

Shine like stars in the world
Philippians 2:15

WESTERN Recorder

April 20, 2010
Vol. 184, No. 15

FOR THE RECORD



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Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, Apr. 21

Run, Pastor, Run

Pastors use running to stay in shape, honor God, and share Christ with others

By Drew Nichter
News Director

Lexington—Eddie Benton turns 60 years old next year. On that day, he will try to continue a tradition he started almost 20 years ago.

At age 40, Benton ran 40 miles. He celebrated the big 5-0 by running 50 miles. And next year, "if the good Lord's willing and my legs don't fall apart, I'm hoping to run 60 miles," he said.

Yes, all at once.

Benton has been a runner for 35 years and a youth minister and pastor for just a few years longer. He has been the pastor at Rosemont Baptist Church in Lexington for the last year and a half.

And as the old man in "Forrest Gump" quipped about the film's main character: "That boy's a runnin' fool."

This week, Benton completed his 68th marathon. And not just any marathon—the Boston Marathon, one of the most prestigious and challenging races in the world. It was Benton's 12th time competing in the race.

As if the Boston Marathon wasn't enough, Benton also will be running in this weekend's Kentucky Derby Festival Mini-Marathon in Louisville, just to help a friend complete her first big race.

It bears mentioning, too, that Benton also is training for the Ironman Triathlon in Louisville in late August. That involves a 2.4-mile swim, a 112-mile bike ride, finished off with a 26.2-mile run.

All of this started in 1975 when Benton began attend-

□ See Kentucky pastors use running ... *Page 6*



MARATHON MAN Eddie Benton, 59, pastor of Rosemont Baptist Church in Lexington, completed his 68th marathon this week—the Boston Marathon for the 12th time—and is training for the Ironman Triathlon in Louisville in late August. (Photo by Drew Nichter)

Christ's love shown in W.Va. mining tragedy

By Erin Roach

Montcoal, W.Va.—The West Virginia coal mine tragedy was an opportunity for Southern Baptists to show compassion to individuals who may not have had much experience with church, a North American Mission Board worker said.

"So many people were ministered to and loved on through genuine care from different pastors, and I think some people for the first time realized that it wasn't just about gaining something for the church," Charlie Minney, associational missionary for Coalfields Association of Southern Baptists in Logan, W.Va., told Baptist Press last week.

"The chaplains and the pastors were there because we cared, not because we wanted something or needed something," he said. "So many people did such a tremendous job, just doing what God calls us to do as ministers, to share the love of Christ."

Minney said between 17 and 20 Southern Baptist ministers were on hand at some point during the ordeal, which began April 5 with the nation's worst mine disaster in four decades. After days of trying to reach four possible survivors, rescue teams learned April 10 the men had perished, raising the death toll to 29.

When the news was announced, Minney said, the families dispersed to begin the grieving process after having waited all week in a building near the mine.

"At that point the families transitioned over into their local churches for counseling and those sorts of things," Minney recalled.

Southern Baptist ministers in the state who had responded as counselors now are working with a church of another Baptist denomination

in the area, Minney said. That church already has friendships established and can more easily connect with families.

Minney recalled the last few hours he spent with the families April 9, when they knew the rescue crews had gone back into the mine in search of the four missing men.

"We knew at that point that we were coming to the end of whatever was going to happen. They had put the nitrogen in and we knew we were getting ready □ See Coal mining families ... *Page 7*

"I think some people for the first time realized that it wasn't just about gaining something for the church."

Charlie Minney, associational missionary in Logan, W.Va.

Cause for concern: Forty percent of unchurched have been hurt

Ventura, Calif.—Nearly four of every 10 unchurched Americans avoid worship because of negative past experiences in churches or with church people, according to a new survey.

The Barna Group said that while many churches place high value on attracting people who do not participate in the life of a church, the unchurched may be different than they expect.

Rather than being "lost," or without faith, 61 percent of non-attending adults label themselves as "Christian." That's lower than the 83 percent of all Americans who self-identify as Christians, but it still outnumbers by a 3-2 margin the 39 percent of unchurched who do not embrace Christianity.

Instead of being foreigners to church culture, a majority of the unchurched (53 percent) have distanced themselves from being Protestant or Catholic, but at one time were associated with one of those groups. Thirty-seven percent said they stopped going because of painful experiences in church.

Nearly one-fifth (18 percent) answered a standard set of questions used by Barna to categorize them as "born again."

Two-thirds of the unchurched (68 percent) believe God is the all-knowing, all-powerful Creator of the universe and still rules that universe today. Little more than one-third (35 percent) believe the Bible is totally accurate.

Less than one in five (22 percent) agree that the ultimate purpose of life is to love God with all their heart, mind, strength and soul, but just one in seven (15 percent) claim their religious faith is very important in their life.

Barna's data indicates that 28 percent of adults have not attended any church services or activities within the last six months. That translates to nearly 65 million adults. Adding children under 18 who may be living with them, the number swells to 100 million.

Barna said the demographics of the group also defy common assumptions. There are more unchurched women than men. Boomers and their elders outnumber the young. Conservatives are more likely than liberals to be unchurched, and whites outnumber minorities nearly 3-1. (ABP)

Find It Here

Statewide evangelistic campaign generating success stories from many Kentucky Baptist churches

By Ken Walker
Kentucky Baptist Convention

Eddyville—Sixteen inmates at the Kentucky State Penitentiary in Eddyville now call Jesus Christ Savior thanks to the Find It Here emphasis that is spreading excitement across the state.

"It was quite novel and the guys received it well," said Randy Foster, director of Baptist Men on Mission for the Kentucky Baptist Convention and one of 30 volunteers who distributed 900 gospel brochures at KSP. "There were only a few who didn't want to receive them."

The 16 decisions took place during a series of worship services at the prison the last weekend of March.

The Eddyville story is only one of hundreds emerging from the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Find It Here evangelistic initiative, which attracted support from 68 of 71 Baptist associations.

The gospel distribution effort is part of the Southern Baptist Convention's GPS (God's Plan for Sharing) campaign that continues through 2020.

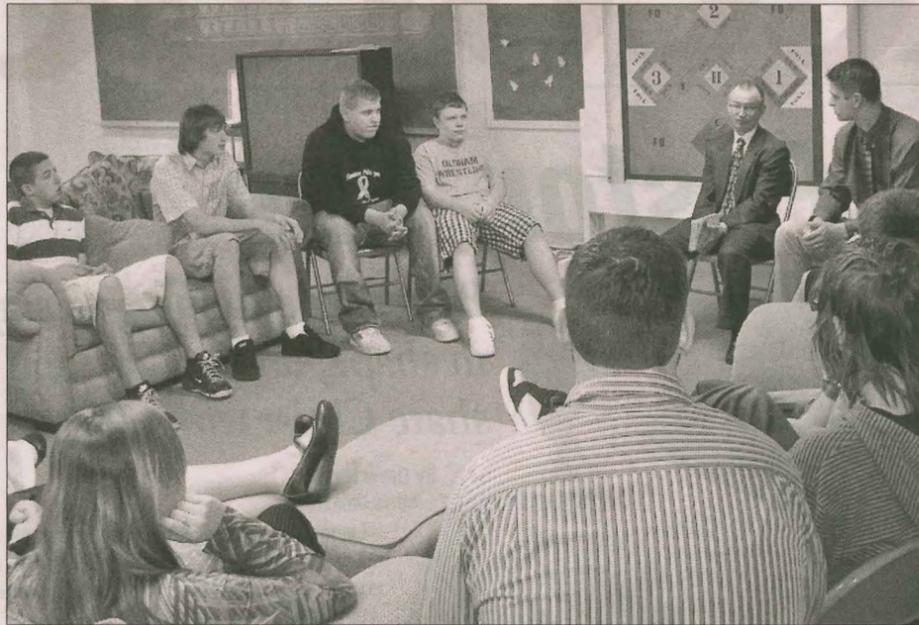
The largest-known conversion count came from Hillvue Heights Church in Bowling Green, which baptized 33 people on Easter Sunday. Seven individuals made decisions to follow Christ that day; five were baptized immediately.

"That says a lot," commented Larry Baker, director of new work and associational missions for the KBC. "Here's a large church that took this seriously and it worked for them."

After Kentucky Baptists distributed nearly 1.4 million gospel brochures during March, more than 1,500 people have returned cards indicating their acceptance of Christ, requesting more information or saying they need to renew their Christian walk.

Among the responses was a note from one man saying, "Please come see me. I can't hold on much longer."

Baker said comments like that are re-



SPECIAL GUEST Kentucky Derby-winning jockey Pat Day (seated, second from right) speaks to a youth Sunday school class at DeHaven Baptist Church in La Grange. The church hosted the horse racing legend March 21 as part of its Find It Here efforts. Nearly 270 people turned out, about 100 people more than DeHaven's average attendance.

kindling interest among Kentucky Baptist churches in reaching out to their communities.

"It's an exciting time," Baker noted. "You can feel it. I don't see how the process can be stopped now. It's loose. It will continue for a number of years as churches think about how they can sow the seed."

Among recent reports are three baptisms and a pair of conversions at Freedom Baptist Church in Stanford; Destiny Baptist in Casey County baptizing an entire family; and Poplar Springs Baptist Church in Liberty seeing four professions of faith. Seven newcomers joined the same day.

"We're seeing a lot of people coming and giving us a try if nothing else," said Baker, noting that numerous churches reported that new families are attending.

"Many of our churches have gotten ready for this and I think that's why God has honored it."

The missions leader said churches also have contextualized Find It Here to fit their communities' needs.

One example is DeHaven Baptist Church in La Grange, which hosted Kentucky Derby-winning jockey Pat Day for a Find It Here event on March 21.

Nearly 270 turned out to the Sunday morning service, about 100 people more than its average attendance. The church billed its April 3 Easter egg hunt as a Find It Here event and plans to distribute brochures at vacation Bible school this summer, according to Pastor Tommy Purvis.

Although DeHaven hasn't recorded any salvations recently, there have been a number of visitors that it plans to follow



up with, the pastor indicated.

"I see this as a big benefit to those who are already here in giving them something significant to participate in," Purvis said. "It's pretty exciting."

Bethlehem Baptist Church in Bremen multiplied its reach beyond Western Kentucky as members mailed brochures to family members and friends in other areas and states. Several return cards sent to KBC headquarters from faraway places have had Bethlehem's name on them, which delights Pastor Leroy Rearden.

"That's doing missions in our country, isn't it?" asked Rearden, who soon will baptize a 60-year-old man who had received Christ but had never taken the next step.

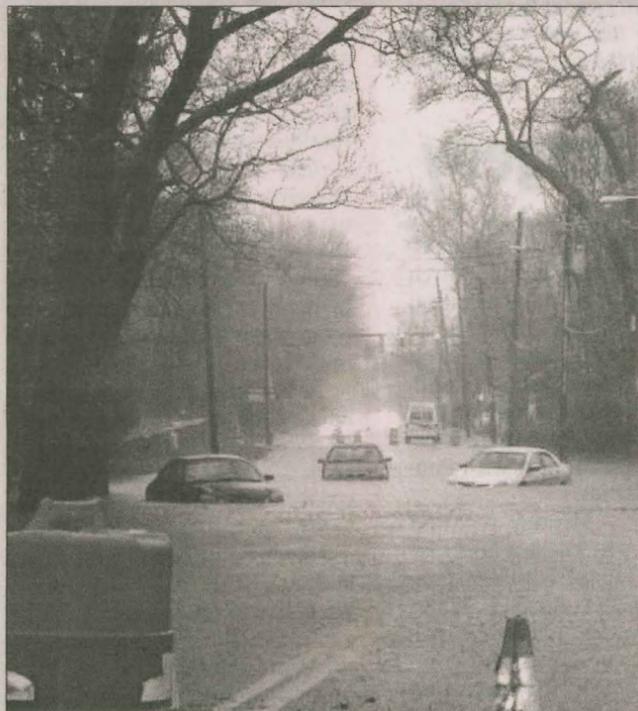
Thanks to distributing 600 brochures in its area, Bethlehem Baptist members became aware of substandard housing. They helped one homeowner by installing water and gas lines and a hot water heater in the trailer. Rearden said church members plan to do similar projects in the area this summer.

