

Shine
like
stars
in the
world
Philippians 2:15

WESTERN Recorder

July 13, 2010
Vol. 184, No. 26

FOR THE RECORD

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and on



Sam Neace of Kiddville Baptist Church in Winchester drops a box of toothpaste into a hospitality bag of everyday hygiene items that will be handed out by the Affiliated International Ministries group to the hundreds of groomers that will be working at the World Equestrian Games this fall. The worldwide equine event will be held at the Kentucky Horse Park in Lexington Sept. 25-Oct. 10. (Photo by Drew Nichter)

'More Than Gold'

AIM, students team up to prep for World Equestrian Games

By Drew Nichter
News Director

Lexington—With just about two and a half months before the start of the country's largest-ever equine event, ministries surrounding the World Equestrian Games also are ramping up.

Last week, a group of nearly 50 Kentucky Baptists—most of them students—gathered at Georgetown College for a different kind of mission project.

"So, you're just going to come to Georgetown and you're going to

do whatever somebody needs you to do," was how LaRaine Rice described last week's "ministry preparation" project.

Rice is the volunteer coordinator for Affiliated International Ministries, an ecumenical group of churches and organizations conducting a variety of ministries before, during and after the World Equestrian Games.

The event, to be held Sept. 25-Oct. 10 at Lexington's Kentucky Horse Park, is expected to attract upwards of 600,000 spectators. As many as

500 athletes and 600 horses will compete in this year's games.

A crowd that large requires a great deal of preparation for officials at the World Equestrian Games. AIM has been instrumental in making that process go much smoother.

"I could throw anything out there to (AIM) and ... they're like, 'We're on it,'" said Melissa Gamble, volunteer services manager for the World Equestrian Games.

□ See *Ky. Baptist teens ... Page 3*

Church attendance up since '08, Gallup says

Washington—A new Gallup Poll found that Americans' self-reported church attendance has increased slightly since 2008.

When asked "How often do you attend church, synagogue or mosque?" 43.1 percent of Americans in 2010 said they attended church "at least once a week" or "almost every week." That's up from 42.8 percent in 2009 and 42.1 percent in 2008.

Researchers previously believed that church attendance rises when economic times are bad. The Gallup data, however, indicates that the opposite may be happening.

"There has been well-publicized speculation about the possibility that church attendance has risen over the past two years as Americans became more despondent and worried as a result of the economic recession," Frank Newport of Gallup wrote. "However, trends ... reflect just the opposite pattern, with both church attendance and economic confidence increasing from 2008 to 2009, and now into 2010."

Demographic breakdown

Conservatives, non-Hispanic blacks and Republicans demonstrated the highest church participation, with 55 percent of each group reporting frequent church attendance. Liberals and young adults (ages 18 to 29) rounded out the bottom, with 27 and 35 percent respectively.

In its report, Gallup said "the small increase in attendance between 2008 and so far in 2010 is statistically significant, suggesting that there has in fact been an uptick in religious service participation in the real world" over the last two and a half years. (RNS)

Louisville church develops heart for unreached people groups

Editor's note: This is the first in a two-part series on Kentucky Baptist churches adopting unreached people groups. Part two will appear in next week's issue of the Western Recorder.

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

Louisville—With an average weekly attendance of 300, Hunsinger Lane Baptist Church is far from a megachurch. But the Louisville congregation isn't letting size deter it from adopting an unreached people group (UPG) on the Indonesian island of Sumatra.

While it had its origins at last summer's Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting, the project still is unfolding.

The latest step involves two college-age members who left for a nine-week teaching and fact-finding mission in early June.

They will be followed in late July by a team con-

sisting of Pastor Charlie Davis, education minister Brian Nichter and mission team member Kory Capps.

A student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Capps said he and his family hope to pursue a post-graduation call to Sumatra through the International Mission Board.

After the two summer trips, the church will determine what UPG it wants to adopt.

"I feel really passionate about it," said Elizabeth Davis, the pastor's daughter, who currently is in Sumatra. "If every church across the U.S. did that, I think we would ultimately be fulfilling the Great Commission."

Pastor Davis traces the undertaking to the 2009 SBC convention, where he heard a pastor from South Carolina describe how God called his church to target a UPG.

"I believe God spoke to me," Davis said of the in-

spiration. "I had felt led for several years to think about a different approach. To fulfill the Great Commission, we needed to be more targeted."

After returning home, he shared those feelings with several mission team members and leaders. After receiving a positive reaction, he invited Phil Nelson, an IMB regional representative, to meet with the mission team last fall. Ironically, last July, Davis started a term on IMB's board of directors, service which would bring him a greater awareness of the agency's resources.

"As a local pastor, I didn't even know the IMB had regional representatives to serve pastors," Davis noted. "I had never heard of any pastors having these people in."

Nelson helped explain the make-up of UPGs (generally defined as a population with less than two percent evangelical Christians) and coach

□ See *Congregation exploring mission ... Page 2*

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, July 14



EYES OF THE WORLD Photos of people from around the world line the walls of Hunsinger Lane Baptist Church's sanctuary. The Louisville church is exploring the adoption of an unreached people group on the Indonesian island of Sumatra. (submitted photo)

Congregation exploring mission opportunities with unreached groups

Continued from page 1

them about the adoption process.

That meeting has been followed by a series of incidents that Davis said can only be described as God leading the church to pursue this course.

They include the fact that Nelson's assignment recently was changed; he now devotes his time to helping mobilize U.S. churches to reach people on Sumatra.

Among others:

- Two former Hunsinger Lane Baptist members now with the IMB have been assigned to engage UPGs on Sumatra.

- Another couple with strong ties to the church recently moved from the Philippines to Sumatra, where he teaches theology.

- A couple who spent the past six years as missionaries to the island, but had to retire for health reasons, have joined the church. Herb and Debbie Ewers have been leading training sessions to help prepare members for service there.

- Davis has met pastors from three other Southern Baptist churches who are reaching out to Sumatra and are interesting in forming partnerships.

"One thing Nelson told us in determining what people group to adopt was to look for connections," Davis said. "If we have people sent out who are focused on reaching UPGs, why wouldn't you partner with them? It makes sense."

Sumatra is fertile ground for the gospel, with 52 of the 53 people groups on the island of 40 million largely not reached by the gospel, Nelson pointed out.

The affinity connections strategist said more than 90 percent of the people there identify with the Muslim religion.

In adoption, a church is saying that it will help new believers understand what it takes to help a congregation grow up and establish a presence, Nelson explained.

Hunsinger Lane's project has drawn considerable support from young adults. In addition to collegians Elizabeth Davis and Melanie Nichter, two members of the mission team are age 29—Capps and Josh Frankel.

Capps said he and his wife, Elizabeth, originally sensed God placing Indonesia on their hearts as students at Northwest College in Minneapolis.

The seminarian said he used to see a call to missions as a personal endeavor but now appreciates how it involves the local church.

"We want to be on board with what God is doing at Hunsinger Lane," Capps said.

Awareness of the project is just spreading through the church after Davis completed a four-week sermon series about it in mid-June.

Although new to most members, Capps said it already has made a deep impact on him.

"The more I started looking into it, I thought how wise it was using available resources and engaging the church in reaching UPGs," Capps said. "It's the difference between a shotgun and a laser. So often missions are short term, but there's no vibrant connection with what's going on."

The primary task Hunsinger Lane Baptist will pursue in the coming year is helping start churches, as well as informing other Kentucky Baptists of the opportunities before them, Davis said.

"I've been a pastor for 28 years and I never thought that my local congregation could reach a people group—that we could take the gospel to the nations and send out teams," Davis said. "That was huge for me. This is a real possibility."



