. Many American students from Murray's BCM, like Jason, have become passionate about sharing Christ with international students that have found their way to their campus. They are taking seriously the Great Commission of making disciples around the world.

Through the ministry of BCM, thousands of international students are being introduced to Christ on campuses all around Kentucky. According to statistics from the North American Mission Board, the number of international students has increased by more than 8 percent during the past three decades. Many of these international students are finding their way to our campuses around the state of Kentucky and ultimately into the ministry of BCM.

Through the support of Kentucky Baptists and the Cooperative Program, Baptist Campus Ministries have been able to have a greater presence through staff and outreach with international students. The opportunity that churches continue to have to partner with the ministry of BCM in hosting international students during holidays, providing for some of their needs, and helping with language allows the gospel to be present in so many places around the world.

Often students find their way back home, having been introduced to the gospel while on campus, and they seek out believers in their country to continue their spiritual journey.

I received a Facebook message from a young man named Seth* from Taiwan, expressing appreciation for the friendships that BCM had provided while he was a student at Murray State. He explained that he had been introduced to Jesus by many students at the BCM. The staff of the BCM had given him the name of someone in his home that could help him understand Christ and answer questions that he might have. Seth shared that when he returned home, he had come to a place where he could believe that Jesus was what he needed. He was thankful that there were students in Murray that had shared that message with him.

As Kentucky Baptists pray for ministry in BCM's around the state, pray for God to be made known among the nations—the nations which have come to Kentucky.

Mark Whitt is campus minister at Murray State University. *Names changed for security reasons.

Investing in volatile markets

By Don Spencer

Whether it applies to retirement savings or other investments, these principles are valid for all market conditions. In volatile markets they are very important.

Focus on objectives, not emotions. Remember the goals that you have established and the time frame



that you have to invest. Objectives are established for times like these so that you can stick with a plan and not be concerned with the emotion that exists in difficult market environments.

Don't make impulsive decisions.

Making changes based on short-term market movements is almost a guarantee for failure as it promotes "buying high, selling low."

Selling today cannot avoid yesterday's losses in a down market. Likewise, in an up market, you cannot buy yesterday's performance by investing in the hottest fund.

Maintain a proper perspective on your time horizon. Specifically regarding retirement participants, these assets are to serve needs for a long period of time. Make sure your objectives and actions are consistent with your time horizon.

Don't count your losses. Tallying up how much has been lost in your account serves no purpose. If you want to measure the progress or status of your investment account, focus on the large gains realized in the equity market over longer periods of time.

Maintain realistic expectations. Equity investments are by nature more volatile than other asset classes such as cash and bonds. This means they will move up and down over time. In years immediately preceding 2000, volatility was almost entirely on the upside, with the S&P 500 Index posting nine consecutive years of positive returns with only six negative quarters. Recent years have seen the other side of that coin.

Understand the benefits of diversification. While it may seem asset classes run in concert with one another, a well balanced and diversified portfolio that includes U.S. equities, non-U.S. equities and bonds provides an excellent cushion in market declines.

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

BCM students fan out across Ky., U.S., for spring break missions

Continued from page 1

secret from the students until it was time to move to the next project, he said.

"We basically planned a missions caravan around the idea of a GPS. They haven't known where they were going to go during the entire week, but each stop was planned around a missions project," Inman noted.

Missions scavenger hunt

At the start of each week, the students met at Laurel Lake Baptist Camp in Corbin to work with churches in the area and participate in worship services. From there, they hit the road to unknown locations throughout the state.

"The idea was, for example, to tell them on Monday, 'This is your assignment for the day.' And then we could tell them later, 'Be all packed up and have your stuff on the van,'" Inman pointed out. "Then we'd be running off down the interstate and they wouldn't know where they're going next."

In addition to the KBC's spring break road trip, students from BCMs throughout the state participated in missions work in a variety of other states and countries, including Nashville; Fargo, N.D.; Dearborn, Mich.; Camden, N.J.; Arlington, Texas; Charleston, S.C.; Gainesville, Fla.; Las Vegas; New Orleans; St. Louis; New York; Atlanta; Ireland; Ecuador; Guatemala; Nicaragua; and Costa Rica.

Murray State's BCM took international students on a spring break retreat to Gatlinburg as an outreach to those who are not yet Christians, Inman pointed out.



PROVIDING HOPE Baptist Campus Ministries students Na-Young Kim (left) and Kim Schuler (right), both of Northern Kentucky University, and Sandra Mathis (center) from Western Kentucky University help sort clothes at the Hope House in Bowling Green. The missions project was just one of several efforts tackled by BCM during a weeklong spring break missions trip, which also included helping churches and associations with the Find It Here campaign. (Photo by Brian Combs)

Several BCMs, including the University of Louisville, returned to Panama City, Fla., for Beach Reach, an evangelistic spring break outreach connected to LifeWay Christian Resources.

Bill Noe, UofL's campus minister, said 22 students from the school's BCM trav-

eled to Beach Reach, where they served other students at the popular spring break destination.

"In the morning we do a free pancake breakfast, and then at night we offer free van rides and send out street teams. We also have a prayer ministry undergirding

all of the ministries that are going on at the same time," Noe said.

Typically, when students set foot on one of the vans, they ask if the ride is really free, and they want to know why the BCM students are offering to help.

"From the beginning we get to talk about Christ and how He compels us to serve others and how He's important in our life and we want to share Him with others, and we get an opportunity to share the gospel with them," Noe explained.

"Then when we see them subsequent times, we're able to build on that initial conversation and continue sharing with them sometimes three and four times during the week," he added. "It also encourages my students and gets them excited about coming back to UofL and sharing their faith on campus."

Pivotal trips

The trip was the first mission trip for several of the students. Noe said the four spring break mission trips he took in college were pivotal in his call to ministry, and he has seen God use the trips to lead some students to career missions all over the globe.

"I think it's exciting to think about 15 or so BCMs that are taking spring break mission trips, but all of those are collectively a part of the KBC," Noe said. "I have 30 or 40 students, and some of them have more who are serving literally all over the world during spring break as an extension of the KBC's and the local churches' commitment to college students through BCM. That's really exciting to be a part of."