"There's a lot of people we didn't know their condition until we passed out brochures," Rearden said. "That makes your church get out and find out what's going on."

Such stories can be repeated numerous times, Baker noted.

"That's part of the genius of this thing," he said. "We wanted churches to determine what kind of caring ministries they want to do. There's been a lot of attention on conversions, but this is so much more than that."

KBC disaster relief teams in Rhode Island



HISTORIC FLOOD Cars were submerged as floodwaters deluged parts of Warwick, R.I., in the worst flooding in the region in 200 years. Kentucky Baptist disaster relief volunteers are in the waterlogged region doing mud-out work. Both Kentucky and the North American Mission Board have put out an urgent call for more volunteers to help in New England.

West Warwick, R.I.—A team of seven Kentucky Baptist disaster relief volunteers are helping residents in West Warwick, R.I., recover from severe flooding that affected areas of New England late last month.

KBC Disaster Relief Associate Coy Webb said the volunteers will help with the mud-out effort for at least a week. The team was sent out April 13 to join the Southern Baptist disaster relief effort already underway in the area.

According to Webb, Southern Baptist Disaster Relief leaders anticipate their efforts in New England will last about one month.

Volunteers still are needed for the work in New England. Trained volunteers may contact the KBC's Baptist Men on Mission office at (502) 489-3527, or toll free in Kentucky at (866) 489-3527.

Contributions to the KBC's disaster relief efforts may be sent to the KBC, Dept. 5008, P.O. Box 740041, Louisville, KY 40201-9976. Please note "disaster relief" in the check memo. Online donations also are being accepted at www.KyBaptist.org/DR.

Tiny Mayfield church vows to rebuild following Feb. fire

By Drew Nichter
News Director

Mayfield—For several weeks now, the members of Baltimore Baptist Church have been meeting at a Lions Club in a nearby town.

That's because the Mayfield congregation's 61-year-old building was completely destroyed in an overnight fire back in February. Investigators never were able to determine the cause of the blaze.

"We just have no idea as to how it started," said Jess Alford, who returned as pastor of Baltimore Baptist last October. He previously served the church from 2002-05.

Alford said he was informed of the fire around 6 a.m. on Feb. 5 by a church member whose son happened to drive by after leaving his third-shift job.

By the time Alford and the fire department arrived at the church, which is situated in a remote area of Graves County with no homes and light car traffic nearby, the fire already had burned itself out.

"There was nothing left but ash and some smoke. That was it," he recalled.

More than a week later, the 45 or so members of Baltimore Baptist Church met for worship at the Lions Club in Wingo several miles away. Alford said he reassured the congregation that the people left behind represent the church, not the burned-out building.

"We were all sort of down about it, and we still feel displaced right now," he acknowledged.

But, "we have a wonderful group of people that is strong in the faith. We just consider this a temporary setback."

Alford said the church does plan to rebuild. However, the future location of Baltimore Baptist still "is up in the air right now," he noted.

"We would like to move to a better location," the pastor said.

Looking to stay in the Mayfield area, Alford said church leaders are working hard to find a new home for Baltimore Baptist, adding that he expects to start holding worship services in a new facility by the start of 2011.

"We're definitely going to rebuild, and we're going to be stronger and better."

Growing Ministries Tour

Repairing the structure beneath Sunday school means renewed momentum, greater attendance

By Drew Nichter
News Director

La Grange—If part of the support structure of a bridge was damaged or missing, would you cross it?

That was a question posed at a workshop last week on the first stop of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Growing Ministries Tour at La Grange Baptist Church.

Associating Sunday school with a faulty bridge, Darryl Wilson asked, "Is it any wonder that the attendance drops when the structure's not there?"

Wilson, head of the KBC's Sunday school department, stressed that churches' Sunday school ministries are increasingly important in the wake of the successful Find It Here campaign among Kentucky Baptists.

He said that, to date, nearly 3,000 people have made decisions for Christ through Find It Here.

"Your efforts, your prayer, your door-to-door visits have already made a difference," Wilson noted. "Keep praying because people are still going to respond ... and in many cases come (to church). We've got to be prepared."

Wilson's workshop offered participants six steps for gaining momentum both in Sunday school as a whole and in individual classes.

Step 1: Prayer. "Bathe your efforts in prayer," Wilson urged. "Our Sunday schools are failing in many cases for lack of prayer."

Prayer is an essential first step, Wilson advised, because "otherwise, we get out without God. We get out in our own power, and in our own power, we're going to fail."

Step 2: Enrollment. Too often, Sunday school classes neglect their enrollment, seeing it as merely a list of names that nev-

er Wilson said.

He encouraged Sunday school leaders to see class enrollment as a list of people to whom the class can minister. "We want to add people so we can minister to them, not so that we can force them to have to come," Wilson suggested.

Breaking it down as a simple equation: enrollment + ministry = attendance, Wilson noted.

Step 3: Prospects. There is a difference between a Sunday school prospect and a "suspect," Wilson said.

"If you don't have good information on them, they're not a prospect, they're a suspect," he said, noting that leaders must have a person's name, contact information and know whether he or she attends Sunday school in order to pursue them as a class prospect.

Step 4: Contacts. Wilson said these also could be called "ministry touches" and that Sunday school classes should have a way of determining how many touches it makes each month.

"If we don't measure it, it doesn't get done," he stressed.

Step 5: Workers. "Having the right number of workers is important," Wilson said.

Not maintaining enough Sunday school leaders and co-leaders to minister to those who are attending results in ineffective ministry, he added. "Lives won't be changed in the same way. ... People won't stick and stay."

Step 6: Planning and training. "If we don't plan, we will plan to fail," Wilson warned.

The Sunday school director challenged participants to consider the "God-sized goals" for their Sunday schools.

But, he cautioned, "If we're not caring for the people He's already entrusted to us, why should He give us more?"

Making disciples is heart of Great Commission, happens most effectively through relationships

By Drew Nichter
News Director

La Grange—To find out how strong a church is, one must evaluate how strong that congregation's members are?

That was the message shared at Growing Ministries Tour workshop on discipleship last week at La Grange Baptist Church.

"Are the members of your church really strong disciples, strong believers (and) mature in the faith? That's how strong your church is, right?" asked Mike James, discipleship and assimilation coordinator with the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

It is every church and believer's task to fulfill the Great Commission Jesus laid out in Matthew 28. "To do that, we have got to build and make disciples," James urged.

According to James, disciple-making is the final command and the ultimate purpose Christ gave His followers before returning to heaven. It also is the intentional process of believers sharing their faith with non-Christians and then nurturing them into spiritual maturity, he pointed out.

So, why make disciples? Because "Jesus said so," James noted. "That's enough."

James described discipleship as a "decision to follow Christ followed by a daily walk." That journey includes relationships, accountability, modeling, experiential activity, observation and reflection.

The most important aspect of discipleship, James suggested, is establishing relationships with others, both as a disciple and a discipler.

"You cannot do discipleship the way Jesus did it unless you are in relationship with some other people," James said.

"We have made a mistake of making discipleship a DVD or a study course," he said. "If discipleship was curriculum, Southern Baptists would have won the world to Christ 30 years ago."

James encouraged workshop participants to model their discipleship efforts after those of Jesus, who spent time in fellowship with His followers. Too often, believers focus on being Christians rather than being disciples, James said. He noted that the word 'disciple' is found in the New Testament 267 times, while the word 'Christian' appears only three times.

Unfortunately, people's busy lives may be the root cause for a lack of discipleship, James noted.

"Maybe that's why we don't do a good job of discipleship today, because it takes time," he said. "Maybe we've let that be an excuse for not making disciples."

But discipleship still happens in churches, James said, pointing out the five places it takes place most often and effectively.

Pastor and staff ministry. Discipleship happens when the pastor and staff intentionally preach or teach on the subject, James said.

Sunday school classes. This often is the most overlooked area in which to enhance discipleship, James noted. "We need to help our Sunday school teachers know they're not just teaching a lesson or teaching the Bible; we want them to make disciples."

Small groups. While most churches have age-graded discipleship classes on Wednesday or Sunday evenings, some congregations have abandoned them, James pointed out. "What are you substituting for that?" he asked.

Mentoring/life coaching. This area is best done in one-on-one or "one-on-a-few" settings, James suggested, and is key for reaching the younger generation.

Equipping parents. "We have not done a good job teaching parents how to disciple their children," James said. "If you're a mom or dad, you have a biblical responsibility to instill in your child biblical values."

Campbellsville, KBC team up to host 'Contagious' conference

Louisville—Campbellsville University and the Kentucky Baptist Convention are teaming up to sponsor the Contagious Churches and Leaders conference May 11-14 at Sojourn Community Church in Louisville.

"This is the second year Campbellsville University has teamed with the KBC to offer a combination class and conference to help equip and train pastors to be missional, reproductive leaders who lead healthy, missional, reproducing churches," said James Woolums, director of Campbellsville's Louisville Education Center.

This year's keynote speaker will be Reggie McNeal, missional leadership specialist with the Leadership Network in Dallas. He will discuss missional leadership and how ministers can become a part of the new church leadership.

Woolums said the desire of conference organizers is to bring in a national speaker each year, and that he is pleased to have best-selling author McNeal leading this year's event.

Woolums also said he is pleased to be holding the conference at Sojourn once again.

Sojourn and Pastor Daniel Montgomery "are a great example of what

a healthy, missional, reproducing church looks like today," Woolums noted.

In addition to McNeal, several Kentucky Baptist pastors will lead conference sessions and participate in panel discussions.

They include Steve Ayers, pastor of Hillvue Heights Church in Bowling Green; Joel Carwile, pastor of Valley View Church in Louisville; Jeff Eaton, pastor of Hope Community Church in Lawrenceburg; Virgil Grant, pastor of Eastside Baptist Church in Richmond; Joe Owens, pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church in Lexington; and Dan Summerlin, pastor of Lone Oak First Baptist Church of Paducah.

Woolums said these pastors will provide "additional perspectives from a variety of viewpoints."

The conference runs each day from 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. McNeal will lead the event's first two days, with the Kentucky pastors leading sessions on the final two days.

For more information or to register for the conference, visit www.KyBaptist.org/Contagious or call Campbellsville University's Louisville Education Center at (502) 753-0264, or toll free at (877) 428-4723.

Cumberlands staffer follows God's call to Kenya

By Laura Silvers
University of the Cumberlands

Williamsburg—Imagine for a moment selling a home, quitting a job and leaving behind family and friends to live in a place with no running water, no electricity and none of the comforts of home.

That is exactly what Amanda Walton, an admissions counselor at University of the Cumberlands, will do this June as she travels to Kenya to serve the Tumaini Miles of Smiles Center orphanage and school.

Named for the Swahili word for "hope," Tumaini is located in a rural area in Western Kenya. Constantly growing, the center currently has 180 students, 30 of whom are orphans.