FUN TIMES AT CAMP CentriKid campers play a game on the Stapp Lawn on the Campbellsville University campus. There have been three CentriKid camps held at the school this summer, in addition several other Christian camp weeks. (Photo by Ashley Holt/Campbellsville University)

Campbellsville Univ. hosts summer camps

By Ashley Holt
Campbellsville University

Campbellsville—The Campbellsville University campus is the host of several Christian camps this summer, including several in which Campbellsville students are participating.

CentriKid is an example of such a camp. Established by LifeWay Christian Resources, the camp is designed for children in first through sixth grades. Kids play games, do Bible studies and attend worship services during the weeklong camp.

West Smith served as the camp director for the second of three CentriKid camps and a training camp held on the Campbellsville University campus this summer.

"It's an opportunity to bring you out of your comfort zone, and to make an important impact on the lives of these kids," he said. "You have to love kids and endure long days, but it's amazing to meet people from all over, some of whom have become my best friends."

Smith's team generally has around 150 campers. He said they usually witness anywhere from eight to 10 campers make decision for Jesus Christ.

The Fellowship of Christian Athletes' leadership camp

is another Christian camp taking place at Campbellsville this summer. This year is the camp's 18th. It came to the Campbellsville campus for the first time last year.

Students come from all around the region to participate. They typically are interested in becoming better leaders for Christ on their sports teams and in their schools.

Steve Wigginton is the FCA director for middle and high schools in the Louisville area. "FCA is such an important organization. The more students and people in general that we can train with leadership skills the better," he said.

Kentucky Heartland Outreach is a missions camp sponsored by Campbellsville University that focuses primarily on Central Kentucky.

André Tomaz, a recent Campbellsville graduate, is serving as the camp director for KHO this summer.

"It's awesome working with KHO and seeing people come to know the Lord," he said. "We're here to minister to these campers and to the homeowners. So far we've witnessed over 30 salvations."

"No amount of work that we do during the day compares to the work God is doing through KHO."

BSK to relocate to Georgetown College campus

Georgetown—The Baptist Seminary of Kentucky, an 8-year-old theological partner of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, is moving to the campus of Georgetown College.

Launched in 2002 at Calvary Baptist Church in Lexington, Baptist Seminary of Kentucky has since 2005 rented space on the campus of Lexington Theological Seminary, which is affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The seminary began looking for a new location last year when Lexington Seminary indicated it likely would downsize and move out of its campus in downtown Lexington.

Baptist Seminary of Kentucky will remain independent from Georgetown College, while leasing space and sharing resources like a 55,000-square-foot library completed in 1998. Georgetown President William Crouch told the Louisville Courier-Journal that while it is a business relationship, "we look at it as if we've added them to our family."

The first Baptist college founded west of the Allegheny mountains,

Georgetown College traces its history to an academy started in 1787 by a Baptist minister named Elijah Craig. In 1942 the college entered into an agreement with the Kentucky Baptist Convention that allowed the state convention to elect the school's trustees.

Georgetown trustees voted in 2005 to revert to a self-perpetuating board of trustees, saying that for fundraising purposes the college needed the freedom to include non-Baptist trustees. A new agreement called for phasing out KBC funding of Georgetown over four years and assured that at least 75 percent of the school's board of trustees would be Kentucky Baptists.

The agreement said that Georgetown would remain an "officially sanctioned entity" in relationship with the KBC; that Georgetown students could receive KBC scholarships; and that Georgetown and the KBC would jointly hire and fund a campus minister position.

KBC Executive Director Bill Mackey told the Western Recorder last

week he and other convention representatives plan to speak with President Crouch about the seminary's move to the Georgetown campus and how it "might impact the memorandum of ministry partnership" between the two.

Mackey declined to make any further comments until a meeting had taken place, only saying, "It is my hope that this ministry partnership can continue to serve the purposes of both entities in the future."

Remodeling is underway while funds are being raised for new offices for seminary faculty near the center of Georgetown's campus. Fall semester classes for the seminary will be offered in August.

Baptist Seminary of Kentucky enrolled 53 full- and part-time students in the most recent academic year.

In addition to the move, Baptist Seminary of Kentucky recently was granted associate-member status by the Association of Theological Schools. (ABP)

With additional reporting by News Director Drew Nichter.

The Widow's Mite

Haitian church gives 2 years' wages for earthquake relief

By Margaret Dempsey-Colson
Florida Baptist Convention

Port-de-Paix, Haiti—A Baptist church in Northern Haiti has made an unprecedented gift of 20,000 gourdes—\$506—to aid in the recovery from the Jan. 12 earthquake.

The gift, though small by some standards, is the equivalent of about two years' wages in the Haitian economy.

"Too often we look at the size of the gift, not the size of the sacrifice," said Dennis Wilbanks, Florida Baptists' associate director of partnership missions. "I was so moved that I could not believe this was actually happening."

The gift from members of Nazarene Baptist Church in Port-de-Paix on Northern Haiti's Atlantic coast is the first time a Haitian congregation has given funds "to distribute as we see fit," Wilbanks said, adding that he is accustomed to receiving numerous requests for financial aid from the impoverished Haitians but was surprised by the unexpected no-strings-attached gift.

On a recent trip to Haiti, Wilbanks, along with Tennessee pastor Steve Nelson and Jean Louis Otandieu, director of missions in Haiti's Northwest Baptist Association, visited the church to thank leaders personally for the sacrificial gift.

"After crossing five rivers and the roughest road I have ever traversed, we finally arrived at the church site," Wilbanks said. "When I saw the building, I was completely at a loss. I could not believe that the congregation that meets in this building could ever raise those kinds of funds, much less even con-

sider giving them."

With a dirt floor, walls of white mud packed onto rough-hewn wooden planks and a metal roof, the church building belies its members' spirit of selflessness and generosity.

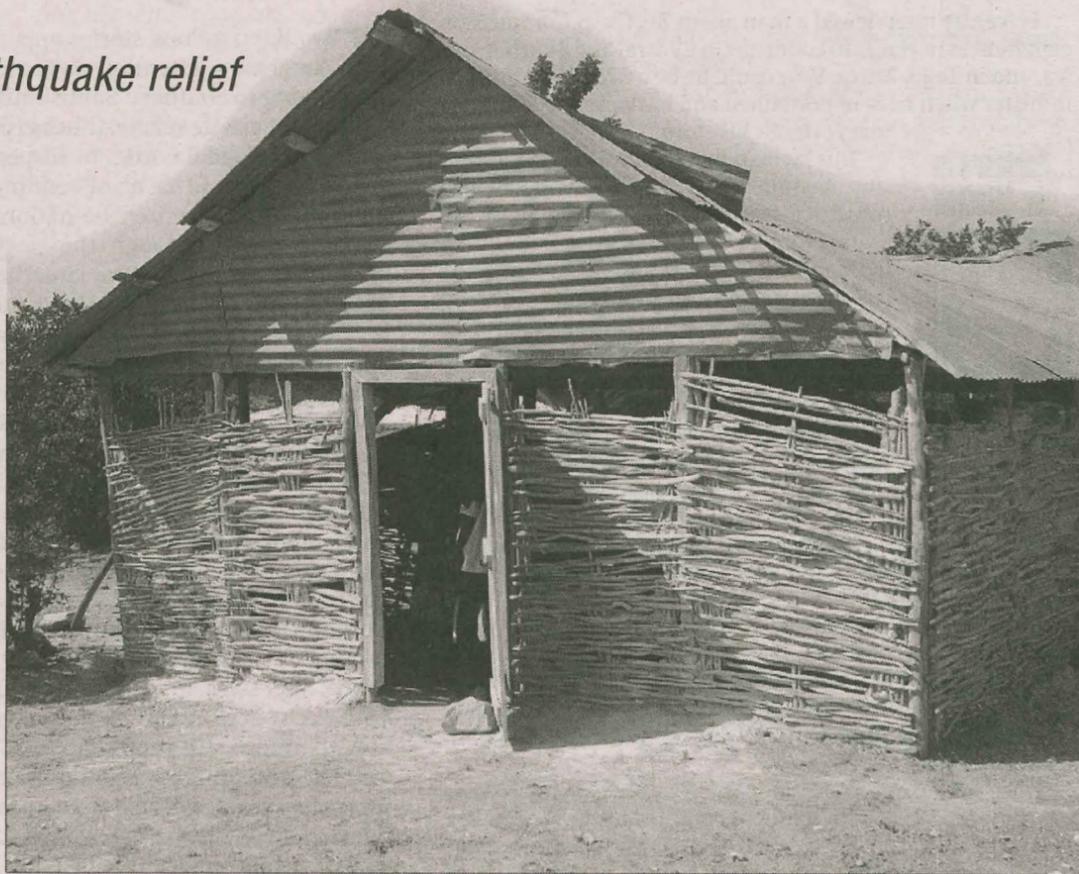
On a typical Sunday, Pastor Pierre Cenervil, a father of 10, preaches to about 130 Haitians, many of whom walk long distances for worship. Cenervil explained to Wilbanks that the church has been praying for a "stronger facility, with chalkboards and benches, so that they could have a school," a desperate need in the area.