Buckets of Hope



Thousands of Buckets of Hope for Haiti filled with various foodstuffs packed by hundreds of Kentucky Baptist churches were collected last week at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville. ■ Above: The estimated 10,000 buckets collected by Kentucky Baptists wait to be loaded onto a truck bound for Miami where they then will be delivered to families in Haiti through the Baptist convention there. ■ Below: Southern Seminary security director Bob Perkins (left, inside truck) gives instructions to Southern Seminary student volunteer workers as they load the Buckets of Hope onto a delivery truck. (Photos by Robert Reeves/KBC)



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Faith and Perseverance

Missionary overcomes personal grief, 'huge gap' in life to win souls in Arizona

By Mickey Noah
North American Mission Board

Mesa, Ariz.—As a Southern Baptist pastor for the last 30 years—and as a North American Mission Board missionary for the past six—Louis Spears has conducted many funerals. But none of them prepared him for the long, lonely walk behind his wife's casket nearly two years ago.

A native of Guthrie, Okla., Spears and his wife, Shelley, had been married for 32 years—ever since they were both 20-year-old church planters in Oklahoma. But in May 2008, she succumbed to a pancreas-related illness only 11 days after its sudden onset.

"Shelley was an incredible person, a woman of many talents," Spears said. "The main thing I miss about Shelley—other than just being together as not only my spouse but also my best friend—is the amount of prayer time she spent on my ministry. She was really my partner in ministry. It's a huge loss and huge gap in my life."

Spears' strong, tried-and-true personal faith prevented him from caving in to the temptation of chucking his whole ministry and blaming God in the process.

"I never thought about blaming God. I was not mad at God," Spears insisted. "The worst thing was being totally cut off from Shelley, missing her encouragement and positive reinforcement."

After almost two years, the 54-year-old missionary said the grief still is "like big ocean waves that just swell up over you and you can't fight them. But you know the Lord is the Lord, that He is supreme and that in His design, He had a purpose for it."

"I can't see it and I don't understand it but I really don't argue with Him about it," said Spears, who has a 24-year-old daughter, Amy, one grandchild and another on the way. "I really tried during Shelley's 11-day crisis and through the last year to live my life without regrets. I didn't leave anything undone or unsaid."

Spears 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. This year's theme is "Live with Urgen-

cy: Share God's Transforming Power." The 2010 Annie Armstrong Easter Offering's goal is \$70 million, 100 percent of which benefits missionaries like Spears.

While no one or nothing can replace the vacuum in his life caused by Shelley's death, Spears said he depends on his challenging missionary work in Arizona to take up some of the slack, ease the pain and bring new victories.

With an estimated 71 percent of Arizona residents counted as unbelievers, Spears, a church planting strategist with Valley Rim Baptist Association, faces a huge challenge.

In addition to Mesa, the association serves 50 churches and missions in the Tempe, Scottsdale, Chandler and Gilbert areas of metro Phoenix.

Because land and buildings are so expensive in the greater Phoenix area, Spears focuses on planting "tactical" churches instead of brick-and-mortar churches, which can financially strap a congregation with huge indebtedness in its infancy and make survival more difficult.

"Tactical churches are collections of people who have not been reached before," Spears explained. "We try to target an area where the kingdom of God hasn't been before. Some may be apartment complexes, mobile-home parks, house churches or just a gathering of people at a Starbucks."

The Phoenix area is the 12th largest metro area in the United States. "We're in a vast multicultural setting. We have a lot of unchurched, unsaved individuals," Spears pointed out.

"We're way behind on the number of churches we need in order to impact these individuals' lives. We have only one church for every 23,000 people in Arizona," he said.

"Since we don't have many churches that run 23,000 every week, it's vital for us to have funds to do evangelistic outreach, buy Bibles and other resources to help posture the churches we do have."

Evangelical Christians—of which Southern Baptists are the largest group—only represent two percent of the state's population, trailing Catholics and Mormons.

"We have some churches that are in senior-adult communities. We have multi-ethnic churches like Native American, Filipino and African-American churches," Spears said. "We have a large Spanish-speaking population. Over 35 percent of the people in Arizona speak Spanish."

On top of the diversity, the uncertainty in the Phoenix area housing market is driving people to multihousing developments—whether apartments, townhouses, condominium communities or mobile-home parks.

"Statistics show that only a small percentage of those people will ever come out and go to anyone's church, so we believe it's important to take church to

them," Spears noted.

Spears often begins his ministry by meeting a multihousing development's property managers as a way to establish a good working relationship.

"We begin by asking the managers what their needs are," he said. "We try not to assume that we know the industry better than the people who work in it. Most apartment communities know how to evict people, know how to charge the rent, know how to handle air conditioning problems and pest control. But what they don't understand is the human element."

"They lose money every time somebody moves so by building a ministry and a partnership with them, it helps to build a sense of community. The people are more likely to stay," Spears indicated.

To assist both the property managers and the tenants themselves, Spears and his team do things like forming kids' clubs



PRESSING ON North American Mission Board Week of Prayer missionary Louis Spears, Mesa, Ariz., did not let the tragic, sudden death of his wife of 32 years, Shelley, in 2008 sidetrack his ministry to multihousing residents and "gypsies" in the greater Phoenix area.

in the afternoon to give them a place to go and something meaningful to do. Latch-key children who are on a break from school and whose parents work may be fed lunch. Afternoon soccer games are offered. Summer sports camps via mobile trailers can be deployed to various multihousing communities.

An offshoot of Spears' work with multihousing communities was his introduction to the "travelers," a substantial gypsy culture in Arizona.

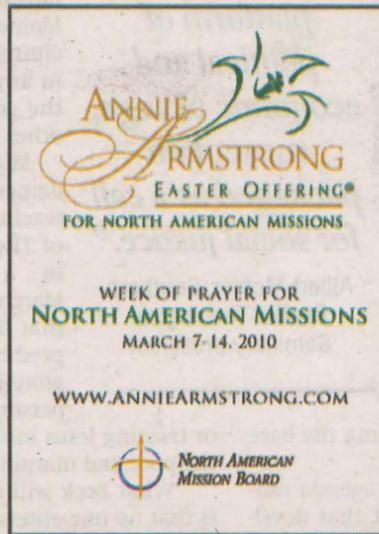
Spears said outsiders like him usually are not successful at trying to approach and penetrate the closed gypsy culture. "American gypsies actually discovered me and began to attend our church in Mesa," he explained. "Eventually, I was accepted into their fascinating culture."