Walton will help the natives start an after-school program for the children. She also will teach English, Christian education and physical education.

While there, Walton will be living at her worksite in a small guest home that has dirt floors. She will have no running water, no electricity and a limited amount of food.

"It's pretty extreme," Walton said. "I will have a roof over my head and a bed to sleep in though."

Walton's journey began in 2003 as a graduate assistant at Cumberlands. "I felt God was calling me to do something on the foreign mission field. So, I began to ask Him, 'How and where do You want me to serve?'" Walton recalled.

She said she soon realized she should use the gifts that God had given her—athletics. She searched for "sports mission trips" on the Internet and learned about the International Sports Federation.

The next year, Walton traveled to Greece twice with the federation, once during the 2004 Summer Olympics.

Walton said she has had a passion for Africa since she was young and was able to embrace that passion when she traveled to Kenya with the ISF. Several trips later, Walton said she began to realize God was calling her to do something more than just visit.

During one of the trips, Walton met Rose, a woman involved with the Tumaini orphanage.

"After a two-hour conversation about the needs of the organization, it clicked in my mind that those were the gifts God had given me," she said. "I knew I would be going back."

Walton said the decision to go into full-time ministry in Africa was a difficult one.

"When I first surrendered fully to doing this, I asked God, 'Why? I feel like I'm in a place where I can serve You, and I enjoy it,'" Walton recalled. "His answer was, 'Right now, you have what you think is best, but I have something better.'"

"As hard as it is to walk away from all the security and amenities we have here, there is something there that is different. ... I feel complete there," Walton said.

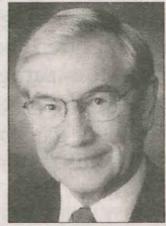


Amanda Walton with a child from the Tumaini Miles of Smiles Center

Called to love

Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union leaders are to be commended for an outstanding WMU Annual Meeting focused on missions, held in Louisville at Westport Road Baptist Church recently. But that is exactly what you would expect from women who have a sincere heart commitment to missions.

Partners in the Mission



By Bill Mackey

Pat Reaves completed four years of service as Kentucky WMU president. She has an incredible record of service through Bethlehem Baptist Church, Long Run Baptist Association, the Kentucky Baptist Convention and Kentucky WMU.

Congratulations to new Kentucky WMU President Linda Cooper of Forest Park Baptist Church in Bowling Green. We look forward to working with her in carrying out the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The program featured three International Mission Board missionaries: David and Linda Jackson, who serve as church planters among sub-Saharan African peoples; and a young woman who serves in a last frontier country.

Susan Hatfield, who serves with Baptist Global Response, spoke about the impact of Care Kit buckets in Africa.

Tim Bender, who serves as pastor of the Louisville Baptist Deaf Church and works as a missionary to extend deaf ministries across Kentucky, also spoke.

It was a special treat to hear the beautiful voices of the New Life Baptist Church Choir (Korean), just before Sook Jae Lee, executive director of Korea Baptist WMU, spoke and paid tribute to Kentucky WMU for their partnership.

Larry Baker, Missions Growth team leader for the KBC, shared a progress report on "Find It Here." He reported that 1,731 response cards had been received so far and that 508 persons had indicated that they received Jesus Christ into their lives. Another 804 indicated they wanted to restore their relationship to Jesus Christ. Lay persons have been more excited about this outreach plan than any that I have ever experienced.

KBC Missions Consultant Larry Martin, Racing Hall of Fame member jockey Pat Day, and Kentucky WMU's LaRaine Rice spoke about the opportunities for ministry and witness coming up during the World Equestrian Games that will be held at the Kentucky Horse Park Sept. 25-Oct. 10. If you want to assist, please contact LaRaine at laraine.rice@kybaptist.org or 502-489-3452.

A special feature of the annual meeting was a reception at the Kentucky Baptist Building for Kaye Miller, the national WMU president, and for Brenda Price, who has retired after more than 27 years of service with Kentucky WMU. More than 250 women made the short trip to experience fellowship, see displays about KBC missions work and to take home valuable missions resources.

Women of Kentucky WMU are leaving a strong legacy for missions in their homes, churches and across the state for the glory of God.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Running can be form of spiritual discipline

Running 60 miles at age 60 will be an amazing physical feat. But for Eddie Benton of Lexington, who has made similar achievements at ages 40 and 50, the feat is also a spiritual discipline.

"Our physical bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit. We ought to do the very best we can to keep it the best we can," Benton told the Western Recorder. "It's certainly a tool God's given to us. So, I think we ought to be taking care of it," the 12-time Boston marathoner explained (see our front-page story).

For many of us, though, it probably isn't realistic to think we could get up off the couch and walk that distance—much less run it—even in a week. Yet Benton's accomplishment constitutes a challenge to church leaders and lay persons alike to make physical fitness—not just spiritual wellness—a regular part of their lives.

While more than half of American adults claim to exercise regularly, the unhealthy consequences of our inactive lifestyles are readily apparent. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, two out of three Americans are overweight or obese, and one in three has high blood pressure. Since 1980, the number of Americans with diabetes has tripled, soaring from 5.6 million to 17.4 million. And more than 26 million have been diagnosed with some form of heart disease.

Not only can regular exercise improve overall health and wellbeing, reducing anxiety and countering depression, it has also been shown to substantially reduce the risk of many deadly but preventable diseases, such as cardiovascular disease, stroke, colon cancer and diabetes. According to Guidestone Financial Resources, which insures many Southern Baptist ministers and their families, regular physical exercise and a healthy diet are associated with fewer hospitalizations, physician's visits and medications. In fact, the New England Journal of Medicine maintains that three-quarters of health care services are linked to preventable, chronic or lifestyle-related conditions.

We all have heard of studies showing that we don't have to run a marathon to see benefits of aerobic exercise. A brisk, 20 to 30-minute walk or jog at least two or three days each week can reduce one's heart rate, blood pressure and weight, while increasing the efficiency of one's heart and lungs. The resulting stronger bones and muscles also will inevitably make us more fit for ministry.

In an article written for Baptist Press several years ago, Branda Polk, a certified fitness instructor and

wellness coach, addresses this vital issue: "Are you ready spiritually, mentally, emotionally and physically for ministry?" Polk asks. "Because we are whole people created to live in physical bodies, we must be physically fit for effective ministry," she asserts.

Polk points to the account of Phillip and the Ethiopian eunuch as a great example of why fitness is essential to effective ministry. Prompted by the Holy Spirit, Phillip started walking down the road from Jerusalem to Gaza, but we are not told how far, Polk notes. Then Phillip had to run alongside the chariot before he was invited to sit.

"Remember, chariots were pulled by horses and even at a trot, Phillip would need to run at a good pace to keep up," she adds.

Also notice that Phillip did not offer excuses or attempt to renegotiate his ministry task. Polk humorously quips, "He didn't say, 'That's great, I'd love to share Christ with that man. Could you just have him pull his chariot up beside me? I don't think I can run that fast.' Or, 'We could meet at the Waffle House for coffee and I'd be glad to answer all his questions.'"

God has given us bodies designed to be strong and fit, yet many of us find ourselves diseased, stressed, fatigued and weak, she observes. "When we are not in good physical shape we cripple our ministry effectiveness," she concludes. Indeed, her point is valid: "Healthful food and exercise keeps our bodies in shape and ready at a moment's notice to answer God's ministry call."

1 Corinthians 6:19-20, which enjoins us to honor God with our bodies, lends support to Benton's perspective that physical fitness is important to spiritual wellbeing. And his feat reminds the rest of us that the crucial question is, can we truly be the kind of servant God needs if we do not take care of ourselves physically and our lives are plagued with disease?

Though Jesus was referring to the need for His disciples to remain vigilant in the spiritual discipline of prayer, we can relate to what Jesus meant when He said, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." Several nights ago, I had a strange dream in which I was teaching a Sunday school class and gave an assignment to underline in a passage every incidence in which the words "willing" or "will" were used. Although similar in form, the words have different meanings: We may be willing to do something, but lack the will to keep doing it. The point is, while we many not be able to run 60 miles, we can put one foot in front of the other and see where it takes us—with any luck, it won't be in the direction of a refrigerator.



After Thought

By Todd Deaton

WESTERN Recorder

Box 43969
Louisville, KY 40253

DR. TODD DEATON
Editor

DREW NICHTER
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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

Western Recorder is published weekly 49 weeks a year by Western Recorder Inc., an agency of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253. It will not be published the first week of January, the week of Independence Day or the week of Christmas. Periodicals postage paid at Louisville, Ky. (USPS 679-380)

For general information, to give news tips, or to place an advertisement, call (502) 489-3535.

POSTMASTER: Send address corrections to:
Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253.

To subscribe: Send \$12.50 for a one-year, individual subscription. Group subscriptions on the church budget plan are \$10 per year. An additional church newsletter service is available for churches of all sizes.

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A blanket of sorrow covers Warsaw after plane crash

By Kaylin Bowers

There is an overwhelming blanket of grief and sorrow in the city of Warsaw. As Poland enters a week

of mourning for the death of the country's president, his wife and many government leaders, the people step out in patriotism with solemn hearts.

Every flower shop was brimming with lines out the door on the day of Lech Kaczynski's death. Crowds of mourners gathered at the president's palace to lay flowers and light candles—a sight mingled with the sound of prayers while a nation prays and asks for God's mercy. Cou-

ples and families held each other as they stood and cried at the palace. It is heartbreaking to watch the people of Warsaw suffer over this

tragic event.

The mix of emotions is varied. Some walk the streets claiming their patriotism; others only know sadness, some seemingly without hope. Yet, even more wonder why these prominent people were on one plane and are just baffled, wondering how anything like this could happen.

When I first heard about the plane crash, it was difficult to know how to react. I was filled with great sorrow for a coun-

FIRST PERSON

We pray that the God of all comfort will pour out His love to these people.

try that has a history laced with tragedy. Why this? I asked.

I also felt great hope in knowing this would be an opportunity to minister to the community around me. This historic incident is in the thoughts and on the lips of every Pole I know.

We are praying that through this tragedy that hearts might be more open to the truth. We pray that the God of all comfort will pour out His love to these people. Our work continues as we enter into the moments God provides to talk with those we know, share the light of Christ and give a word of comfort where we can. (BP)

Kaylin Bowers is a missionary in Poland with the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Praying for the children in Russia's orphanages

By Russell Moore

I nervously switched off the television as I heard my children bounding toward the door. I didn't want them to hear the news. I didn't want to hear it myself. Every time I see what is going on in Russia, with the government calling for an immediate halt on American adoptions, I think about the Russian orphanage where I first met my two oldest sons. And I want to cry.

The news reports are appalling, to be sure.

A grandmother in Tennessee reportedly placed a child who was adopted from a Russian orphanage on a plane bound for the former Soviet Union, sending him back because the family allegedly said they couldn't deal with his disturbed emotional state and alleged potential for violence. The Russian government and the Russian people are outraged, and want to see to it this will never happen again.

There are several things Christians ought to keep in mind and, more importantly, in prayer here.

First of all, we should pray for this child, and for his family. We don't know much about this situation beyond what we see in the news, but that's enough to know this is a catastrophe. It is horrific any time a child is orphaned. It is even more horrific when a child is twice-orphaned.

We should also pray fervently that God would change the hearts of the Russian government officials, that they would not allow this tragedy to further harm the already endangered orphans. Sadly, this family's actions may have catastrophic implications. This case, along with one or two others, has given impetus to a nativist Russian nationalism already uncomfortable with international adoption.