Still, having seen what the Confraternite Missionnaire Baptiste d'Haiti convention and Florida Baptists have done for Haiti during the past 15 years and saying that Florida Baptists "have been there when no one else seemed to care," the pastor led his church to look beyond its own need, Wilbanks said.

Cenervil said he wanted the financial gift to "help the poor people of Port-au-Prince who lost everything in the earthquake." Although his own church has dire needs, he said his congregants needed "to be obedient to God and that this was the right thing to do to give the money to CMBH for the disaster relief effort."

The gift, Wilbanks said, signifies the maturing of the church in Haiti "from a people who are only recipients to a people who are givers." He said he believes the church has set an example and standard for other churches in Haiti "to mature to the place of giving without expectations of receiving something in return."

"This church is an example of a



small, impoverished church partnering with others to increase its impact through a collective gift," said Wilbanks, who emphasized that "faithfulness and obedience are more important than a token gift given out of abundance."

The gospel message in Haiti after the earthquake continues to be a miracle, both in the number of new converts won to Christ and the planting of new churches across the island nation, Florida Baptist Convention Executive Director John Sullivan said.

"This is one of the most amaz-

ing displays of the grace of God in redemption that we know," Sullivan said. "This is the most amazing display of redemption with which the Florida Baptist Convention has been involved."

Sullivan credited all other Southern Baptist state conventions for their roles in the evangelistic harvest, saying it was "the most amazing display of cooperation among state conventions that I have been a part of in my years in Florida. Their churches share in the victories because of their financial support, mission teams, prayers and encouragement." (BP)

EXAMPLE OF SACRIFICE
The building of Nazarene Baptist Church in Port-de-Paix, Haiti, belies the 130-member congregation's sacrificial giving for earthquake relief. (Photo by Steven Nelson/Florida Baptist Convention)

Ky. Baptist teens serve others ahead of equestrian games

MOMENT OF PRAYER
LaRaine Rice (center), volunteer coordinator for Affiliated International Ministries, is joined in prayer by Dawna Clark (left) from Central Baptist Church in Lawrenceburg and Connie Wise from Liberty Baptist Church in Campbellsville before assembling hospitality bags filled with everyday personal hygiene items for grooms at this fall's World Equestrian Games. Each of the bags has AIM's colorful "More Than Gold" logo, which provides AIM volunteers with a means for sharing the gospel with others, something AIM coordinators say will happen often during the Sept. 25-Oct. 10 games. (Photo by Drew Nichter)



Continued from page 1

Groups of nine Kentucky Baptist churches participated in last week's AIM-sponsored mission project. Working Monday through Friday mostly at the Kentucky Horse Park, the mission team of primarily high school students learned that summer missions isn't just about leading backyard Bible clubs or repairing houses.

"Anything they asked us to do is what we did," said Rice, who also is the youth and college consultant for Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union.

Jobs included cleaning the seats at the horse park's indoor and outdoor arenas, painting fences, pulling weeds and picking up cigarette butts—most of the time in temperatures exceeding 90 degrees.

"I think it gives them a humbling experience to know that servants get down in a lowly place," said Pastor Rick Clark, who brought a group of four boys—all of them young Christians eager to learn about missions.

"We feel like this is getting them started on the right track to do missions early in their lives," he said.

Last Thursday, the mission team detoured from their horse park duties to work inside a warehouse filling hospitality bags for the hundreds of grooms who will be working at the World Equestrian Games.

Gamble came up with the idea as a way to do something nice for the games' "unsung heroes."

The grooms "come in-way before the teams

and they take care of the horses night and day," she said. "They're the ones that are out in the mud and the cold and the dark."

The gender-specific bags were packed with a number of everyday personal hygiene items such as toothpaste, deodorant and washcloths.

Each bag has AIM's "More Than Gold" logo, a five-color horseshoe design that helps AIM volunteers share the gospel with others.

During the games, the "More Than Gold" emblem will be prominently displayed on AIM volunteers' T-shirts and on trading pins, which have become popular souvenirs at worldwide sporting events like the World Equestrian Games and the Olympics.

Each project participant was given a "More Than Gold" pin and encouraged to give it away—along with a gospel presentation.

At Georgetown College, where the mission team stayed, Rice said some team members used the pins to share the gospel with Georgetown students working at the cafeteria.

"They've been very intentional about remembering even when they're on the college campus, it's a mission field, too," she noted.

Pastor Clark said his students realized that cleaning the horse park's arena seats was something they could do at their own high school football stadium, praying over each seat in the process.

"They realized they were to pray for the people that were going to sit in those seats," Clark said. "It kind of brought it home to them."

Great Commission minister

I recently interviewed a man about his Great Commission experiences in Haiti, 10 countries in Central and South America, and in Togo, Africa. How could he be a Great Commission minister when he is not ordained and has never been to seminary? Here's his story.

Partners in the Mission



By Bill Mackey

This layman first got involved in partnership missions in 1985 in Haiti and helped construct five chapels over the next five years. From 1992-95, he served as an International Service Corps missionary with the International Mission Board in Brazil. There he participated in the building of 103 mission chapels in the state of Minas Gerais.

While a chapel was being built, hundreds of people would respond to the showing of the "JESUS" film. Construction team members rotated doing door-to-door witnessing, school visitation and home Bible studies. The layman said it was gratifying to see the spiritual growth of team members, some of whom responded as career missionaries, and to see thousands make decisions for Christ.

He said one of the most heart-rending projects he worked on involved the construction of a chapel in a very poor and rocky remote area known as Jequitihonha—"The Valley of Death." A precious lady there had prayed 11 years for a church building. Three chapels were built within 12 miles by teams that week.

Once his formal work with the IMB ended, this layman continued to work with national conventions in various Brazilian states and in the Central and South American countries of Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Honduras, Venezuela, Nicaragua, Panama, Guatemala and Mexico, as well as in Togo, Africa. This servant of Christ was not a formal student of culture, but he has learned the culture in various countries by working with the people.

And to help pass this missionary spirit on to future generations, he has taken seven teenagers from his local church on mission trips. His grandsons also have accompanied him on several mission trips. He has five more mission trips scheduled before the end of this year.