The gypsy mission field is a natural extension of Spears' missions work in multihousing communities since so many gypsies travel in RVs and live in mobile-home parks throughout Southern Arizona because of the area's warmer winters.

"People who give through the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering help supply a base of church planters and allow them to have a living while they're beginning to build new congregations," Spears said.

"Without the Annie Armstrong offering, I would be able to devote only a fraction of the time to tactical church plants, and even less to reaching the 'travelers' population."

"But because of the offering, in addition to my salary, I receive training; materials for evaluation and training; demographics for new and existing church areas; and am able to network with other church planters across the country."



MENTORSHIP Every Tuesday afternoon, NAMB missionary Louis Spears (center), who serves in Mesa, Ariz., meets with Doug Shepherd (left) and Eric Ehman, two Phoenix-area pastors whom Spears currently is coaching. Spears is a church planting strategist with Valley Rim Baptist Association.



PLANTING THE GOSPEL Garden Place House Church meets on Monday nights at Garden Place Apartments in Mesa, Ariz. Shown here, North American Mission Board missionary and church planter Louis Spears leads a youth Bible study. (Photos by Greg Schneider/NAMB)

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SBC leaders criticize Beck's choice of words ... but acknowledge that he may have a point

By Bob Allen

Louisville—One Southern Baptist leader said broadcaster Glenn Beck's advice to his listeners to leave churches that preach "social justice" was stated poorly but basically on target, while another said the statement was so broad that it would include asking people to leave Southern Baptist churches.

Albert Mohler, president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, said in a blog commentary March 15 that the Fox News personality's controversial comments "lacked nuance, fair consideration and context" that left them open to easy rebuke by the many verses in the Bible that condemn injustice.

But Mohler added there is something to Beck's assertion that some clergy use terms like "social justice" and "economic justice" as "code words."

"Regrettably, there is no shortage of preachers who have traded the gospel for a platform of political and economic change, most often packaged as a call for social justice," Mohler noted.

Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, said on his weekly radio program March 13 that if taken literally, Beck would be asking people to leave Southern Baptist churches. That is because the denomination's official confessional statement, the Baptist Faith and Message, includes an article titled "The Christian and the Social Order" that challenges Southern Baptists "to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in our own lives and in human society."

Land said one example of churches influencing social justice was enacting of civil-rights laws in the 1960s. "Dr. (Martin Luther) King (Jr.) was about social justice, and

thank God he was," Land said. As a social conservative, Land indicated that, for him, stopping abortion is considered an issue of social justice.

"This is not painting with a broad brush," Land said of Beck's comments. "This is painting with a paint bomb."

Land conceded that some liberal Christians use the term for political reasons. During debate over welfare-reform legislation in the 1990s, Land said, Jim Wallis—a politically progressive evangelical leader who has urged Christians to boycott Beck's program because of his remarks—was "running through the halls of Congress with his hair on fire" claiming that changing the system would hurt the poor.

"We're going to have disagreements about the best way to bring about social justice," Land noted. "Are you going to redistribute fish or are you going to teach people how to fish? Are you going to focus on free-market capitalism as a way of expanding the base of wealth?"

Mohler traced roots of the agenda criticized by Beck to a movement that developed in the late 19th and early 20th century called the Social Gospel. Its primary theologian, a Baptist minister named Walter Rauschenbusch, Mohler said, called for replacing an "old evangelism" concerned with salvation from sin through faith in Christ with a "new evangelism" correct-

ing social ills and injustice, in effect partially bringing the kingdom of God to reign on Earth.

"The last century has seen many churches and denominations embrace the Social Gospel in some form, trading the gospel of Christ for a liberal vision of social change, revolution, economic liberation and, yes, social justice," Mohler wrote. "Liberal Protestantism has largely embraced this agenda as its central message."

"The urgency for any faithful Christian is this," Mohler added. "Flee any church that for any reason or in any form has abandoned the gospel of Christ for any other gospel."

Miguel De La Torre, an ordained Baptist minister who teaches ethics at Iliff School of Theology in Denver, said in a column published March 15 on EthicsDaily.com that Beck's viewpoint is the product of a dominant religious culture that focuses on personal piety like praying or trusting Jesus instead of reaching out to the poor and marginalized.

"What Beck will one day sadly discover is that no one enters heaven without a letter of recommendation from the 'least of these,'" De La Torre said.

De La Torre also said advocating a Christianity that goes beyond feeding the hungry to ask why they are hungry "is to invite hostility from those privileged by the status quo." (ABP)

"Regrettably, there is no shortage of preachers who have traded the gospel for a platform of political and economic change, most often packaged as a call for social justice."

Albert Mohler, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary president

State Department highlights religious freedom violations

Washington—The State Department issued its annual human rights report March 11, noting religious freedom violations in countries ranging from China to Iraq to Saudi Arabia.

The report on 194 countries called 2009 "a year in which ethnic, racial and religious tensions led to violent conflicts and serious human rights violations."

The State Department said "no genuine freedom of religion" exists in North Korea and Cuban law permits punishment of "any unauthorized assembly of more than three persons, including those for private religious services in private homes."

The report said religious minorities continue to face "escalating discrimination and persecution." In Iraq, for example, despite the government's public calls for tolerance, attacks on places of worship by extremist and insurgent groups limited their ability to practice their faith.

In China, repression of Tibetan Buddhists and Muslim Uighurs increased, the report said. Non-Muslims are prohibited from expressing their religion publicly in Saudi Arabia.

The department noted that several countries with "generally strong" human rights records had been home to religious freedom violations in 2009, citing the recent ban on construction of minarets in Switzerland as an example.

"Discrimination against Muslims in Europe has been an increasing concern," the report said. (RNS)

Meet the class of 2010, part 1

Soon-to-be graduate 'Carol' has made the most of her Oneida experience

During the next several weeks, I am going to share the success stories of some of our students who will graduate in May. Because of various state and federal laws and because some events prior to enrolling might be an embarrassment to the families, I do not use their real names. But the stories are true and our many friends have played a critical role in making these successes possible.

"Carol" (not her real name) came to us as a freshman from Eastern Kentucky. In her senior essay about her Oneida experience, Carol wrote: "We were always moving and I had a big problem getting close or even trying to make friends."

Many students who find their way to OBI have not had much stability in their lives. I attended 13 different schools before I came to Oneida as a junior.