The stakes are high. Families who were poised to be freed through adoption are now suddenly on hold, in a "diplomatic limbo" of waiting. "An estimated 3,500 Russian children are in some stage of the adoption process with 3,000 American families," reports The New York Times.

The very fact that this horrible situation is getting such coverage all over the world is precisely because it is such an anomaly. There have been more than 50,000 U.S. adoptions from Russia since 1991, with adopting parents carefully screened and the Russian government receiving reports back from the post-adoption home studies.

FIRST PERSON

It would be quite different if there were a vibrant adoption culture in the former USSR. Adoption is extremely rare in Russian culture. The very few families who adopt, and children who are adopted, are often stigmatized.

The leftover effects of Communist materialism matched with the instability of the new economy have resulted in a skyrocketing abortion rate along with orphanages filled with abandoned children.

The children who are not adopted languish in these orphanages until they are old enough to be thrown out, defenseless, into society, where they often find few options beyond the Russian military, prostitution or suicide.

The Russian orphanage where my wife and I found our sons, then Maxim and Sergei, was the most heartbreaking place I have ever been. Its sights and smells and sounds come back to me every day. But, even more so, before my mind's eye every day are the faces of the children we couldn't adopt. The little girl who peered around the door frame every day as we visited our then-future sons. What happened to her? What will happen to those like her, and like my sons, who are waiting now for homes and families, someone to love them and feed them and hug them?

There are other Maxims and Sergeis, sitting day and night in cribs somewhere in Russia. Let's pray that the Russian people make the right decisions. And let's pray for the providence of the One who promises to be a Father to the fatherless. This situation isn't just a human interest tragedy. And it's not just a foreign policy issue.

Russia's orphans aren't foreigners to those of us who've been adopted into the family of Christ. They're Jesus' little brothers and sisters (Matthew 25:40). He won't forget them. And neither can we.

My television's going to stay off for awhile. I don't want my boys to overhear this horrible scenario and wonder if, God forbid, they might ever be put back on a plane to Russia. I don't want them to know, yet, that they live in a world so dark that such things can happen. Maybe you could turn your television off too, just for a little while, and pray for the orphans of Russia.

Russell Moore is dean of the School of Theology at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

Is your child addicted to video games?

By David Garrard

A 2009 study by researchers at Iowa State University found that almost one in 10 American children (ages 8-18) are addicted to video games in perhaps the same way some folks are addicted to drugs or gambling. "Pathological gamers" played 24 hours each week on average, were more likely to be boys, and were twice as likely to have doctor-diagnosed attention problems.

David Gentile, the ISU psychologist who conducted the study, says that spending a lot of time playing games doesn't necessarily mean a child is in trouble. Parents should begin worrying when five or more of the following signs are present:

- skipping chores and homework to play games.
- poor test and homework scores.
- playing games to escape problems.
- most non-school hours are spent on the computer or playing video games.
- falling asleep in school.
- not keeping up with school assignments.
- worsening grades.
- lying about computer or video game use.
- choosing to play games instead of seeing friends.
- dropping out of other social groups (clubs, sports).
- irritability when not playing video games.
- excessive thinking about games and planning the next opportunity to play.

Practical guidelines for parents include not allowing children to have game systems in their bedroom and establishing rules for video game use, including time limits. Along those lines, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no more than one to two hours of "screen time" daily, which includes TV, movies and internet.

David Garrard is minister to children at St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville.



FAMILY FORUM

7 habits of financially wise people

By Don Spencer

Whatever your financial situation, there are books telling you how to fix it—get rich quick, get out of debt, make money without risk, avoid taxes, make higher than average returns on investing, etc. Since the days of Benjamin Franklin and his book, "The Way to Wealth," financial self-help books have become like diet books: a hot item for a brief period that swiftly disappears to used book vendors. Only a few have stood the test of time. One is George Clason's "The Richest Man in Babylon," compiled in the 1920's.

Clason used parables set in ancient Babylon, the place where money may have been invented. In one parable, Algamish tells Arkad the secret of his wealth, "I found the road to wealth when I decided that a part of all I earned was mine to keep." Arkad responds, "Is that all?" Arkad reluctantly applies the wisdom, and at Algamish's death he becomes the richest man in Babylon, giving that same advice to others: "Say to yourselves, 'A part of all I earn is mine to keep.' Say it in the morning. Say it at noon. Say it at night. Say it to yourself until the words stand out like letters of fire across the sky."

People often lose common sense when dealing with dollars and cents. "The Richest Man in Babylon" has endured because Clason put the basics of financial planning in a handful of simple statements. Together, they form seven habits of financially wise people:

1. **Start your purse to fattening.** Keep at least a tenth of your earnings for yourself. Save.
 2. **Control your expenditures.** Stick to a budget.
 3. **Make your gold multiply.** Invest wisely.
 4. **Guard your treasures from loss by consulting with wise men.** Get guidance from financial professionals.
 5. **Make of your dwelling a profitable investment.** Own your own home.
 6. **Insure a future income.** Have adequate life and disability insurance as well as retirement income.
 7. **Increase your ability to earn.** Continually improve job skills to strengthen your value in the marketplace.
- Don Spencer is a certified financial planner and directs the Kentucky Baptist Convention's church financial benefits department.

The Carpenter's hands: rough, gentle; wounded, healing

They must have been rough, the hands of the village carpenter. In an age without gloves or skin creams, He shoved stones into place, absorbed splinters, hewed timber, and gripped lumber with bare fingers. In a day without sunscreen lotions, He labored under the blistering Middle Eastern sun.

In an era without modern machinery, He raised houses, erected buildings, fashioned furniture and repaired children's toys. His hands must have developed a thick layer of protective hide that was obvious to those who shook His hand or felt His touch.

But, oh, what gentle hands. Never squeezing too hard, touching too roughly, or overzealously slapping another's back.

What powerful hands! The trace of a single finger could restore sight to the blind, bring life to the dead, heal a leper's skin, or lift a suffering soul from life's dust.

And what wounded hands! They bore the scars that no lotion could heal and no oil could help. They were the hands of Jesus.

The Gospels use the words "hands," "fingers" and "touch" nearly 200 times, and the words often refer to Jesus: "Jesus put out His hand and touched him," "So He touched her hand," "He went in and took her by the hand," "Then He touched their eyes," "Immediately Jesus stretched out His hand," "Jesus came and touched them," "Then little children were brought to Him that He might put His hands on them and pray."

Our hands should convey love. In His parable of the prodigal son, Jesus described the reaction of the father to the homecoming of his wayward boy: "Filled with love and compassion, he ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him" (Luke 15:20).

Many parents truly love their children, but don't always convey this love in a way that makes their kids feel secure. Hugs, hair-tussling, pats on the back, even horseplay and roughhousing—all are ways we can communicate affection to our youngsters.

Jesus wasn't afraid to touch others. Leprous skin didn't repulse Him, nor did He hesitate to handle the

that were sick with various diseases brought them to Him; and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them."

How can our hands become a blessing to others? Perhaps wiping the brow of a fevered child? Cooking a meal for a lonely single? Typing a note to one needing encouragement? Cutting flowers for a neighbor? Wiping the noses of infants in the church nursery? Handing out bulletins with a smile and a handshake on Sunday? Knocking on the door of someone needing the Lord? Your hands can do His work every day!

I can visualize our Lord's rough-hewn hands resting in a posture of prayer, palms together, fingers pointed upward as the Carpenter of Nazareth took time to beseech God's blessings on the work of His hands.

Oh, to be like Jesus. To have the same touch, the same grip on life, the same openhanded generosity, the same beautiful, beckoning hands as our Lord. Look down at your hands right now. May God take them and use them for His glory. Let's

pray with the hymnist:
"Let my hands perform His bidding,
Let my feet run in His ways;
Let my eyes see Jesus only,
Let my lips speak forth His praise."
(From "All for Jesus" by Mary D. James.)

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

FIRST PERSON



David Jeremiah

Now He wants to use our hands to send the same message of love, humility and acceptance.

filthy feet of His disciples in the Upper Room. Now He wants to use our hands to send the same message of love, humility and acceptance.

Psalm 104:28 says that when God opens His hand, we're filled with goodness; and Psalm 145:16 echoes the thought: "You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing."

Are your hands open? Generous toward a needy person whom God brings across your path? Toward His work that needs support? Toward those depending on your provision?

We must use our hands to help others. At the beginning of Christ's ministry, we read in Luke 4:40: "When the sun was setting, all those who had any

Kentucky pastors use running to share Christ, honor Him

Continued from page 1
ing Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and took up running "just to kind of stay in shape," he recalled.

On the other end of the running spectrum is Mike James.

A self-described recreational runner, James, a former pastor turned regional church strategist for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, has run a few 5K races, but never more than a 10K.

An off-and-on runner who is trying to get back on the running wagon, James said right now he is doing a run/walk combination to get back in good-enough shape to compete in a 5K this year.

So, what do Benton and James have in common? They both have similar reasons for pounding the pavement.

"Our physical bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit. We ought to do the very best we can to keep it the best we can," said Benton, citing 1 Corinthians 6:19. "It's certainly a tool God's given to us. So, I think we ought to be taking care of it."

Benton said he likes to get his run in early each morning, doing so six days a week—never on Sundays.

Describing it as a "stress reliever," Benton said his early-morning run "gives me a time to kind of be alone with the Lord."

"I really just like time to think," Benton

said, noting that unlike many runners, he does not listen to music while running. "A lot of time I'm praying, talking over things with the Lord (and) thinking about the week."

For James, running often leads to sermon ideas or inspiration for other projects. "You're alive and your blood's pumping, so I get a lot of ideas from running."

James and Benton both agreed that lacing up the shoes and hitting the road or trail makes them better pastors and leaders.

"I think I'm able to accomplish a whole lot more because of my fitness," Benton said. "The energy level is there, ... but for me, it's the clarity of thinking."

He noted, however, that these days unfortunately, "we've got so many Baptist pastors who can't go from one meeting to the other without running out of breath."

Five years ago, Skip

Alexander was nearing that point in his own life.

Closing in on 40, the pastor of Campbellsville Baptist Church said he didn't like where he was physically—and decided to do something about it.

Noting that the church he leads even has a gymnasium, "it seemed a little contradictory to me to be a pastor who didn't exercise when you've got a facility for doing that," he said.

At a deacon/pastor retreat five years ago, Alexander ran with a few pastors from around the state. Last year, he completed his first marathon.

As a pastor, Alexander said he felt convicted to be an example for what he called the "stewardship of our bodies."

"If we're the model of prayer, if we're the model of evangelism, we should also be the model of physical fitness," Alexander explained. "I'm not trying to equate those as equal, but people do see us, and when they see us, they draw conclusions about our lifestyles. Is it gluttonous?"

He said that in all areas of life, especially in physical fitness, a pastor should be a "good example of holistic, godly, gospel ministry."

For these church leaders, running not only has been a way to model the "temple" passage in 1 Corinthians, but also to share the gospel message with others.

"I'm known around the community as 'that guy who runs,'" Alexander said, adding that his reputation breaks down barriers for non-Christians.

"It gives them something to talk (about) with the preacher that's not church," he said. "It knocks down stereotypes."

While pastor of a church in Bardstown three years ago, Benton attended a high school basketball game where he met a man who wanted to talk about running. Ten minutes later the conversation shifted to life matters.

"I was sitting there sharing the Lord with this guy because his family was falling apart," Benton recalled.

Running "kind of gives me an inroad into the community," he pointed out.