I share this man's story to draw attention to the fact that although many Southern Baptists have spent the last two years talking and blogging about the Great Commission, thousands of laypeople like him have been living out the Great Commission for most of their lives.

This man's passion is expressed in the sign that is placed over the door of each church that he helps build, "Only Jesus Christ Saves, Acts 4:12." This Great Commission minister is the real deal. He sold a successful construction business in Charlotte, N.C., and overcame personal challenges to go to Brazil. I am greatly challenged and inspired by his Great Commission spirit and commitment.

He is my brother, Ronnie Mackey. Ronnie still lives in the rural community where we grew up, but he has the world on his heart.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Growing 'Great Commission eyes'

Two Baptist Press stories appearing in this issue caught my attention as examples of sacrificial giving to Southern Baptist missions causes.

The first article relates the decision of First Baptist Church, Springdale, Ark., to suspend its weekly television ministry in favor of sending more money to "seeing the nations come to Christ through the work of Southern Baptists." The church's pastor, Ronnie Floyd, says that serving as chairman of the Southern Baptist Convention's Great Commission Resurgence Task Force this past year has "so changed my life and ministry perspective." Certainly, Floyd, who has been vocal in urging pastors of other large churches to increase their Cooperative Program support, is putting himself on the line by making good on his promises to increase CP giving from the church that he serves. (See full story on page 6.)

While the total CP giving of the Springdale congregation, which averages about 6,300 in worship attendance, increases to about \$500,000—approximately 3.7 percent of its undesignated receipts of \$13.37 million—the move still represents a 25 percent increase over the preceding year and more than double what it gave two years ago. That is a commendable step, particularly since the increase comes at a time when the church cut its budget by \$600,000.

Much has been said in press conferences, columns and blogs in recent months concerning the desire to see a Great Commission resurgence. The task force's report affirms the Cooperative Program as the "preferred conduit of Great Commission funding" and "the most effective and efficient means of channeling the sacrificial support of our churches." And what Southern Baptists need now is for worthy examples to arise among the leaders of our national and state conventions in increasing support for cooperative missions endeavors. Indeed, grand words ring hollow when sacrificial commitment does not follow.

The other article comes from a small congregation in a completely different part of our world—a third-world country devastated by a recent earthquake. Nazarene Baptist Church in Northern Haiti recently gave 20,000 gourdes, or about \$500, to be used to "help the poor people of Port-au-Prince who lost everything in the earthquake." Admittedly, the gift doesn't sound that remarkable to most American ears, but the amount represents about two-years' wages for the average Haitian. (See full article on page 3.)

"With a dirt floor, walls of white mud packed onto rough-hewn wooden slats and a metal roof, the

church building belies its members' spirit of selflessness and generosity," observes freelance writer Margaret Dempsey-Colson. Even more commendable, the church had been praying for an adequate facility to be used for a desperately needed school, but they chose to give to missions instead.

Dennis Wilbanks of the Florida Baptist Convention believes the gift signifies the maturing of the church "from a people who are only recipients to a people who are givers." In their willingness to give sacrificially, in spite of their dire needs, they set an example for other believers—particularly Americans who, in comparison, give from abundance.

In that same story are reports of a growing receptiveness to the gospel. Haitian pastors count more than 135,000 professions of faith since the earthquake, and 135 new churches have sprung up in the past four months. Through their gifts to Cooperative Program, prayers and involvement in missions, every Southern Baptist church shares in victories like these.

In "The Purpose Driven Life," Rick Warren advocates that we think like "world-class Christians." Citing Philippians 2:4, the transformation, he says, entails a shift from self-centered thinking to other-centered thinking, and is achieved by adopting Paul's mindset in 1 Corinthians 10:33: "I don't think about what would be good for me but about what would be good for many people so that they might be saved." In this way, we develop what he calls our "Great Commission eyes" through which we see and seize opportunities to "do whatever will bring them a step closer to knowing Christ."

Warren urges, "The Great Commission is your commission, and doing your part is the secret to living a life of significance." The disciple's mission is clear, but not simple: "Go everywhere in the world and tell the Good News to everyone" (Mark 16:15). Here's how Warren explains our common call: "God invites you to participate in the greatest, largest, most diverse, and most significant cause in history—his kingdom. ... He's building his family for eternity. Nothing matters more, and nothing will last as long."

These examples of sacrificial giving, along with stories like the one about Hunsinger Lane Baptist Church in Louisville adopting an unreached people group in Indonesia (see page 1), are reminders that if we are serious about being like Jesus, we must grow "Great Commission eyes" and nurture a heart for the whole world—not just for our desires and happiness or that of our families, friends or churches.



After Thought

By Todd Deaton

Will the NBA's LeBron James win in Miami?

By David Gray

Lebron James is leaving the Cleveland Cavaliers in order to become a bigger winner. I wonder what will constitute a big enough win.

Having the best record in the NBA hasn't been enough. To be popular hasn't been enough.

To be rich beyond his wildest dreams hasn't been enough. Will winning the NBA championship be enough?

Then I think about myself. What success will make me feel validated? What accomplishment will satisfy my yearning to achieve?

Visits from two men have shown me what would be the ultimate win. Both entered my office with questions. The first wanted help knowing how to save his marriage. The second desired to know ways to grow in his ability to communicate his faith and his love to his wife and kids. Every time I can help a man succeed in properly caring for his family, I have experienced a win.

I have had what the world might consider mixed results in my career. God graciously allowed me to be chosen the pastor of a small rural church. Eleven years later I led a good, but still small church. I think I understand how Lebron feels. There have been a lot of good things that have happened, but it just doesn't

feel like we've won it all. There is an elusive championship (in the world's eyes) that I have not been able to rally those around me to obtain.

The difference between me and Lebron is my success or failure won't be determined by a survey of my career statistics. What will count will be the quality and depth of my relationship with Jesus Christ. My obedience in fulfilling my calling to be a disciple who makes disciples who can make disciples is the measure that will determine my success. I don't have to settle for a corruptible crown. I claim a prize that will still have meaning in eternity.

Lebron seems to be seeking to have the world see him as a great champion. I seek to have the One who has won to declare me a winner. So right where I am I pursue the calling to urge men to "love your wives; even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it" (Ephesians 5:25). I want to model, teach and train men to understand how to raise their children without provoking them to anger but to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the word." (Ephesians 6:4).

Lebron James has been chasing a lesser dream. Let us "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14). Sure, basketball, football and all the other sports can be fun. But they do not determine a true winner. A true champion is the one who fulfills his or her calling from God. (BP)

David Gray is pastor of First Baptist Church in Garrettsville, Ohio, located about 35 miles from Akron, Lebron James' hometown.

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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.

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Be the 'somebody different' in someone's life

On the way to work last week, I heard an interview with University of Louisville Head Basketball Coach Rick Pitino. As hard as it is to admit as a Kentucky Wildcat fan, some of what he said made sense and got me thinking. At the risk of someone coming and asking for my Big Blue fan card, here I go.

When asked about one of his players who turned pro against his advice, Coach Pitino said:

"It's the strangest thing, and as a parent I can tell you this. And dealing with other parents who have had children, the one thing is, you'll take a father—a Jerry West, an Oscar Robertson, you'll sometimes meet people of that stature—who'll say to me, 'Coach, will you do me a favor? Can you speak to my son, and give him a little guidance? He's not listening to me.' Well, you're Jerry West; you're Oscar Robertson—not just singling those two out—and there have been others. If they're not going to listen to you, why are they going to listen to me?"