While Carol's next statement may or may not be true, her perception of school was: "The teachers did not want to work with me. They just put me off to another teacher. They would pass me to the next grade even when I ... had not learned the things I should have learned."

Carol currently has a 3.0 GPA. For many students like her, the smaller class size at OBI is a lifesaver. With only 10-12 students in a class, there are fewer distractions and the teacher can spend more time with each student. Students quickly learn that our teachers have nothing more important to do than to help them. That's why they are here. Virtually every Oneida teacher could earn much more money nearly anywhere else. They are here because of their desire to help students. When you have a passion to do

something, you do it naturally and with love. Carol needed the individual attention she received from our staff.

Carol continued: "I came here for three reasons. One, I wanted to prove that I could (make good grades), even though I had failing grades. No one thought I would stay in school past the age of 16."

Many of our students come with a strong desire to show family and friends that they can succeed, but they are not able to find success in their current learning and/or living environments. In the months before Carol enrolled at OBI, half of her grades were 'D's and 'F's.

Between moving so much and low grades, there was not too much happening at school that encouraged her. One of the many benefits of a boarding school is stability. No matter how many times the family may move, the student is here in the same school with the same caring

teachers. Our stability and caring staff made it possible for Carol to earn that 3.0 GPA.

"The second reason I came to Oneida was because I wanted something stable so I could finish school and make friends," Carol said. "Thirdly, I wanted to make my mom proud of me."

Failure in the classroom and at school in general often is a source of tension and conflict at home. If a student is failing at school and there is serious stress at home, where does he or she find happiness and success?

Carol has been accepted to college and is looking forward to this next step. Hopefully she will continue the success she has found at Oneida.

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

This is Oneida



W.F. Underwood

Always read the directions

Senior Kahkola recalls first night on Clear Creek campus

After his first night on campus during a visit to see if this was where God wanted him, it's a wonder senior Shane Kahkola even stayed around for the next four years as a student. As he is getting ready to graduate, he still recalls the incident with humor.

"My first time to visit the campus is a funny story," Shane said. "I had announced to our church back in Marion, Ind., that the Lord had called us to ministry. My pastor suggested we visit Clear Creek and see if we felt led here. We scheduled our time to visit but we were going to be arriving late at night."

"So, the staff left a key out for us along with directions on how to get to our room," Shane continued. "Well, we didn't read the directions and couldn't figure out how to get to our room so we ended up sleeping in our van overnight. The next day we were known all over campus as the family who slept in their vehicle overnight. Now, I read the directions."

So, what has been the value of these last four years? "I don't know if I can do it justice to these last four years in just a few words," Shane

said. "I do know when I started Bible college I didn't realize at first how important this would be to me in ministry. Since I have been here, I have been taught to make sure everything I do lines up with Scripture. And just the discipline of having to get class assignments in on time and all the things associated with being a student has helped me to see the value of time management in my life. I know that will translate over to my ministry."

"There are also more technical aspects involved in ministry that I was not aware of before I came here," Shane noted. "There are techniques for communication, tech-

niques for studying the Scriptures and other things that are so valuable for someone who is preparing for ministry. You can learn them on your own, but having a group of peers has been so valuable for me. I would not have had that help if it were not for 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.ccbbc.edu; e-mail: dfox@ccbbc.edu

Changes at Cedarmore

New look takes shape with help from God, volunteers

Crossings Camps has experienced a great blessing this month. At Cedarmore, we are in the final stages of completing a new worship center. At the same time, we are preparing the site for a new dining hall. Last week, we made a decision to rework all parking and roads at the worship center prior to the coming summer. Additionally, we began and completed construction of two new ponds, one of which will be near the dining hall. During the same week, we demolished three more of the old buildings which were the cottages.

One might think that beginning such a large task that is very sensitive to weather is a great risk—and perhaps that is right. Our weather forecast for the week predicted rain most every day. We made arrangements in scheduling and equipment, therefore, we had no choice but to proceed.

Literally every single day, the rain went around the Cedarmore property. Unbelievably, bad weather did not hinder the week's work. Parking, roads and ponds all were finished! Without question, God answered our prayers. There was

no doubt that He alone arranged our weather.

I want to offer thanks to two friends from Western Kentucky who came to assist, Greg Burchard and Tim Jackson. They are great supporters of our ministry and worked long days with us to accomplish so much. Greg commented over and over that our avoidance of rain when it was predicted each day had to be of God. God's power and provision was evident.

As we continue to prepare for the summer, we need your prayers that all projects will be completed and the many details of summer all will come together.

If you have not been to Cedarmore lately, I would encourage you to come and see us. You may find that it looks like a whole new place.

Ky. Baptist Assemblies



David Melber

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

Great Commission focus

Sunrise takes command to make disciples to heart

Matthew 28:18-20 reads: "Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'"

As you read this text, does Sunrise Children's Services come to mind? Most Baptists will not immediately associate the Great Commission and Sunrise together because we have trained our minds to interpret this Biblical passage from a narrow, soul-winning perspective.

We understand "go and make disciples of all nations" as sharing the good news of Jesus with others so they, as disciples, will share the good news of Jesus with others. So, what is wrong with that? Nothing—but is that all there is to being a disciple of Jesus Christ and the Great Commission?

The disciples who walked with Jesus went where he went and were instructed to do what he did. So, where did they go and what did they do? The Gospels record Jesus going to the sick, the outcast, the poor, the kids, the widows and other suffering people. Jesus literally shared bread and water with peo-

ple, as well as the kingdom of God.

Another pivotal evangelical text reads, "Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.' He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness" (Matthew 9:37-10:1).

In Matthew 10:1, right after the words about the harvest being plentiful but few workers, Jesus sends the Twelve to "drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness."

Jesus wanted the kingdom of God proclaimed and simultaneously wanted suffering humanity to receive a touch from the kingdom of God. The social side of Jesus was synonymous with his evangelical mission; one was not subservient to the other. Jesus saved souls and lives at the same time. Our evangelism would be more effective if we learned to do the same.

The children we serve through the ministries of Sunrise Children's Services have opportunities to hear the good news. At the same time, we help heal their hurts physically and emotionally. Our mission is not only to share the good news, but to be good news at the same time. As we literally save young lives, we too are fulfilling the Great Commission. Will you come help us?