The local running groups Benton participates with, especially, provide ample time



RUNNING PARTNERS Lexington pastor Eddie Benton (center) runs in the 2007 Marine Corps Marathon in Washington alongside his daughter, Whitney (right). The race was Whitney's first marathon and her father's 63rd. (Photo courtesy of Whitney Benton Harris)

for sharing the gospel with non-believers.

"When you're out on a 15-mile run, ... they're going to have to listen to what you have to share," he joked.

Inside the church, Alexander said running has allowed him to stay connected to Campbellsville Baptist members.

Using the Nike+ shoe system, which electronically tracks speed, mileage and time data during his runs, Alexander is able to upload that data to a Web site, which then transfers it to his Facebook page.

"I'm amazed at how many people track along with that or ask me about how running's going," he said.

One's running successes even can be inspirational for others, Alexander noted.

"I've never heard anybody who said, 'I ran a marathon,' and somebody said, 'Well, that's discouraging.' Everyone's impressed," Alexander said. "And they almost always say, 'I want to do that,' or, 'I can do that.' And it gives you a chance to say, 'Yes, you can. You can do all things with God.'"

Healthy pastors = healthy churches

By Drew Nichter
News Director

Campbellsville—Pastor Skip Alexander stated what many in his profession likely already know: "Pastoring is hard."

To ease the daily stress of life as a church leader, Alexander runs.

An avid runner since starting five years ago, Alexander said he is healthier—both physically and in his ministry.

"I'm able to work harder," he noted. "I really don't get sick much anymore. I can't remember having the flu since I've started running."

Eddie Benton, pastor of Rosemont Baptist Church in Lexington, uses running as a stress reliever. Even conflict within the church sometimes can be resolved with a good run.

"If we had a rough deacons' meeting, let's go run 10 miles and we'll get that thing taken care of," he joked.

But the alarming state of pastors' health is no joke.

An Ellison Research study several years ago found that 71 percent of Protestant ministers admitted to being overweight by an average of 32.1 pounds. That included 15 percent who were overweight by 50 pounds or more.

Ellison also found that only half of the ministers surveyed got the recommended minimum amount of weekly exercise (30 minutes a day, three days a week). Twenty-eight percent did not exercise at all.

So, what is a time-strapped pastor to do to get in shape?

Alexander asked himself that very question five years ago. He found the answer in running—and wants other pastors and church leaders to follow in his footsteps.

"It will be one of the most important decisions they will make," Alexander suggested. "They will benefit from it. Their churches will benefit from it. They will extend the tenure and effectiveness of their ministries by incorporating exercise into a healthy lifestyle."

But how does one get started? According to Benton, the key is "start slow."

"Start out walking or walking and running at a decent pace two or three times a week," he suggested, "then work it up to four or five times a week."

The results may not come right away, "but after two, three or four weeks, they ought to really begin to feel a difference in the way they feel about themselves."

Mike James, regional church strategist with the Kentucky Baptist Convention, recommended consulting with a physician before starting any exercise regimen. But if that routine involves walking or running, the next stop should be a good shoe store.

"Everybody has a different type of foot and a good store will look at your feet and tell you" what type of shoe to buy, James said. "It may cost a little bit more, but it'll make a tremendous difference."

For Alexander, running is an easy and time-efficient way to squeeze a good workout into a pastor's busy schedule.

"For most pastors, it's efficient with time," Alexander said. "You can get a run in early in the morning (or) late at night. You can get an hour to run and get cleaned up at your schedule."

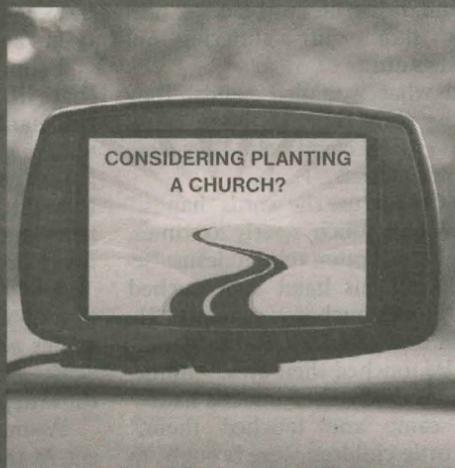
"As pastors, we don't have the privilege to say, 'Every 3 o'clock every other day, I'm going to run.' It's just hard to do," he added.

As far as getting started, Alexander and Benton each recommended several online resources such as RunnersWorld.com, which has numerous plans for runners of all abilities.

Benton suggested simply asking another runner how he or she got started, or finding a partner to run alongside.

"Just like you need an accountability partner in spiritual things, you need that in running, too."

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Task force chair: 'Great Commission Giving' won't replace CP

Associational group's Web poll indicates more than 75 percent would vote against GCR report

By Mark Kelly

Nashville, Tenn.—The Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program will remain "the central and preferred conduit of Great Commission funding" if the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force report is adopted by messengers to the SBC annual meeting in June, the chairman of that committee said last week.

Establishing a "Great Commission Giving" category of missions funding only celebrates what else is being done outside the Cooperative Program to fund Southern Baptist missions causes, without detracting from CP giving, Ronnie Floyd said during a one-hour conference call hosted by the Network of Baptist Associations.

"The bottom line is that we believe the greatest stewardship of the Great Commission investment and deployment is given through the Cooperative Program," Floyd noted. "We're going to ask Southern Baptists to recommit themselves, that it be the central and preferred conduit of Great Commission funding. We're going to ask people to step it up."

Floyd went on to point out that the task force's Feb. 22 progress report suggests creating a new category of "Great Commission Giving" to celebrate designated gifts being made to Southern Baptist causes, not parachurch organizations. The Cooperative Program channels undesignated contributions from churches to Southern Baptist national

and international endeavors according to a pre-determined formula. The form currently used to report church giving already asks for missions spending outside the Cooperative Program, Floyd pointed out.

Celebrating designated gifts to Southern Baptist missions causes will not diminish the importance of the Cooperative Program, added Jim Richards, executive director of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention.

"The Cooperative Program will remain as the singularly highlighted method of support for the SBC's cooperative endeavors," Richards said.

Task force members responded to questions during the panel discussion, which was hosted by Bobby Gilstrap, director of missions for Huron and Southeastern Baptist associations in Michigan.

James Smith, director of missions for Monongahela Baptist Association in Clarksburg, W.Va., said his constituents were concerned that adding a new giving category to celebrate designated giving could mark "the death of the Cooperative Program" and herald a return to a "society" approach

to missions, in which organizations compete with each other to raise money directly from individual congregations. Southern Baptists established the Cooperative Program in 1925, in part, to free congregations from the constant appeals for money.

Floyd responded by saying task force members are firm believers in cooperative missions giving.

"No one in our whole task force believes in societal giving or else we wouldn't be giving to the Cooperative Program," Floyd said. "The only reason the Great Commission Giving aspect was brought up is this whole element that churches really need to

be celebrated for what they are already doing" through the SBC.

David Franklin, associational missionary for Bartow Baptist Association in Cartersville, Ga., asked how structural changes suggested by the task force could lead to a resurgence of passion for the Great Commission.

Floyd replied that structural changes can reflect better obedience to the Great Commission, which in turn can set in

motion a new movement of God's Spirit among Southern Baptists.

"The No. 1 need (in the Southern Baptist Convention) is for spiritual revival. ... The issue is where we go from here," Floyd said. "We believe that when we really see a mighty move of God and we're willing to risk it all to present the gospel of Christ to every person in the world and to make disciples of all the nations, that nothing will ignite this spiritual revival any more and serve as a catalyst to it than obedience to the Great Commission."

People are mistaken if they think they can simply pray for revival and not deal with structural issues, Floyd added.

At the close of the conference call, Gilstrap announced results from an informal poll the Network of Baptist Associations had conducted on its Web site.

Nearly 80 percent of respondents indicated they are not satisfied with the content of the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force's initial report. If adopted as it currently is, 81.3 percent indicated that the report would have a negative impact on their ministries, as opposed to 18.7 percent who said it would have a positive impact or no impact at all.

More than three-fourths (76.8 percent) of those who responded to the Web poll said they would vote against the GCR Task Force's recommendations as they currently stand. (BP)



Ronnie Floyd

African-American Baptist pastor urges SBC to repent of perceived racism

Arlington, Texas—A prominent African-American Baptist pastor said the Southern Baptist Convention has not kept a promise made in 1995 to "eradicate racism in all its forms from Southern Baptist life and ministry."

Dwight McKissic, pastor of Cornerstone Baptist Church in Arlington, Texas, released an article posted on his blog to media April 8 calling on the convention to repent "for passive and intentional acts of racism in SBC life" that have occurred since the SBC adopted a historic resolution on its

150th anniversary apologizing to African-Americans for the convention's racist past.

McKissic said most systemic, institutional and individual racism in SBC life is "passive, not intentional."

For example, he said, a black member was not added to a Great Commission Task Force appointed last summer until it was pointed out that the group studying denominational effectiveness ought to include an African-American perspective.

McKissic said the oversight wasn't intentional but is symptomatic of a prob-

lem that convention leaders must address if they are serious about reaching the world for Christ.

Fifteen years after resolving to "apologize to all African-Americans for condoning and/or perpetuating individual and systemic racism in our lifetime" and to "genuinely repent of racism of which we have been guilty, whether consciously or unconsciously," McKissic said, there has not been one African-American hired as the chief executive of any SBC entity. He said he is praying that will soon change, as searches are

in progress for leaders of both of the SBC's mission boards and Executive Committee.

Roger Oldham, vice president for convention relations with the SBC's Executive Committee, said a work group of the Executive Committee is studying a motion referred by the convention in 2009 to study ways to more actively involve ethnic churches and ethnic leaders in the SBC.

He said McKissic's article "will certainly be a resource this work group may want to consider when it begins to discuss potential strategies it may recommend." (ABP)

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Dave Edwards

Angela Thomas

33 Miles

Coal mining families witness Christ's love amid tragedy

Continued from page 1

to get some answers," he said, referring to the process of counteracting the dangerous gases within the mine.

"We knew that we were within hours of finding out if there were four alive or not," Minney continued. "The people were strong. They continued to hold on to hope. They continued to trust that God was going to reveal something miraculous in their lives. Even when they were being told that there was almost no chance that anybody got to a refuge chamber, they still held on to hope."

Minney is a West Virginia native, and for 11 years he was on staff at First Baptist Church of Woodstock, Ga., before being commissioned in March to serve in his home state.

"It was a quick growing process for me," he said of the timing of the coal mine tragedy. "God revealed to me a lot of things about the people in West Virginia that I really didn't know."

As he considered the tragedy from an eternal perspective, Minney said he looks forward to what God might do even through the loss of 29 lives.

"Sometimes when we're in it, we don't understand it. We may never understand, but I think there will be a time when we'll be able to look back on these days ... and just realize that God had this in the palm of His hand," Minney said.

"Who knows what God is going to do? We just have to follow His will from this point forward and continue to let Him have His way in our lives." (BP)

Former Congressman urges Christians to repudiate extremist religious groups

By Bob Allen

Washington—A former Congressman and ordained Baptist minister suggested extremists like Fred Phelps' Westboro Baptist Church and members of a Christian militia group arrested in Michigan for plotting to wage civil war against the United States are giving Christians a bad name and should be repudiated.

J.C. Watts, a former four-term Congressman from Oklahoma and the first black Republican elected to the House of Representatives since Reconstruction, said in a newspaper column that "depraved people" like Phelps and nine members of the self-named Hutaree militia charged with seditious conspiracy and other crimes help feed "a growing and troubling anti-Christian bigotry" that is sweeping the nation.