"It's the same way in the game of life. I was always trying to get my oldest (son) in shape when he was young. I'd say, 'Why don't we do this or why don't we do that?' 'No, dad, I'm not going to do it.' Then all of a sudden, he met Short Brown, our strength coach, or Rock Oliver, and

he said, 'Oh, I'm definitely going to do it.' I said, 'I've been trying to get you to do it for years, Michael, and you wouldn't listen to me.' And he said, 'Oh no, but the strength coach told me to do it.' So it's often it happens in this game of life, who people listen to isn't necessarily the person with the most wisdom, but the person that is somebody different in their life."

That is the phrase that hit home: "... who people listen to isn't necessarily the person with the most wisdom, but the person that is somebody different in their life." It got me thinking about those who were "somebody different" in my life. Maybe it has more to do with the fact that two of them passed away this past month, than with what Coach Pitino said.

One of them I never met. Dana Key was the lead singer and guitarist for the Christian Band DeGarmo & Key. Their rich lyrics were spiritually challenging and their musical style spoke to my heart language and provided for me endless hours of soul searching as to what I was to be as a Christian young man. Their call to not be a "Casual Christian"—and a myriad of other songs—challenged me in my faith and drew me to Scripture.

The other was Jabe Cravens. He

and his wife, Alohana, were youth sponsors at Little Flock Baptist Church in Shepherdsville. He was a man's man, a pipe fitter by trade who couldn't wear a long-sleeve shirt because his arms were too big for the sleeves. Two of their three sons, Butch and Mike, were older than me; Todd, was younger.

Jabe had a zest for life, which showed every day. From the softball field to youth events to just hanging out at their house, he loved life and he loved us students. The sheer number of us that showed up for his funeral some 30 years later reminded me of the influence he had on an entire generation of teens.

As a youth minister, I have had the opportunity to be that somebody different in the lives of students. As a parent I have had the privilege of seeing other adults be a somebody different for my kids.

I have watched my dad, who has been scoutmaster of Boy Scout Troop 20 for more than 40 years, be that somebody different in the lives of countless young men.

The church and our communities are full of teenagers who need somebody different to speak to their lives. Let us do our part as a church to facilitate putting men and women of integrity in the lives of our students—men and women who maybe can be that somebody different.

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

Youth Ministry Corner



Joe Ball

Freedom to think and make mistakes

By Scott Wigginton

Q: What advice do you have about parenting a teen who is always compliant?

How easy it might be to confuse compliance with healthy obedience. Since obedience is highly valued by God, one might imagine that the root motivation of healthy obedience is love and respect. Jesus told His disciples, "If anyone loves, me, he will obey my teaching" (John 14:23).

Compliance, on the other hand, might be motivated by a number of factors. While compliance out of love and respect would certainly be synonymous with a healthy obedience, compliance also may find its motivational roots in fear and an unhealthy need to please. Teens who never question or push the limits may need to learn that it is fine to have an opinion and to express their true feelings.

Parents who instill a strong sense of responsibility, self-discipline and appreciation for structure in their children may need to be careful so as not to be controlling. When teens seem to always agree with everything you are saying, it might be wise to let them know that you would see it as a sign of maturity if they would sometimes voice a different perspective or opinion. Parents need to ask for feedback as to whether we make it difficult for our children to have a different opinion.

Parenting that begins in childhood as "thus saith the Lord" and never moves to "come let us reason together" runs the risk of disempowering and even alienating young-adult children who need to have the freedom to think and even make mistakes. Some wise old sage once suggested that we need to "give teens enough rope to fall on their faces but not enough to hang themselves."

Scott Wigginton is associate professor of pastoral ministries and counseling at Campbellsville University and minister of counseling at Campbellsville Baptist Church. Send questions for Family Forum to Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253 or e-mail wesrec@kybaptist.org.



Planning in light of estate tax repeal

By Laurie Valentine

In 2001 Congress enacted sweeping changes to a variety of federal tax laws, including changes to the estate tax laws. Those changes included a gradual increase in the amount that could pass estate tax free from \$675,000 in 2001 to \$3.5 million in 2009; a gradual lowering of the top estate tax rate from a high of 55 percent to a flat 45 percent; and a repeal of estate taxes for those who die in 2010.

The 2001 changes will disappear on Jan. 1, 2011, when the estate tax comes back to life with an exemption of only \$1 million and the tax rate once again at 55 percent.

Coupled with the 2010 repeal of estate taxes is the reintroduction of carryover basis for 2010. Instead of inherited assets getting a step-up (increase) in cost basis to the assets' date of death market values, heirs will have to use the original price paid for the asset (carryover basis) in determining how much capital gain they will have to report when they sell an inherited asset. Each estate can exempt \$1.3 million of gains from the carryover basis rule, and spouses get a \$3 million exemption. Even so, this tax law change impacts many who may never be wealthy enough to worry about estate taxes.

While most estate planners believe Congress will repeal carryover basis and enact estate tax changes that will take the exemption back up to at least \$3.5 million and a flat rate of 45 percent, it seems less likely that will occur in 2010. Steps to consider in light of the delay:

- Organize cost basis records so heirs will know what you paid for assets if the carryover basis rules are not repealed.

- Review formula provisions in your will or trust. Formula provisions referencing "the amount subject to estate tax" may result in more than you intended passing to your surviving spouse or, in some cases, less than you intended passing to him or her. Amending the formula provision to reference a designated amount or the 2009 exemption amount (\$3.5 million) will remove the "unknown" during this interim period.

A "wait-and-see" approach may not be the best plan for your estate plan in 2010.

Laurie Valentine is trust counsel for the Kentucky Baptist Foundation.

Pursuing growth without health is dangerous

By Jon Weece

We keep marks on our laundry room wall charting the growth of our two children, and my son and daughter both are growing like weeds. To grow more, I could go the route of some Major League Baseball players and slip a little "juice" into their food. They would grow, but that kind of growth isn't healthy or natural. It's forced and dangerous to their long-term vitality. Maybe I should clarify the premise of this article by saying, "Numeric growth without spiritual health is dangerous, especially in an era of cookie-cutter churches."

To all my friends in church leadership, you know this, but let me remind all of us that this labor of love we refer to as kingdom building cannot be explained in algebraic equations. Personally, I'm thrilled by the growth of many churches today, but let's not get swept up in the trendy euphoria of plugging in a formula to get people to come through the doors. Big screens, theater seating, edgy music, jeans and shirts untucked, movie clips, intelligent lighting and dramas—yada, yada, yada.

Overall, the church in the United States isn't growing. It's declining steadily and will continue if we don't address what really needs to change, which is us—those of us who lead and those of us who participate; and not only method but, more importantly, mission.

I'm reading the same books you are on church growth and attending the same conferences you attend. And there are principles we all can apply and practices we all can learn

from. But remember, one of the beauties of the church is autonomy, and thank goodness no two churches or two church leaders are the same. So, if you are feeling pressured to keep up with the megachurch Joneses of the world, don't be. And I'm leading one of them! Remember there is only one church and it is global, which makes it "mega!"

Ask God what He wants the church you are in to be and do, then obey that calling. Let the spirit of God partner with your faithfulness to His word and I promise you that people will fight over pew space like kids scrambling for the last seat in musical chairs. And you won't have to inject any "juice" or contrived man-made programs to expand it.

It seems, too many leaders today are interested in building crowds and not communities. The two are interrelated, but not interchangeable. There is something to be said for passionate patience; praying and actually following the leading of God as a movement of believers and doing it with great vigor, even though God may respond with "wait." I hope this paragraph doesn't sound cynical, because I'm one of the most optimistic people you will ever meet. But I do fear we are franchising the church—again—and we seem to be doing it under the alias of "relevance."