Bill Smithwick is president of Sunrise Children's Services. Contact Sunrise at (502) 538-1000 or www.sunrise.org

Sunrise Children's Services



Bill Smithwick

Pledge of Allegiance ruled constitutional 'Under God' patriotic, not religious

San Francisco—The same federal court that sparked controversy in 2002 by ruling that leading public-school students to recite the words "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance is unconstitutional now says the pledge is an "appropriate patriotic exercise" that does not violate the constitutionally mandated separation of church and state.

A divided three-judge panel of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled March 11 that, while the First Amendment forbids the government from establishing religion, not every mention of God in a government setting violates the amendment's Establishment Clause.

The majority said the substance of the pledge is "one of allegiance to our Republic, not of allegiance to the God" and therefore constitutional.

Judge Stephen Reinhardt, who was part of the three-judge panel that ruled the pledge unconstitutional eight years ago, filed a dissent twice the length of the majority's 60-page ruling, arguing the defining legal issue was not recitation of the pledge, but an act of Congress adding the words "under God" in 1954.

"To put it bluntly, no judge familiar with the history of the pledge could in good conscience believe, as today's majority purports to do, that the words 'under God' were inserted into the pledge for any purpose other than an explicitly and predominantly religious one," Reinhardt said.

"Nor could any judge familiar with controlling Supreme Court precedent seriously deny that carrying out such an indoctrination in a public school classroom unconstitutionally forces many young children either to profess a religious belief antithetical to their personal views or to declare themselves through their silence or nonparticipation to be protesting nonbelievers, thereby subjecting themselves to hostility and ridicule," he continued.

Judges Dorothy Nelson and Carlos Bea, however, said the words "under God" must be analyzed in the context in which those words appear. They said Congress' "ostensible and predominant purpose" in both enacting and amending the pledge "was patriotic, not religious."

Brent Walker, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty and generally a supporter of strong church-state separation, said the pledge itself is "not a religious exercise."

Walker said, that, while forcing public-school students to participate in a prayer or religious exercise would clearly violate the Constitution, "ours is a secular pledge, which is intended to inspire patriotism. It does not have the purpose or primary effect of advancing religion. A teacher-led pledge is not the same as teacher-led prayer. Students cannot be compelled to recite the pledge, with or without the words 'under God.'" (ABP)

Gallup poll shows young adults now leaning pro-life

Washington—Young adults who once identified themselves as pro-choice now tend to be more pro-life when compared to other age groups, according to a Gallup analysis of survey trends since the 1973 landmark Roe v. Wade decision.

Gallup examined the views on abortion for four age groups and found that in an average of polls from 2005-09, 23 percent of those ages 18-29 believed that abortion should be "illegal in all circumstances," an increase of five percent from the period of 1975-79 and nine percent from 1990-94. The 23 percent figure tops all age groups, ahead of those ages 65 and older (21 percent) and those ages 30-49 and 50-64 (both of which are at 17 percent).

Opposition to abortion, Gallup said in its analysis, is "growing fastest among young adults." Gallup's Lydia Saad wrote that "18 to 29 year olds are now roughly tied with seniors as the most likely of all age groups to hold this position on abortion."

"This is a sharp change from the late 1970s, when seniors were substantially more likely than younger age groups to want abortion to be illegal," she explained.

Gallup's annual survey asks individuals if they believe abortion should be "legal under any circumstances," "legal only under certain circumstances," or "illegal in all circumstances."

Of the four age groups, 18 to 29 year olds were the only ones to see a decline in total support for abortion rights since the mid to late 1970s. From 1975-79, 26 percent of young adults backed abortion "under any circumstances." That climbed to 36 percent from 1990-94 before plummeting to 24 percent from 2005-09, a percentage that was the second lowest. (BP)

NATIONAL NOTES

Texas board tentatively OKs curricula—The Texas State Board of Education turned back some controversial revisions to social studies standards in meetings March 10-12, retaining requirements that students learn about historical notables and adding language about significant political ideas. Texas, the frontline in the cultural battles over public-school curricula of late, is influential in the textbook market because it buys or distributes about 48 million books annually, influencing textbook content for most other states. The new standards will face a final vote in May when the board meets. Standards for given subjects are revised every 10 years.

D.C. gay marriage law could be reversed—The District of Columbia's recent ruling legalizing same-sex marriage could change if a plan to rescind the law and have the nation's capital follow California's lead is successful. The law went into effect March 3. Opponents of the law want to take advantage of a section in the D.C. Charter that allows citizens to gather signatures to place the issue on the ballot. The D.C. Charter allows for two types of citizen-backed measures: a referendum, which applies only to a bill that has passed the council and has yet to go into effect, and an initiative, which can appear on the ballot at any time.

Anti-abortionist's killer convicted of murder—A Michigan truck driver faces life in prison after being convicted March 11 of murdering an anti-abortion activist. Harlan Drake was convicted in the Sept. 11 shooting deaths of anti-abortion activist James Pouillon and gravel pit owner Michael Fuoss. Drake's attorneys argued that he was insane when he killed the men; prosecutors countered that he killed them because he felt that they had wronged or upset his family. Sentencing for Drake is set for April 23.

Salvation Army reports record donations—Nickels, dimes and quarters added up quickly last Christmas despite the economic slump as Americans donated a record \$139 million to the Salvation Army's Red Kettle campaign. Bell ringers set up the signature red kettles in front of an estimated 25,000 locations across the U.S. on Thanksgiving Day. The Salvation Army reported a 7 percent increase in giving over the \$130 million record of 2008. The Red Kettle campaign, the nation's longest running annual fundraising campaign, helps Salvation Army provide more than 28 million Americans with food, shelter, rent, substance-abuse treatment and Christmas assistance each year. Walmart and Sam's Club locations partnered with the Salvation Army to raise 29 percent of the total amount.

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Campbellsville University's theater department will present a performance of the musical "Smoke on the Mountain" March 27 & 29, 7 p.m., and March 28, 3 p.m. General admission tickets are \$5, Campbellsville employee tickets are \$1, and Campbellsville students are free. Tickets will be available at the door or can be purchased by calling (270) 789-5266, or online at www.Campbellsville.edu/Theater.

■ **KUTTAWA**—First Church will hold revival services March 28-April 2, 7 p.m. with **Salaw Hummingbird** as evangelist. **Carl Nelson** is pastor.

■ **LEBANON**—Woodlawn Church will hold revival services March 28, 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.; March 29-31, 7 p.m. with **Luke VanHoose**, pastor of Royal Springs Church in Georgetown, as evangelist. **Greg Haynes** is pastor.