Along with battles like "Merry Christmas" becoming politically incorrect and negative portrayals of Christians on television and in movies, Watts—now a business consultant who left Congress in 2002—said Christianity now has to contend with "nut cases hijacking the name 'Christian' while committing atrocities in the name of Christ."

Watts, a former youth minister and associate pastor at Sunnyside Southern Baptist Church in Del City, Okla., said every Christian in America should be "outraged" by both the self-described "Christian" militia group and the independent Baptist congregation from Topeka, Kan., notorious for picketing funerals of American soldiers with placards bearing hate-filled messages.

"Christians cannot allow the lines to be blurred, which is what the secularists want," Watts said. "Christians should denounce such groups because what these people are doing does not reconcile with true Christianity or biblical principles."

Keeping their distance

Earlier this month, Baptist Press carried a story denouncing Westboro Baptist Church. The article made it clear the small congregation—composed mostly of members of the pastor's extended family—is not affiliated in any way with the Southern Baptist Convention.

American Baptist Churches USA updated their Web page with a "news flash" denouncing Westboro's tactics and pointing out it is not an American Baptist church.

Media in Michigan, meanwhile, reported that David Brian Stone, ringleader of the group accused of plotting to kill police officers, had attended Thornhill Baptist Church, a congregation in Hudson, Mich., affiliated with the Southern Baptist Church.

Thornhill's pastor, Elton Spurgeon, told the Detroit News that Stone had attended infrequently for about eight years. Stone's 21-year-old son, Joshua, who also is named in a federal indictment unsealed March 29, recently had gotten married in the church, but Spurgeon did not officiate.

Both Spurgeon and his wife, Donna, said they did not condone the group's activities and had no clue about what was going on. They said they knew the family owned guns and wore camouflage but thought they were hunters.

Authorities say the Hutaree, the name Stone chose for the group, planned to kill an unspecified law-enforcement official and then ambush

other officers by using homemade bombs to attack the funeral motorcade. They then would retreat to a staging area defended by booby traps. They hoped the attacks and retaliation would become a catalyst for other militia groups to engage in a more widespread uprising against the government.

Authorities do not know what the word Hutaree means. They suspect it is a made-up word with no meaning except reference to the group.

A Hutaree Web site defines the term as "Christian warrior."

"We believe that one day, as prophecy says, there will be an Anti-Christ," the Web site proclaims. "All Christians must know this and prepare, just as Christ commanded."

"Jesus wanted us to be ready to defend ourselves using the sword and stay alive using equipment," it continues. "We, the Hutaree, are prepared to defend all those who belong to Christ and save those who aren't. We will still spread the word, and fight to keep it, up to the time of the great coming." (ABP)



J.C. Watts

National Day of Prayer ruled unconstitutional

Madison, Wis.—A federal district judge in Wisconsin has ruled that the 1988 law creating the annual observance of the National Day of Prayer is unconstitutional.

"It goes beyond mere 'acknowledgement' of religion because its sole purpose is to encourage all citizens to engage in prayer, an inherently religious exercise that serves no secular function in this context," U.S. District Judge Barbara Crabb ruled last week.

"In this instance, the government has taken sides on a matter that must be left to individual conscience."

The Madison, Wis.-based Freedom from Religion Foundation, which filed suit in 2008 to stop the prayer day, hailed the decision as a "sweet victory."

"The law is on our side," said the group's co-president, Annie Laurie Gaylor. "The judge had the courage to make the decision on the merits of the case and not worry about public opinion."

The White House issued a statement last week on Twitter saying: "As he did last year, President Obama intends to recognize a National Day of Prayer."

In 2009, Obama issued a proclamation but did not host the traditional White House observance that his predecessor, George W. Bush, had held while he was president.

The American Center for Justice, which filed a brief in the case supporting the law on behalf of 31 members of Congress, called the decision "flawed" and predicted it could end up before the Supreme Court.

"It is unfortunate that this court failed to understand that a day set aside for prayer for the country represents a time-honored tradition that embraces the First Amendment, not violates it," said chief counsel Jay Sekulow.

The law creating the national observance dates to 1952 and was made more specific in 1988, calling for it to be marked annually on the first Thursday in May. (RNS)

Two men dedicated to serving God & young people

Oneida Baptist family deals with loss of men who faithfully served students

The past few months have been difficult for our students and staff. I wrote earlier about the loss of Gary Garrett on Dec. 10. Garrett and his wife had served the students and mission of this school for nearly 25 years.

While we were dealing with Garrett's death, we discovered that another faithful Oneida servant was diagnosed with cancer. Michael and Denise Spencer came to OBI nearly 18 years ago with their two small children. During the Thanksgiving holiday, Michael did not feel well. It was discovered that he was seriously ill with cancer. On April 5, Spencer went home to be with the Lord he had served all his life.

Spencer originally came to Oneida to be our campus minister, which means being in charge of our daily chapel services. He had a unique vision for the many opportunities to work with the young people who were entrusted to our care. As most of our readers know, OBI does not close its doors to boys and girls who are not Christians. We welcome the opportunity to share the gospel message with young people who often know little or nothing about the Savior's love.

Over the years Spencer's presence became a significant influence on our campus. A new Campus Ministry Center, completed in 1995, provided a wonderful place for our students to experience Christ. For years the large covered porch of the CMC was filled to capacity many evenings with students eager to learn more about Jesus at the feet of one who knew Him very well, Michael Spencer. Before the teach-

ing began, there always were several praise and worship songs sung with the accompaniment of Spencer's guitar.

I personally believe that Spencer also had a unique gift to share the gospel from the pulpit. I believe I know good preaching when I hear it, and Spencer was a skillful preacher of the word. He had a gift to share the message, especially with young people, so that they could understand how God's word applied to their daily lives. He was able to use the daily chapel services to share how God's word related to things that were important to teenagers.

Before long, Spencer found a place of service in the classroom. Teaching Bible, advanced Bible and English classes gave him yet another opportunity to impact the lives of young people. When students did not readily accept all that was being taught, Spencer was able to patiently share the word in such a way that eventually even the most skeptical student could see and understand.

Spencer was loved by his students. Though he confided in me on more than a few occasions that he didn't understand why God didn't use him more with adults, he clearly knew he understood and touched the lives of countless young people.

Garrett and Spencer gave a total of 42 years of service to this ministry. Both of these men will be missed by our students and staff. These two wonderfully gifted men knew the value—and now the reward—of service.

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

This is Oneida



W.F. Underwood

Who's in charge here?

Clear Creek is thankful for all who provide leadership

Did you ever enter a place of business and wonder, "Who is in charge here?" Sometimes it is a negative thing. Maybe you are not attended to as you feel you should be and you want to know who's running the show.

Sometimes it is a positive thing. The Baptist disaster relief workers prepare, deliver and serve hundreds of meals as smoothly as a well-oiled machine. I have watched hundreds of people being fed in such an efficient manner, and I wonder who is in charge. Obviously whoever is in charge is very good at what they do. The

question becomes a compliment. Someone may have, at some time, asked of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, "Who is in charge here?" I would like to say it would have been in a positive manner, but Clear Creek has been training servants of God since 1926. Someone has possibly been upset about something at some time. Someone has undoubtedly asked to speak to the person in charge. Just who would that be? I'm glad you asked.

The student in the classroom might say the professor is in charge. After all, one letter written in a grade book makes the difference be-

tween passing and failing a course. Assignments made by the professor are mandates to the student, and the professor is the authority figure in the classroom.

The professor, however, may point to the academic dean. The professors are accountable to the dean, who is accountable to the president. So some might think I am in charge, but the chart goes beyond the president.

The president takes advice and instruction from the trustees, who are elected by and answer to the Kentucky Baptist Convention. Individual Christians, members of Kentucky Baptist churches, elect the trustees and are two

notches above the president. Enjoy being in charge for a minute and I will add one more line on the chart. Christians have a "built-in" leader, since they are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, who also directs the leadership and the students at Clear Creek—and all of our churches as well. So, do we even need to ask who is really in charge?

Thank you for the leadership you provide to Clear Creek.

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

Clear Creek Chronicle



Donnie Fox

Wall Street Journal and the Bible

Financial 'authorities' focus on vastly different purposes

The Wall Street Journal has a lot to say about the meaning of money in our lives.

The WSJ claims to be a unique publication because it is the country's only national business daily and is put together by the world's largest staff of business, financial and news experts. It has the reputation of being the authoritative word about money matters.

The Bible also has a lot to say about the meaning of money in our lives. It is unique because it was written by those inspired by the ultimate authority, the one and only true God; the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Bible is a perfect treasure of God's instruction and it points us to the absolutely reliable standard by which our conduct is and will be judged.

The focus of the Wall Street Journal is man and his purposes and ways. The focus of the Bible is God and His purposes and ways.

If the WSJ is your source to find meaning in life, you likely will conclude money is the most impor-

tant thing, and you will measure your happiness and success in life by the amount of money you can accumulate in its various forms.

If the Bible is your source to find meaning in life, you will discover the most important thing is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind, and to have no other gods before Him. You also will discover that "no one can serve two masters; either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other; you cannot serve God and money" (Matthew 6:24).

My prayer is you will shift your priorities to enable God to be God of your life. When that happens, your money works for you instead of you working for your money. Your material possessions become the means by which you live, not the end for which you live.

Please give Laurie Valentine and me the privilege to assist you in stewarding that which God has entrusted to you. Call us toll free.

Reprinted from *Western Recorder*, April 29, 2008

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



KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION

Barry Allen



A NATION GRIEVES Mourners in Warsaw reflect on the nation's future after the April 10 airplane crash that claimed the lives of Poland's president and numerous other government and civic leaders. (Photo by Kaylin Bowers)

Polish, U.S. Baptist leaders grieve in wake of tragic Poland plane crash

Warsaw, Poland—"We weep with the weeping," Gustaw Cieslar, president of the Baptist Union of Poland, stated in an e-mail to Baptist Press.

Cieslar answered several questions from BP in the wake of the April 10 airplane crash that claimed the lives of Poland's president and numerous high-ranking officials in one of the greatest losses of national leadership in modern history.

"In all our churches we are praying for the families who suffer the most and for the leadership of our country," said Cieslar, who ministers through churches in several Polish cities.

Two Southern Baptist seminary leaders were in Poland at the time of the tragedy: R. Philip Roberts, president of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo., and Jerry Johnson, the seminary's academic dean.

Johnson told BP April 12 the Polish people are "not only grieving but also thinking about the sudden nature of death. In a country that is well over 90 percent Roman Catholic, most lack assurance of their destiny at death.

"This is an enormous loss for the people of Poland," Roberts added. "Many of the leaders killed in the crash were instrumental in the Solidarity movement. They were the spear point for bringing liberty and democracy to the country.

"There are many in the country asking the question, 'Why?'" Roberts continued. "For the Christians here, there is a great chance to step up and help the people work through their grief and suffering. Now is a time to help them in answering some of life's toughest questions, including

the ones about eternity that often surface when events such as this occur."

Johnson, preaching April 11 to a Baptist congregation in Sopot, the hometown of Poland's prime minister, Donald Tusk, who was not on the ill-fated plane, spoke from Revelation 1:18 in exhorting the worshippers "to look to Jesus as 'the Living One' in time of trouble, who says, 'I was dead, but look—I am alive forever and ever, and I hold the keys of death and Hades.'"

"Southern Baptists should also pray that God will use our Polish brothers and sisters to reach their country with the message of Jesus at this strategic time," Johnson added.