In light of an eternal, never-

changing God and book, there is something about that word (relevant) that seems slick to me—almost faddish and trendy, instead of holy and set apart, which is what Jesus, our leader, was. Was He in touch with the needs of those He was loving? Yes, but He didn't lose His message or mission in the limited scope of methodology. And if the church is to be the body of Jesus on earth, I'm not so sure I want to be associated with anything that smacks of "cool." The opposite is just as dangerous: legalism!

Somewhere in the middle, where the church serves the poor (relationally, emotionally, spiritually and financially) of this world is where I want to be and lead from.

So, if big screens and movie clips and edgy music help you accomplish the mission of Jesus to take as many people to heaven as possible, then great. Go for it! But if you are in a church where that won't work, then take the road less traveled. At the end of the day, be faithful. Ask Noah and Paul—there's a lot to be said for simple obedience.

I'll continue to measure my kids as they grow, but I'm rethinking the metric system we use in the church—one of numeric size—and I want to exchange it for one that measures health.

Jon Weece is lead follower at Southland Christian Church in Lexington. This article first appeared as one of his blog posts in June.



Floyd's congregation to trade TV for CP

Springdale, Ark.—First Baptist Church of Springdale, Ark., is suspending its national and international television broadcasts to increase contributions through the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program by 25 percent.

Ronnie Floyd, the church's pastor and chairman of the Great Commission Resurgence Task Force that completed its work last month, announced June 27 that First Baptist, Springdale's would air its final TV broadcast this weekend.



Ronnie Floyd

"For a few months, God has really been working in my life about what actions I need to take and our church needs to take to get the gospel to the nations in a more effective manner," Floyd wrote in a June 28 post on his website. "Serving as the chairman of Southern Baptists' Great Commission Resurgence Task Force has so changed my life and ministry perspective."

The reallocation will bring the congregation's Cooperative Program giving to \$500,000 for the church's fiscal year beginning Oct. 1, Floyd said. That represents a 25 percent increase over the 2009-10 budget and more than doubles the \$243,000 the congregation gave two years ago.

Floyd said the congregation "will continue to have a weekly reach into our region and perhaps our state" through TV but that "for a season of time, two or three years or perhaps for a long time beyond, we are suspending our national and international television ministry in order to allocate more money to seeing the nations come to Christ."

In making the decision to suspend the weekly broadcast on the Dallas-based DayStar Television Network, Floyd said "I had to ask myself several hard questions: Is the pure gospel being preached on this channel by someone besides me? The answer is yes. Is this the best way to appropriate monies so the gospel can go where it has never been before? The answer is no.

"While exceptions to this might be justifiable on a secular network, I felt the answer was no on this network, even though we had witnessed many come to faith in Christ," he continued. "I felt for us to allocate more monies so that more missionaries could go to North America and to the nations of the world would at this time be more beneficial for kingdom work."

According to the church's 2009 SBC Annual Church Profile report, the \$500,000 Cooperative Program contribution would have represented 3.7 percent of First Baptist, Springdale's \$13.37 million in undesignated receipts. (BP)

LifeWay's Australian-themed VBS reached 2.9 million in '09

Nashville, Tenn.—Just like a boomerang that returns when it's thrown, LifeWay's "Boomerang Express" vacation Bible school curriculum returned, bringing new Christians and church prospects with it.

"Vacation Bible school consistently returns a statistic that says the number of professions of faith made by those attending VBS equals about 25 percent of the number of baptisms in the Southern Baptist Convention," said Jerry Wooley, VBS specialist for LifeWay Christian Resources. "We are very proud of that. It shows how much prayer and work our churches put into making VBS not only fun, but more importantly, evangelical."

Nearly 2.9 million children, youth and adults in 25,000 churches attended the "Boomerang Express"-themed VBS last year.

The trend of churches hosting VBS in the evening continued, with about 70 percent of churches doing so. Wooley said there are several potential factors impacting this trend.

"Staffing is a big part of it," he noted. "You have working parents, other day camps and child care for kids, a rising number of year-round schools and even weather that make it advantageous for churches to meet in the evening. It also allows working teens the opportunity to be involved in VBS as youth attendees and youth leaders."

"Boomerang Express," set in Australia's Outback, proved to be one of LifeWay's best-received VBS themes.

Churches this summer are using "Saddle Ridge Ranch," LifeWay's main 2010 VBS theme, and "Club VBS: Route 254." The 2011 themes, which were announced June 15 at the SBC annual meeting in Orlando, Fla., are "Big Apple Adventure" and "Club VBS: Beach Blast."

The value of event evangelism

Research reveals churches' attractional events 'do work'

Fort Worth, Texas—Block parties, festivals and other evangelistic events are essential ingredients for effective churches, according to a study by the Scarborough Center for Baptist Church Planting at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and the North American Mission Board.

"Our findings suggest that many of our nation's most effective evangelistic churches are utilizing attractional evangelistic events," said Jerry Pipes, NAMB's team leader for mass evangelism.

Researchers polled 3,200 Southern Baptist Convention churches last year as part of the Evangelistic Event Research Project. From that group, they identified 500 "A-churches" and 500 "B-churches."

A-churches were those with a membership of 50 or more who experienced at least 10 percent growth between 2002 and 2007 and baptized more than 12 people in 2007. They had a membership to baptism ratio of no more than 35 members to 1 baptism, and 25 percent of new members came from conversions as evidenced by baptisms.

B-churches were those of the same size range that baptized at least one person in 2002 and between four and nine people in 2007.

A-churches were identified as highly effective with their evangelism efforts. They reported, on average, one baptism annually for every 25 members. B-churches were identified as less effective than A-churches but still more effective in evangelism than most SBC churches. They averaged one baptism annually for every 104 members.

"We define evangelistic events as special events, which intentionally draw lost people through relationships and attraction, clearly present the gospel and provide an invitation to respond," Pipes said.



MAIN ATTRACTION Ron Satterwhite, pastor of First Baptist Church of Port Tampa in Tampa, Fla., shares the gospel using magic at a block party during last month's Crossover Orlando. Research shows that Southern Baptist churches involved in similar types of outreach events have more effective ministries.

In the research, several common denominators emerged among highly effective churches:

- They sponsor attractional evangelistic events, do several of them annually, do them especially well and get excellent results from them.

- Two-thirds of highly effective churches sponsor both evangelistic events and an active personal evangelism program.

- Significantly more highly effective churches sponsor evangelistic events than less-effective churches.

- They sponsor significantly more evangelistic events and do significantly better preparation and follow-up for evangelistic events than less-effective churches.

- They sponsor more holiday-related, revival-like and sports and recreation evangelistic events than any other types. More than half sponsor revival-like evangelistic events.

The report comes at a time when, in some quarters, the value of attractional methods has been questioned

for reaching communities with the gospel.

"A lot of churches have pursued a missional approach to evangelism and church growth to the neglect of attractional evangelistic events that will draw people in," Pipes said. "It's like asking a pilot flying over the Pacific Ocean whether he wants his right wing or his left wing. The answer is you need both wings—both missional methodologies and an attractional model."

Frank Page, president-elect of the SBC Executive Committee, said the study confirms what many pastors have learned firsthand.

"I think it's on target, and I say that not only from the statistics but from 34 years as a pastor," Page said. "Attractional events do work."

"This research helps correct some erroneous thinking and helps provide a recognition of reality among churches who might have inadvertently pulled back from these events," Page added. (BP)



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San Quentin inmates earn seminary diplomas behind bars

By Phyllis Evans
Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary

San Quentin, Calif.—Morris Curry Jr., a chaplain at San Quentin State Prison in California, said the facility has more in common with Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary than one would notice at first glance.