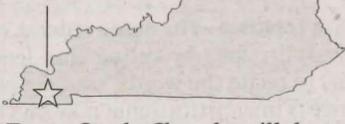
■ **LOUISVILLE**—Walnut Street Church will host a screening of "Fireproof" March 28, 5 p.m. The event is free and open to the public. For more information, call Minister to Families and Students **Kris Billiter** at (502) 992-1615. **Rusty Ellison** is pastor.

■ **MAYFIELD**—High Point Church will hold revival services March 28-31, 6:30 p.m. with Kentucky Baptist Convention President **Don Mathis** as evangelist. **Rick Hatley** is pastor.

■ **TOMPKINSVILLE**—First Church will hold revival services March 28-31 with **Jerry Tooley**, director of mission for Daviess-McLean Association, as evangelist. **Tom Stokes** is pastor.

Spotlight on ...

Mayfield



Trace Creek Church will host its annual Easter pageant "The Promise" March 26, 7 p.m.; March 27, 2 & 7 p.m.; April 2, 7 p.m.; April 3, 2 & 7 p.m.; and April 4, 6 p.m. Admission is free; groups of 20 or more must make reservations. For more information or to make reservations, visit www.TraceCreek.org. **Ronnie Stinson Sr.** is pastor.

Cumberlands to offer master's degree in Christian Studies online starting this fall

Williamsburg—Officials at University of the Cumberlands have announced that the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools recently approved the school's formation of a Master of Arts in Christian studies.

Classes for the 30-hour degree will begin this fall. Since the Christian studies master's degree will be offered entirely online, students anywhere in the world will be able to complete the degree.

"The Master of Arts in Christian studies program is designed to blend both the academic study of the Bible and Christian theology with the practical application of biblical faith and theology in ministry settings," noted Bob Dunston, religion department chair at University of the Cumberlands. "Our program will challenge and encourage our students to think critically and creatively as they apply the gospel in the 21st century."

"Our courses will be taught not only by faculty members of University of the Cumberlands but also by outstanding ministers in the local church who can pass on to our students their invaluable experience and wisdom," Dunston said. "We look forward to preparing biblically based ministers ready to meet the challenges of the present day and the future."

University of the Cumberlands has developed a strong reputation for producing outstanding ministers and Christian educators throughout its history, according to Cumberlands President Jim Taylor.

"We are proud of our graduates, so many of whom have gone on to fill vital ministry roles, from serving as local pastors or as missionaries, to serving with the KBC or SBC," he said. "This outstanding new program will allow Cumberlands to do even more to educate leader servants to advance the kingdom of God."

Core courses for the degree include two semesters each in Old and New Testament survey and two courses in Christian theology. Each student then will choose an emphasis in biblical studies, Christian education or church planting. The final step is a capstone course in which the student will develop, implement and evaluate a project in a ministry setting that fits his or her God-given call and talents.

Courses for the Christian studies master's degree will be taught in eight-week bi-terms. For more information about the program, contact Dunston at (606) 539-4227, or via e-mail at Bob.Dunston@UCumberlands.edu.

HomeLife magazine hosts marriage event

Nashville—HomeLife magazine, a publication of LifeWay Christian Resources, hosted one of six Love & Marriage conferences earlier this month at LifeWay headquarters in Nashville. About 400 people, ranging from engaged couples to a couple married 49 years, attended the event.

Les and Leslie Parrott are experts at relationships. She is a marriage and family therapist, and he is a clinical psychologist. But that doesn't mean their marriage is perfect.

The Parrotts talked about the myths of marriage and how each person in a marriage relationship brings assumptions about what their marriage will look like. Often those are determined by the kind of marriage their parents had.

Leslie Parrott told the group it is important to say what you mean and to understand what you hear in conversations. "Men and women tend to process things differently," she explained.

Men tend to want information. "Just the facts. Just tell him what he needs to know. He is interested in 'report' talk," Les Parrott said.

"Women, on the other hand, tend to want 'rapport' talk," Leslie Parrott noted. "We want the information, but we want to know details and how you feel about it."

Both ways are OK, but spouses need to understand that they may process information differ-

ently the Parrotts said.

Gary Chapman, author of several books, including "The Five Love Languages," took the platform for the afternoon session.

"One of the fundamentals of a good marriage is to feel loved," he said. "If you feel loved by your spouse, your whole world will feel bright. If you don't feel loved by your spouse, the world can look very dark."

He said that a high percentage of people who come to him for marriage counseling are helped when they discover how and begin to speak the love language of their spouse. In his book, he describes the five love languages: words of affirmation, quality time, receiving gifts, acts of service and physical touch.

"I use the image of each of us having a love tank," he said. "As long as our tank is full, boy, are we happy. But if our tank isn't being filled with love, we're not happy. I have found that much of the misbehavior in marriage comes from an empty love tank."

LifeWay and HomeLife will sponsor four more Love & Marriage events this year: July 24 in Virginia Beach, Va.; Aug. 14 in New Orleans; Aug. 21 in Dallas; and Sept. 25 in Knoxville, Tenn. Visit www.LifeWay.com/Marriage for more information.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March

25-28 Adult Kentucky Changers, Jonathan Creek Camp and Conference Center, Hardin.

30 Iron Sharpening Iron, My Old Kentucky Home State Park, Bardstown.

April

9-10 Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union Annual Meeting, Westport Road Baptist Church, Louisville.

9-10 Region 8 Disaster Relief Recertification and Training, First Baptist Church, Hazard.

10 Region 5 RA Congress, Aberdeen (Ohio) Baptist Church.

12 Growing Ministries Tour, La Grange Baptist Church.

13 Growing Ministries Tour, Mays Lick Baptist Church.

13 Iron Sharpening Iron, Applebee's Park, Lexington.

15 Iron Sharpening Iron, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

16-17 Exalt, Georgetown College.

16-18 All-State Children's Choir—East, Cedarmore Camp and Conference Center, Bagdad.

18 High Attendance Sunday School Day.

20 Growing Ministries Tour, First Baptist Church, Monticello.

20 Iron Sharpening Iron, University of the Cumberlands, Williamsburg.

20 Senior Living Celebration, Sand Spring Baptist Church, Lawrenceburg.

22 Growing Ministries Tour, Hawesville Baptist Church.

22 Iron Sharpening Iron, Buffalo Wild Wings, Bowling Green.

22 Senior Living Celebration, Second Baptist Church, Greenville.

22-23 Quarterly Prayer Meeting for Spiritual Awakening, Haven of Rest, Inez.