Cieslar, the president of the Baptist Union of Poland who also served as president of the Warsaw Baptist Theological Seminary for 10 years, said the country is in shock, and many people are asking questions about God and now are "more sensitive to the gospel."

"Poles are very religious and they try to find hope in rituals in the churches, which are probably more important to them than searching to find the truth in God's word," Cieslar said. "Without the word of God, it is difficult to find Him personally through Jesus. Without it, a few weeks after this tragedy people will return to the same pattern of life.

"We point to Christ who is the sovereign, whose Kingdom was not shaken by this accident, and that even this accident had a place in His plan," Cieslar noted. (BP)

Compiled from reports by Baptist Press and Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Assessment underway after China quake

Jiegu, China—Southern Baptist disaster relief specialists have mobilized to assess needs in Western China's Qinghai province after a magnitude 6.9 earthquake and several strong aftershocks flattened houses made of mud and wood April 14.

At least 600 people have died and more than 10,000 were injured in the area, according to news reports. Police used shovels to dig through the rubble in one town because excavation equipment was not available, the Associated Press reported. Crews worked to repair a damaged road to the airport so equipment and rescue teams could reach the area. The AP also reported that hospitals were overwhelmed and doctors were in short supply.

Southern Baptists' disaster relief coordinator for the region was working last week to get an assessment team into the area, according to Jeff Palmer, executive director of Baptist Global Response.

Qinghai province is located in Western China, near the border with Tibet, and foreigners usually are not permitted to travel there by the government. Disaster response also would be hampered by the difficulty of reaching the remote area.

"News reports indicate the Chinese government and military are responding," Palmer said. "They were very efficient in responding to the massive disaster in Sichuan."

The quake struck along the same fault line that caused the magnitude-7.9 Sichuan quake two years ago. About 90,000 people died or were missing after that disaster.

Even if Southern Baptist specialists from the United States are unable to travel to the site of this recent quake, "we'll keep monitoring the situation and see if we can send some resources that can be utilized through on-ground contacts in Qinghai," Palmer said.

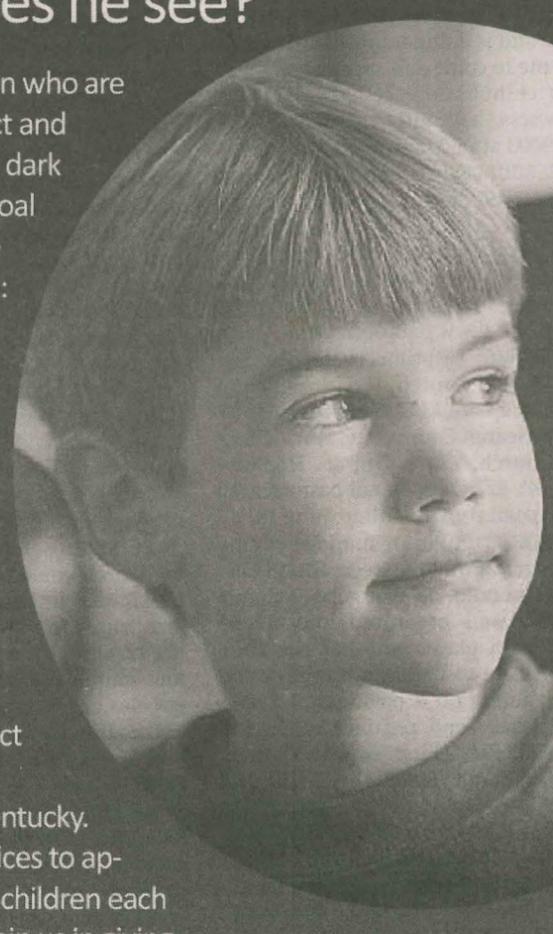
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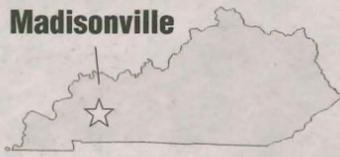
MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

- **BARDWELL**—Mississippi Church will hold revival services April 25-30, 7 p.m., with **C.W. Barnhill**, pastor of Hickory Missionary Church, as evangelist. **Mark Burnett** is pastor.
- **BELTON**—Forest Oak Church recently ordained **Dale Drake** as a deacon.
- **BEREA**—Bethel Church will hold revival services April 25-28, 7 p.m., with **Brian Fossett** as evangelist. **Kenny Davis** is pastor.
- **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Meadowview Church recently honored Pastor **Brent Gupton** for his 30 years in ministry.
- **DAWSON SPRINGS**—**Gary Mitchell** recently resigned as pastor of Beulah Hill Church.
- **HENDERSON**—Cash Creek Church recently called **Nick Clark** as pastor.
- **HICKMAN**—David's Chapel will hold revival services April 26-28, 7 p.m., with **David Gossum**, pastor of New Harmony Church in Clinton, as evangelist. **Charles Southerland** is pastor.
- **LONDON**—**Joe Arnold** recently resigned as pastor of Slate Hill Church.
- **LOUISVILLE**—Highland Park First Church will host in the Beginning, a seminar on the biblical teaching of the origin of the universe led by **Bob Swinson**, director of Creation Science Ministry, April 25-28, 7 p.m. The event is sponsored by several Louisville churches. The event is free and child care will be provided. For more information, call (502) 231-3917.
- Walnut Street Church will host a 35th anniversary celebration of Friendship International Ministry April 21, 9:30 a.m.
- **PIKEVILLE**—Immanuel Church will hold revival services April 25-28 with **Steve Hale** as evangelist. **Sam Crawford** is pastor.
- **RAVENNA**—Williams Memorial Church recently ordained **Charles Blevins** as a deacon. **Paul Hubbs** is pastor.
- **WILLIAMSBURG**—University of the Cumberlands' music department will host a performance of the jazz ensemble April 22, 7:30 p.m., at the Nell Moore Recital Hall on campus, and the chorale and band April 23, 7:30 p.m., at the Kohn Theatre on campus. The performances are free and open to the public. For more information, call the music department at (606) 539-4332.
- **WILLISBURG**—Willisburg Church will hold revival services April 25-28, 7 p.m., with **Travis Ferris** as evangelist. **Jay Hatfield** is pastor.

Spotlight on ...

Madisonville



First Church will celebrate its 140th anniversary April 25 with former pastor **Jim Weaver**, now pastor of First Church in Springfield, Va., as guest speaker. **Joe Leonard** is pastor.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April

- 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 KBC Men's Chorale Concert, Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, Pineville.
- 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.
- 29-5/1 Spring Retreat for Ministry Assistants, Lake Barkley State Resort Park, Cadiz.
- 30 Children's Bible Drill, First Baptist Church, Somerset; Lone Oak First Baptist Church, Paducah.
- 30-5/2 Equestrian Trail Ride, Mammoth Cave National Park.

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

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SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Second Baptist Church, Hopkinsville, Ky. (affiliated with KBC). Send resumés to: Pastor Search Committee, Second Baptist Church, 720 W 7th St., Hopkinsville, KY 42240; or e-mail pastorsearchsbc@gmail.com. Deadline: June 15.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of children and family life (recreation). Candidate should be energetic, self-motivated, well organized and a creative team player who has the ability to relate to children, families and other adults on a personal and spiritual level. Send resumés to Dr. Stephen C. Rice, First Baptist Church, 1516 Midland Trail, Shelbyville, KY 40065; or e-mail to rice@fbcshelbyville.com. Phone: (502) 633-1317. Website: www.fbcshelbyville.com.

SEEKING: Senior pastor for Southside Baptist Church, Princeton, Ky. Candidates should have strong preaching skills, passion for pastoral care, demonstrated ability and a heart for missions and evangelism. Church has three staff members and averages 350 in Sunday school. Send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, PO Box 439, Princeton, KY 42445; or e-mail southside@timesleader.net. Resumés accepted through May 31, 2010.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, Somerset, Ky. Please mail resumé to Pastor Search Committee, 1685 Hwy. 3091, Somerset, KY 42503.

SEEKING: Director of missions for Holston Baptist Association serving the ministry area of Northeast Tennessee. All applicants should mail resumés to DOM Search Committee, 207 University Parkway, Johnson City, TN 37604-7339. Resumés must be received by May 31, 2010.

SEEKING: SBC church youth leader, spiritually mature with heart in service to youth. Approx. 20 flexible hours per week. Youth leadership experience required. Will plan, organize and implement comprehensive youth ministry to help lead youth to salvation and develop Christian growth; maintain guidance/working relationship with pastor; integrate youth into life of church; lead volunteer workser. Contact us: Tunnel Hill Baptist Church, 734 Tunnel Hill Church Road, Elizabethtown, KY 42701; Attn: Youth Leader Position Inquiry. (270) 737-8120. Visit www.tunnelhill.org, click on "email form" under "Contact Us"; enter your e-mail address; in Subject, enter "Youth Leader Position Inquiry"; add message and click "Send Email."

SEEKING: Senior pastor. The pastor search committee of Victory Baptist Church in Lexington, Ky., a Southern Baptist congregation, is accepting resumés for a senior pastor. Resumés should be sent to pastorsearch@vbclex.org by June 1, 2010; or mailed to the church office at 2261 Armstrong Mill Road, Lexington, KY 40515, Attn: Pastor Search.

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.

TOURS: Ten-day Holyland tour departing Nov. 8. Contact Pastor Jack Studie for a color brochure at jstudie@aol.com; or (270) 889-7604.

KBC to provide training event for church planters

Louisville—Kentucky Baptist church leaders who are involved in or interested in starting new churches are invited to attend the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Basic Training Journey for Church Planters, May 11-13 at the Kentucky Baptist Building in Louisville.

The training event is sponsored by the KBC and the North American Mission Board.

Participants will gain basic skills and explore strategic issues of the church planting process. Participants also will learn how to lay out a church planting plan customized to fit their needs.

"This training is foundational for anyone involved in or interested in getting involved in church planting," said Larry Baker, interim team leader for the KBC's missions growth team. "We aim to provide practical assistance for those doing this important work and to network them with others in the same situation."

Discussion topics will include vision, master plan, leadership development, core groups, administrative issues, mileposts and more.

The event is open to church planting teams, individual church planters and their spouses, sponsoring or partnering church leadership, and anyone considering starting a new work.

Cost is \$35 per person with a maximum of \$180 per team. Registration deadline is April 30. To register visit www.KyBaptist.org/BasicTraining, call (502) 489-3528, or toll free in Kentucky at (866) 489-3528.

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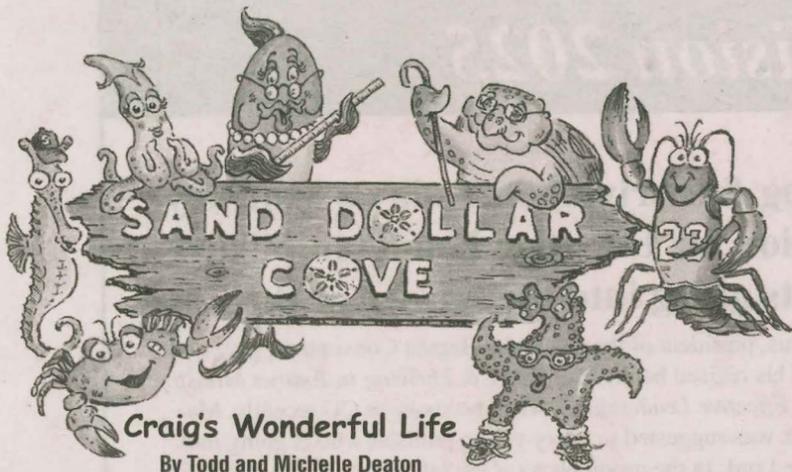
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Craig's Wonderful Life

By Todd and Michelle Deaton

One school day, Mrs. Tuna Tidewater asked her class to make some posters. "Find pictures of things for which you are thankful," she instructed.