“God is behind those walls,” Curry said of San Quentin, which is located only 20 minutes from Golden Gate Seminary’s Northern California campus in Mill Valley.

During a graduation ceremony at the prison in June, four inmates received diplomas in Christian ministries from Golden Gate Seminary’s contextualized leadership development program.

The graduates were Mark Baldwin of California, 50; Robert Butler of California, 51; David Cowan of Pennsylvania, 42; and Darrell Cortez Hartley of Missouri, 46.

The 30-plus inmates in the program at San Quentin are taught by seminary graduate students and alumni on a volunteer basis during spring and fall semesters. The program takes two to three years to complete, and instruction includes eight classes that range from church planting and evangelism to ministry training.

“The word ‘contextualized’ means the material is taught in the language and culture of a particular people group,” said Chris Foreman, one San Quentin’s first CLD instructors. “When we began to teach at San Quentin, we had to contextualize the curriculum for this culture.”

Foreman is a Golden Gate Seminary graduate who is pastor of First Southern Baptist Church of San Lorenzo, Calif.

Golden Gate is marking the CLD program’s 30th anniversary this year. The program has 62 centers nationwide and is taught in 17 states and 11 languages—but San Quentin is the only prison location.

Most CLD graduates have the option of participating in commencement ceremonies at one of Golden Gate Seminary’s five campuses. But for the San Quentin graduates, the ceremony went to the prison. More than 150 inmates and guests attended the ceremony in the prison’s Protestant chapel.

“These graduates are receiving the same



GOD BEHIND THE WALLS Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary’s academicians and CLD instructors pray over the graduates at the conclusion of the graduation ceremony held at San Quentin State Prison. The Golden Gate Seminary personnel pictured are (from left) Michael Martin, vice president of academic affairs; Jerry Stubblefield, retired senior professor; Donald Hart, GGBTS alumni; and Glenn Prescott, director of theological field education. (Photo by Terry Peck/GGBTS)

experience as our other graduates,” Golden Gate President Jeff Iorg said. “The program is the same, the people on the podium are the same, the diploma is the same, and we expect the same kind of results from these graduates as from our other graduates.”

“Some may wonder why such a program would be offered in prison, where many of the graduates will never be paroled,” Iorg added. “Our mission is training leaders to expand God’s kingdom. The church is in San Quentin and needs leaders here, too.”

Curry, of Garden Chapel Christian Fellowship at San Quentin, agreed.

“People on the outside need to see the work that God has done on the inside with these men,” he said, adding that ministry is happening in the cells.

“It might be the only time some of these men get to make a decision for Christ. And they’re not the same people once they ask Jesus into their lives,” Curry noted. “God has done something to them on the inside. You can see the redeeming value of God in

their lives.”

The CLD program provides classes at a post-high school level to train Christian leaders. For those without a high school or college diploma, or for those who speak English as a second language, CLD offers an opportunity to become equipped and trained for effective Christian service.

Donald Hart, a GGBTS grad who has taught several CLD classes, said he was amazed at the difference in the men.

“Even without knowing them deeply, I could see transformation, could see what God had done in their lives. The work of God doesn’t stop at the prison door,” Hart said.

Ray Fox, another Golden Gate graduate, said he was struck by how much the prisoners accomplished with minimal resources. San Quentin students are not allowed to use computers, and there are no Power-Point presentations, CDs or a theological library available.

“We use blackboards as a teaching tool,”

Fox said. “I am humbled by these guys. They come in with their handwritten, crumpled assignments, and they spend 16 weeks proving you’re not wasting your time with them.”

Curry identified some obstacles to earning an education in prison.

“While it is available, it is sometimes inaccessible because of lockdowns, late and slow meal schedules and inclement weather,” he said. “It would be easy to use these as excuses, but these brothers were determined to keep going.”

At the prison, all the instructors are volunteers because there is no budget for the program.

“All the hardcover theology books are purchased with donated funds,” noted Don Beall, the seminary’s national CLD director. “The prisoners don’t own the books, but they check them out and are responsible for them. These books cost \$49 each, and if they lose a book they have to pay for it.”

Inmates’ salaries are 28 cents an hour, Beall said.

“Even with this minimal income, the Garden Chapel congregation has sent \$6,000 to six missions so far this year,” Curry pointed out.

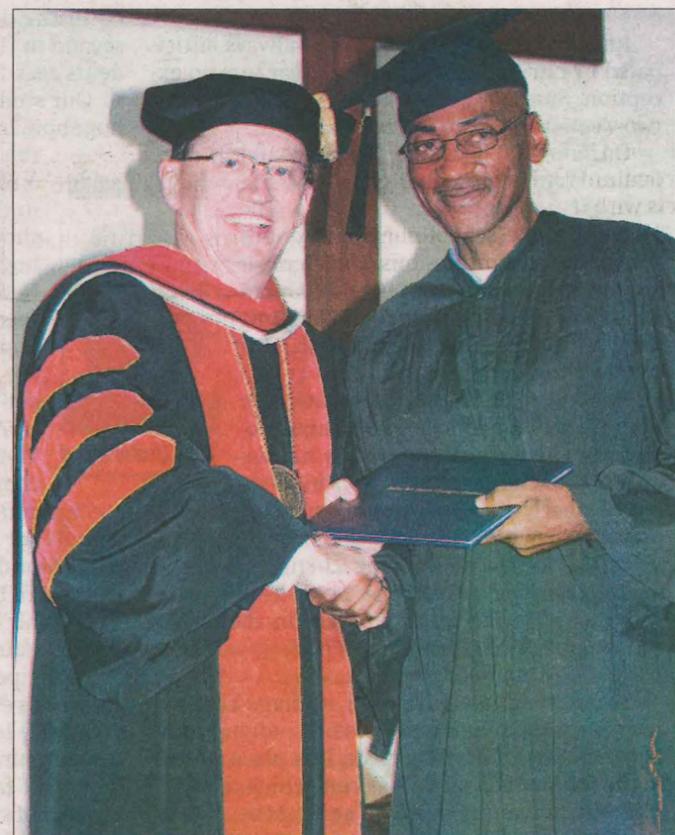
Cowan, one of the four inmates who graduated, oversees the prison’s missions ministry through prayer vigils and fundraising, and he corresponds with missionaries through handwritten letters.

The other CLD graduates also have ministries within the prison. Baldwin teaches an apologetics class and leads a daily Bible study, Hartley counsels individuals who are struggling with addictions, and Butler is an ordained minister.

“Under the leadership of my pastor (Curry), I minister to the needs of this church. I preach, pray, welcome, teach and assist the pastor in whatever he needs,” Butler said.

Even though some of the CLD graduates at San Quentin won’t be released for years, maybe even decades, they still are useful for God’s kingdom, Iorg said.

“Thank God for these men who are learning to be ministry leaders—and missionaries—in the difficult setting of a state penitentiary,” Iorg said. (BP)



PROUD MOMENT Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary President Jeff Iorg shakes the hand of graduate Robert Butler as he hands Butler his diploma in Christian ministries from the seminary’s contextualized leadership development program. (Photo by Phyllis Evans/GGBTS)

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LifeWay's Transformational Church website up, gauges church health

Nashville, Tenn.—LifeWay's new website TransformationalChurch.com has gone live.

Last winter, LifeWay announced Transformational Church, a new ministry focus and initiative based on one of the largest and most significant research projects ever conducted on the American church.

LifeWay's goal for the project is to assist churches to see greater levels of transformation in the lives of individuals, churches themselves and their communities.