23-25 All-State Children's Choir—West, Jonathan Creek Camp and Conference Center, Hardin.

24 Literacy Missions Leaders Retreat, Cleft Rock Retreat Center, Mount Vernon.

24 Youth Bible Drill and Speakers' Tournament, Parkway Baptist Church, Bardstown.

26 Iron Sharpening Iron, Jenny Wiley State Resort Park, Prestonsburg.

27 Developing and Managing People, Baptist Building, Louisville.

27 Growing Ministries Tour, First Baptist Church, Danville.

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

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SEEKING: Full-time minister of music and worship to lead a comprehensive, blended worship ministry for all ages at First Baptist Church, Lawrenceburg, Tenn. FBC is a family- and community-oriented church that offers a great potential for personal and congregational growth. Lawrenceburg is a small, historic city located in Southern/middle Tennessee and is conducive to raising a family. Submit resumé and DVD to First Baptist Church, 2100 Springer Road, Lawrenceburg, TN 38464.

SEEKING: Executive director for The Baptist Foundation of Illinois. The ideal candidate will have fund-raising experience; be committed to the BFI mission and vision; and be an active member of an SBC church. For more information, visit IBSA.org/bfi.

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 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: 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@cvillebaptist.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.

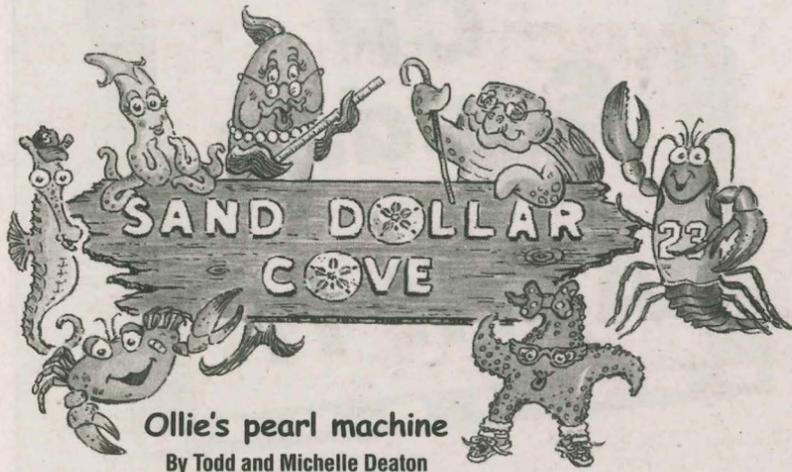
SEEKING: Full-time pastor for First Baptist Church of Clinton, Ky. Resumés, accompanied by CD/DVD, may be sent to Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 320 Mayfield Road, Clinton, KY 42031; or e-mail resumé/link to pastor4fbc@yahoo.com.

SEEKING: Senior pastor for Pleasant View Baptist Church, Waynesburg, Ky. Send resumés 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.

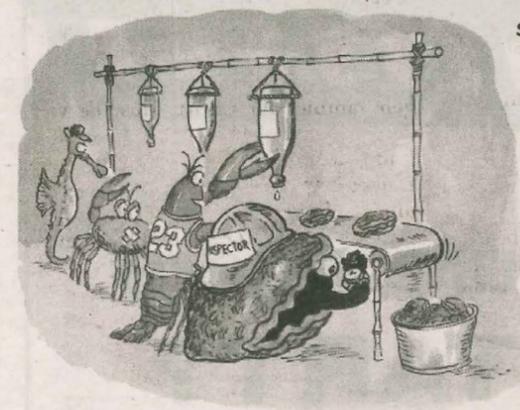
SEEKING: Bivocational SBC pastor for Karns Grove Baptist Church, located between Philpot and Whitesville, Ky. Send resumés to: Pastor Search Committee, Karns Grove Baptist Church, 6371 Karns Grove Road, Philpot, KY 42366.

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



Ollie's pearl machine
By Todd and Michelle Deaton

Ollie Oyster awoke one day feeling sick. "Mom, my stomach hurts," he called out.
 "You don't have a fever," his mom said. "Does your throat hurt?"
 "No," Ollie answered. "I just have a stinging pain on my side. It hurts to move."
 "What did you do yesterday during recess?" his mom asked.
 "Well, I played with trucks in the sandbox," Ollie said.
 "Hmmm," his mom nodded, "sounds like you are starting to make a pearl."
 "A pearl?" Ollie asked.
 "Oysters make pearls when something gets under their skin," she reminded him.
 Sometimes, when a small shell or a grain of sand gets inside your shell, it rubs and causes a sore. Your body makes a special coating to protect you," she explained. "Eventually the coating hardens into a beautiful pearl."
 "Does it have to hurt so much?" Ollie whined.
 "If you find an easier way, let me know," she chuckled.
 All day, Ollie thought about how to make a pearl. As soon as school was over, he ran to look for old oyster shells along the shore.



Seamore Seahorse saw Ollie. "What are you doing?" he asked.
 "I'm going to invent a pearl machine," Ollie announced.
 Seamore helped Ollie gather shells all afternoon. "Don't we need sand?" he asked as they walked home.
 "That's right," Ollie nodded. "I'll put some in my pockets while I'm playing tomorrow."

The next day, as they were sitting on the steps of Ollie's house, Craig Crab crawled up. "What's up?" he asked.
 "We're making a pearl machine," Ollie boasted.
 "We have shells and sand," Seamore said. "What else do we need?"
 "Does it have something to do with what you eat?" asked Craig.
 "I eat very tiny plants," Ollie said.
 "Then I'll grind up some seaweed," offered Craig.
 In a few minutes, Craig returned with the seaweed and Lenny Lobster, who wanted to help, too.
 Ollie looked at the shells, sand and seaweed: "Something's missing," he frowned.
 "Do you think salt water helps?" Lenny suggested.
 "Maybe," Ollie said. "Let's put the sand, seaweed and salt water into some bottles, then we can pour them."
 First Seamore selected a shell and poured sand into it. Next, Craig placed seaweed into it, and then Lenny added salt water.
 Ollie, who named himself "inspector," put a shell on top and shook it to mix it together. He then used a watch to time it for five minutes. When he opened the shells, all he found was slimy, green mud.
 "It doesn't work!" he wailed, knocking the shells off the table.
 Ollie's mother ran to see what all the fuss was about. "Ollie, look at this mess! What are you doing?" she asked.
 "I was trying to make a pearl machine," he cried.
 Ollie's mom smiled, "You forgot some ingredients," she said.
 "I did?" he asked.
 "Making pearls requires time and pain," she explained. "We all go through painful experiences. But if we are patient, God can use the bad times to bring about something good."