Most of the class worked hard, except for Craig Crab. He did not cut out any pictures.

"Craig, why aren't you making a poster?" she asked.

"I can't think of anything," Craig replied.

Mrs. Tidewater told Craig to finish his poster at home. "Surely you can think of one thing for which you are thankful," she said.

All afternoon, Craig played basketball with Lenny Lobster. After supper, he went to his room. He tried to think of something he was thankful for, but nothing came to mind. "I'm so tired. I'll do this later," he yawned, and in a few minutes, he was fast asleep.

Suddenly, everything seemed different. He walked to his closet to dress for school. Only one outfit was hanging there. It was the same one he had worn yesterday.

"Mom, where are all my clothes?" he asked.

"That's all you have, dear," Craig's mom said.

Craig shrugged, put on the outfit, and went downstairs for breakfast. He poured a bowl of Frosted Flukes. "Where's the milk?" he asked.

"We don't have any," his mom said. "You'll just have to eat dry cereal."

"Dry?"

Craig replied, puzzled.

"Hurry, or you'll be late for school," urged his mom.

Craig ran outside and began looking for his bike. It wasn't there.

"Have you seen my bike?" Craig asked Seamore Seahorse.

"You don't have a bike," Seamore replied.

"I do, too. I rode it home yesterday," Craig insisted.

"No, you didn't," Seamore said. "We always walk home from school together."

"This is strange," Craig thought, scratching his shell.

As they walked up the steps into the school, Craig saw that the door was off its hinges, most of the windows were cracked, the grass was high and some of the swings were missing.

"Do you see anything wrong?" Craig asked.

"No, it looks like it always does," Seamore said.

Craig shrugged and went inside. Mrs. Tidewater gave a picture to her students to color. Craig reached into his desk for a marker. They weren't there.

"Hey, where are my markers?" he whined.

Mrs. Tidewater set a bucket of markers on her desk, and Craig pulled out a nearly dried-up, red one "This is just great," he whined.

"What's wrong, Craig?" Mrs. Tidewater asked.

"I don't understand," Craig whined. "What happened to my clothes, the milk for my cereal, my bike, our school?" he listed.

"Yesterday, you couldn't think of one thing for which you were thankful," Mrs. Tidewater said. "Have you changed your mind?"

"Yes, Mrs. Tidewater, I can think of lots of things!" he exclaimed.

At that moment, the alarm clock rang and Craig awoke. "Whew! It was only a bad dream," he sighed. "I'd better start on my poster."



Treasure Hunt

Why did Craig Crab not make a poster?
How did He find out that he had a wonderful life?
What changed during his dream?
For what are you thankful?
Read Psalm 100 together.

For Heaven's Sake



Preacher's Kids



Bible Crosswords

Across

- 1 Christian disciple from Joppa who was known for her charity (Acts 9:36-43)
- 6 Resurrection day
- 10 Sixth Jewish month (Nehemiah 6:15)
- 11 Jesus did not give this to Pilate (John 19:9)
- 12 In the direction of
- 13 Derisive wit that attacks evil
- 15 A priest placed blood on the tips of these (Leviticus 14:14)
- 18 Dog noise
- 19 Laughter noise
- 20 "The valley of the shadow of _____" (Psalms 23:4)
- 21 Live
- 22 Noah's boat
- 24 What John did to the little book given to him by the angel (Revelation 10:10)
- 25 Eagle (Leviticus 11:18)
- 27 The son of Ikkesh (2 Samuel 23:26)
- 28 Expressing gratitude
- 31 Ceremonial act
- 32 "Wilt thou break a _____ driven to and fro?" (Job 13:25)
- 33 In order that
- 35 Up to now
- 36 "May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the _____, and length, and depth, and height" (Ephesians 3:18)
- 39 "This is the _____ which the Lord hath made" (Psalms 118:24)
- 41 Absence or closure of a natural body passage
- 44 "I shall _____ thee wisdom" (Job 33:33)

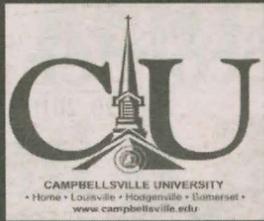
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48	49					50		51		
52			53						54	

- 46 The Lord makes us do this in green pastures
- 48 To act properly
- 50 "_____ Lord God! behold, thou hast made the heaven and earth" (Jeremiah 32:17)
- 51 "They sought to _____ hold on him" (Mark 12:12)
- 52 Edward, for short
- 53 One does this on the seventh day of the week
- 54 Feminine pronoun

- 17 "For every one that _____ shall be cut off" (Zechariah 5:3)
- 19 Esau was, but Jacob wasn't
- 21 Pleads
- 23 Part of the children of Zebulun's inheritance (Joshua 19:15-16)
- 25 "Covet earnestly the best _____" (1 Corinthians 12:31)
- 26 Opposite of out
- 29 "The day of the Lord is _____" (Obadiah 1:15)
- 30 Location of the water of Meribah (Numbers 27:14)
- 34 Amorite king (Deuteronomy 31:4)
- 37 Contests of speed
- 38 "The mountains and the _____ shall break forth before you into singing" (Isaiah 55:12)
- 40 Paul continued a _____ and a half at Corinth (Acts 18:11)
- 42 The father of Rizpah, Saul's concubine (2 Samuel 3:7)
- 43 President Lincoln, for short
- 45 Address abbreviation
- 47 "Mine _____ affecteth mine heart" (Lamentations 3:51)
- 49 Edwin for short
- 50 In this way

Last week's solution

1	C	2	A	3	N	4	A	5	C	6	A	7	P	8	S	9	T	10	A	R
12	O	R	E	N	O	U	R	13	H	14	I	R	A	N	E					
15	P	E	S	O	U	R	E	16	U	17	A	M	A	N						
18	A	S	T	O	N	I	S	19	H	20	M	E	N	T						
21	H	I	T					22	E	E										
23	N	A	V	E	L			24	A	N	N			25	W	I	N			
26	E	V	E	R				27	G	A	T			28	D	A	R	A		
29	T	A	X					30	I	R	A			31	J	E	S	U	S	
32	A	R	I					33	B	E	L									
34	C	O	N	F				35	C	A	T			36	O	N				
37	A	L	O	T				38	L	A	B			39	G	N	A	T		
40	M	I	N	E				41	E	N	E			42	H	E	M	I		
43	P	O	O	R				44	D	E	L			45	T	R	E	S		



Preparing Christian Servant Leaders Through Vision 2025



Helping young pastors



“Surviving & Thriving in Today’s Ministry, Prescription for Effective Leadership” given to students going into the service of the Lord

< Dr. Don Mathis, president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, gave and signed copies of his revised book, “*Surviving & Thriving in Today’s Ministry, Prescription for Effective Leadership*,” when he spoke at CU recently. Mathis said his book was suggested to every young minister who is going into the service of the Lord. In the group photo at top left are, from left: Dr. John Hurtgen, dean of the CU School of Theology; President Michael V. Carter; Mathis; Dr. Ted Taylor, director of CU’s leadership/character development institute and pastor of Columbia Baptist Church; Rev. John Chowning, vice president for church and external relations and executive assistant to the president and pastor of Saloma Baptist Church; Rev. Ed Pavy, director of Campus Ministries; Dr. Skip Alexander, pastor, Campbellsville Baptist Church.

< At left CU student Sean Stengl of LaGrange, Ky., has his book signed by Dr. Mathis. Stengl, of Westport Road Baptist Church in Louisville, credits Dr. Chip Pendleton, pastor of Westport Road Baptist Church, as his mentor.

Spring break students on missions

Many Campbellsville University students spent their spring breaks helping everywhere they could. Small groups traveled throughout Kentucky helping churches with their “*Find it Here*” campaign. Others went to locations including Dearborn, Mich., where students worked with missionaries in the largest Muslim community in America; Atlanta, Ga., Charleston, S.C., and Gainesville, Fla., where students did inner city work; and to Costa Rica where they backpacked through the Conte Reservation doing house testimonies and showing Christian movies. These groups are sponsored by CU’s Baptist Campus Ministry (BCM). The mission trip to Costa Rica was also commissioned by Campbellsville Baptist Church. A team sponsored by SportsReach, a Christian sports ministry, traveled to Florida to play softball at various prisons.

Those going on the mission trips included:

- GPS Team (various locations throughout Kentucky) – Deborah Dean, team leader, of Rising Sun, Md.; Kim Baker of Louisville, Ky.; Joe Harris of Calhoun, Ky.; Sasaki Takayuki of Japan; and Tomo Suko of Japan.
- Dearborn – Bonnie Boulware of Radcliff, Ky.; Jinhua Li of China; Lindsay Bramble of West Point, Ky.; Kristina Wallace of Hopkinsville, Ky.; Chris Clan of Elizabethtown, Ky.; Zhixin Chen of China; Ashley Abner of Glasgow, Ky.; Rebekah Bess of Owenton, Ky.; and Hillary Anderson of Campbellsville.
- Atlanta, Charleston and Gainesville – Alan Haven, team leader, of Shelbyville, Ky.; Chris Price of Campbellsville; Drew Simpson of Hodgenville, Ky.; Kenton Hallinan of Louisville; and Reyn Judd of Greensburg, Ky.
- Costa Rica – Rev. Ed Pavy, team leader, director of campus ministries at CU; Garrett Baker of Bowling Green, Ky.; David Johnson of Campbellsville; Brian House of Madisonville, Ky.; Spencer Adams of Marion, Ohio; Logan Hazelwood of Salvisa, Ky.; Trevor Ervin of Glasgow; and Britt Craddock of Harrodsburg, Ky.
- The SportsReach team was led by Jim Hardy, assistant football coach at CU. The students on this team included: Calvin Bini of Radcliff, Ky.; Jeffery Demary of Columbia, S.C.; Lincoln (Bubba) Lawless of Campbellsville; A.J. Brown of Pelham, Ala.; Lorenzo Hines of Fort Belvoir, Va.; Stan Warrenhuffman of Cincinnati, Ohio; Cody Wills of Junction City, Ky.; Henri Baynham-Baker of Elizabethtown; and Patrick Henry of Bishopville, S.C.

For more information about mission trips, contact the Office of Campus Ministries at 270.789.5227 or e-mail jstansbury@campbellsville.edu.

Tiger Prayer Ministry

Four students have launched a prayer ministry for students and faculty at CU with a mission of turning a class assignment into something that will help others for much longer than one semester. All are members of CU’s FIRST CLASS where students are assigned a Servant Leadership project.



TPM project developers are, from left: Kaylynn Best, Harrodsburg, Ky.; Erin Alston, Campbellsville; Carri Hunt, Mt. Vernon, Ky.; and Maribeth Milburn, Lawrenceburg, Ky. Prayers can be e-mailed to: tigerprayerministry@gmail.com.



The “*Find it Here*” rally at CU included Dr. Skip Alexander, Campbellsville Baptist Church pastor, and the church choir; Rev. Michael Goodwin, Salem Baptist Church pastor, top left and right photos; below, left, Dr. Ross Bauscher from the KBC; and below right, Rev. Kyle Franklin, Mt. Roberts



Baptist Church pastor and CU staff member. CU Baptist Campus Ministry students visited every residence hall room on campus to share *Find it Here* literature and to invite every CU student to church for Easter Sunday.



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