Treasure Hunt

Why did Ollie want a pearl machine?
 What were some items he used?
 What did Ollie's mom say was needed?
 What painful experience have you had?
 How can something good come from it?
 Read James 5:10 together.

For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



Preacher's Kids

David Ayers



Bible Crosswords

Across

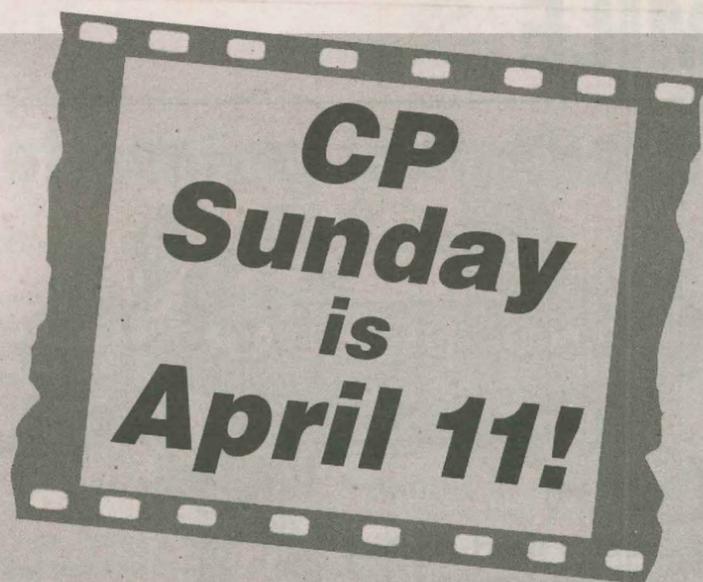
- 1 "I am the _____, and the lily of the valleys" (Song of Solomon 2:1)
- 9 Not out
- 10 Timid
- 11 On or about, abbr.
- 12 "I am the _____, and know my sheep" (John 10:14)
- 17 Immerse briefly in water
- 18 Central state, Des Moines is the capital, abbr.
- 20 "I am the way, _____, and the life" (John 14:6)
- 24 "Behold the _____ of God" (John 1:29)
- 26 Extraterrestrial, abbr.
- 27 Suffix
- 28 "_____, every one that thirsteth" (Isaiah 55:1)
- 29 Two, Roman numeral
- 31 "The _____ is Lord even of the sabbath" (Matthew 12:8)
- 34 "We have not _____ this power" (1 Corinthians 9:12)
- 37 Network, especially of blood vessels
- 38 Learning disabled, abbr.
- 39 "Jesus Christ, the _____" (Mark 1:1)
- 42 Certified Public Accountant, abbr.
- 43 Containing oxygen, prefix
- 44 Dorothy's state, abbr.
- 45 Head nurse, abbr.
- 46 "Lest I _____ you in pieces" (Psalms 50:22)
- 48 "The Spirit of God descending like a _____" (Matthew 3:16)

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- 51 Took a chair
- 53 "I am the _____" (John 14:6)
- 54 "I am ... the bright and _____" (Revelation 22:16)
- 24 "I am the bread of _____" (John 6:35)
- 25 Direct toward a target
- 30 Understanding
- 32 Writings that contain the old covenant, abbr.
- 33 "I am _____ and Omega" (Revelation 1:8)
- 35 "They were _____ afraid" (Mark 9:6)
- 36 "I am the _____: ... if any man enter in, he shall be saved" (John 10:9)
- 40 Effects, abbr.
- 41 "Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, _____ with us" (Matthew 1:23)
- 44 "I will give unto thee the _____ of the kingdom" (Matthew 16:19)
- 46 Nashville's state, abbr.
- 47 "Why make ye this _____, and weep" (Mark 5:39)
- 49 "I seek not mine _____ will, but the will of the Father" (John 5:30)
- 50 Vagrancy, abbr.
- 51 Large body of water
- 52 Nurse, abbr.

Last week's solution

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
I	N	C	I	S	E	T	R	A	N	C	E
S	T	A	T	E	S	R	A	M	O	U	T
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
B	E	M	T	H	L	E	H	E	M	H	O
A	S	S	M	O	O	C	H	B	A	D	
A	C	T	I	O	N	H	E	R	A	L	D
33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44
S	P	E	E	D	S	R	O	T	T	E	N
P	E	P	S	E	L	E	D	E	T	A	
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52
Y	D	W	R	E	L	K	H	B			
50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61
A	R	A	B	I	A	E	N	O	U	G	H
D	A	M	S	E	L	O	E	T	E	S	T



COOPERATIVE PROGRAM

CP Sunday is a day to highlight and celebrate the Cooperative Program. Celebrating CP Sunday is one of the easiest ways to help your congregation understand how they are supporting missions through the Cooperative Program.

love in action



Not sure where to **START?**

Try one of these easy ideas!

■ **PLACE** a Cooperative Program "Love in Action" budget brochure in the worship guide or hand out as educational material.

■ **OBSERVE** a missions moment using free CP videos or printed materials and offer a prayer of thanksgiving for the worldwide impact of Cooperative Program dollars.

■ **SHOW** a Cooperative Program video testimony in the morning worship and thank the congregation for investing in missions.

■ **PREACH** a message from Acts 1:8 or Matthew 28:18-20 and use Cooperative Program video or printed materials to illustrate the message.

■ **ORDER** and use free copies of the Cooperative Program Cram Course in Bible study classes.

■ **USE** a five minute testimony of a church member regarding the impact of a CP funded experience such as Partnership Missions, Disaster Relief, NAMB or IMB mission trip, or a Baptist Collegiate ministry involvement, etc.

■ **INVITE** a CP speaker to your church.

For even more suggestions and free promotional resources go to:

www.kybaptist.org/cpsunday

For more information: 502-489-3374 / 866-489-3374