The website will be one of the primary sources of information, education and direction for Transformational Church. The site will be refreshed continuously with new information, and resources will be highlighted that can be used in strengthening the elements of transformation in churches.

"We are working toward a clean and fluid website that church leaders will visit often and even mark as a 'favorite,'" said Bruce Raley, director of leadership and evangelism training and events. Raley leads LifeWay's Transformational Church project team and coordinates consultant training for the initiative.

"Included on the site," he added, "will be podcasts, articles, research and data releases, ideas for ministries, leadership challenges, 'God stories' from churches where transformation is taking place, and more."

While some areas of the site still are under construction, many resources already are avail-

able, including the Transformational Church Assessment Tool, which is designed to help a church "assess the health of the congregation, celebrate areas of strength and address areas of concern."

The site also features information about the book "Transformational Church," written by LifeWay President Thom Rainer and Director of LifeWay Research Ed Stetzer, as well as calendar dates of training for certification as a Transformational Church consultant.

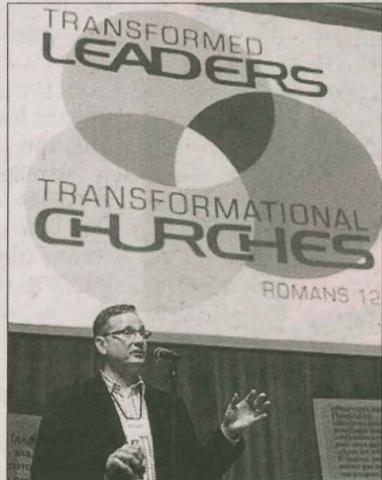
Rainer said there are two motivating forces behind the Transformational Church initiative:

First, "we want to know reality. Facts are our friends and they help us understand the current situation of the church in real terms—good, bad and ugly."

Second, "we see hope and possibilities in what God is doing in local churches. This is what our research has shown us, and we want to share this encouraging data with churches at all levels of effectiveness."

Raley noted that Transformational Church is not "just another program" or a "one-size-fits-all strategy" with a formula for immediate results.

"Transformational Church is a guide to assist churches as they examine where God is working and what they need to identify as possibilities for greater transformation, today and in the future," he said.



TRANSFORMATIONAL RESOURCE David Francis, LifeWay's director of Sunday school, introduces the Transformational Church initiative to those attending last year's SBC State Conventions' Summit. LifeWay has launched Transformational Church.com as a resource for churches to promote greater levels of transformation in individuals, congregations and communities. (Photo by Kent Harville/LifeWay)

Down on the farm

Oneida's FFA, 4-H students find success at state FFA and county competitions

By Jennifer Griebenow
Assistant farm manager and FFA advisor

June activities on the farm are always anticipated by our farm kids—and this year was no exception. Summer school began June 7 with the two-week summer ag intensive class.

On June 8-10, Kimberly Withrow and Jessica Vires represented Oneida at the state FFA convention in Lexington. The pair accepted a platinum-level donor plaque and certificate from Maj. Gen. Ed Tonini of the Kentucky National Guard on behalf of our FFA chapter for ranking first in the statewide "Support Our Troops" fundraiser last fall.

Kimberly placed first in the state with her diversified livestock production proficiency. She will advance to the national FFA proficiency competition in October. Kimberly and Jessica were Oneida's first FFA members since 2004 to earn their state degrees.

Oneida's FFA and 4-H took 21 students to the Laurel County Ag Fair June 14-18. In the dairy show, Sara Huerta won first place in the junior showmanship class and Lauren Nichols won first place in the market dairy class.

Summer ag intensive class students competed in the skill-a-thon and livestock judging competitions. Taylor TerBurgh won first place overall in the junior division skill-a-thon, which requires students to identify livestock equipment, cuts of meat, breeds of livestock and types of grain.

Olivia Bevil was the overall winner in livestock judging, winning by 30 points. She also won first place in the market hog and goat judging contests in the junior division. David TerBurgh

earned first place in breeding ewes judging. Sara Huerta took first place in market steer judging. Lily Wynn won first place in dairy heifer judging.

This was the second year OBI students competed in the district goat show. Olivia Bevil placed second in the district showmanship class for students ages 12-13.

Our students also did very well in the county hog show. In showmanship, Taylor TerBurgh, Lauren Nichols, Megan Schultz, Olivia Bevil and Trenton Nichols all earned first place in their classes. Olivia was named junior showmanship champion. In the market hog contest, Olivia, Trent Parkhouse and Nathan Partin won first place in their respective classes. Olivia's hog earned the grand champion market hog title, weighing 252 pounds and selling for 70 cents per pound.

At the beef steer/heifer show, Lily Wynn was the junior division showman champion. Nathan Partin's calf won the average daily gain competition with a gain of 3.9 pounds per day. Sara Huerta earned first place in the junior division with her market beef project and record book.

The fair's highest award was the Charles M. Cornett Youth Livestock Showman Award, based on participation and individual ranking during the week's events. Olivia Bevil, Sara Huerta, Taylor TerBurgh, Lily Wynn and Trent Parkhouse took second, third, fifth, eighth and ninth places.

As OBI farm staff, we are encouraged by the number of students who show interest in this our agriculture program. We count it as one of our many blessings.

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

Going beyond the classroom

Clear Creek faculty provide training in the community

You have read many times about the importance we place on connecting our students to serve the communities around Clear Creek. Our students enjoy these opportunities to be out in the community and helping any way they can. I also am proud to say that our faculty members are just as responsive to the needs in our area and are willing to help in any way.

We recently were contacted by the Harlan County Chaplains Organization to help them with some training for their duties with the Harlan County Sheriff's Department. This is a unique situation with a sheriff who really wants his chaplains to be effective. These chaplains ride with the deputies on patrol and are right in harm's way every day. The sheriff even has secured and issued bulletproof vests to help protect the chaplains when they are on patrol.

Two of our faculty members, James Ditty and Richard Bartels, recently spent a weekend with the chaplains to provide training opportunities for them. The seminar led by Bartels addressed grief, its components and the beginning of how to minister to those suffering

with grief. Due to the nature of the chaplains' work, time was taken to address the grief and depression of first responders and trauma grief.

"The men showed a great deal of interest, posed many questions and shared from their work experiences," Bartels said.

The seminar led by Ditty dealt with spiritual formations. Ditty gave a summary of the book "Ten Questions to Diagnose Your Spiritual Health" by Donald Whitney. Each participant received a copy of the book. Ditty underscored the absolute necessity for God's servants to be constantly in the word, in prayer and seeking to grow in their personal relationships with Christ. "The men were very interested and participated with many questions," Ditty said.

This training was supported by the sheriff who actively participated in the seminars. He also met privately with Bartels and Ditty to discuss how the chaplains could get more training in the future.

It is a joy to serve with faculty who look beyond the classroom for opportunities to teach and serve.

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

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First steps

Students begin life journeys with God at Crossings camp

This week, I asked Drew Nichter of the Western Recorder, who recently accompanied a group of students from Phos Church in Buckner to Crossings at Cedarmore, to write this column from a chaperone's point of view.

By Drew Nichter

While I was away at camp, my youngest daughter, Sadie, took her first steps. I found this out during a moment of downtime I had amid keeping tabs on five very active (to say the least) middle school boys.

When I heard about it, I was a little disappointed and sad that I hadn't been home to witness it.

At worship that evening, Crossings camp pastor John Nix invited anyone who felt like God was calling him or her to be "adopted" (this summer's camp theme) into His family to stand up.

When I saw several kids from our group stand up, including a couple of "my guys," things all of a sudden "got real," as those younger than I like to say.

I felt this tremendous burden as Nix told those who were standing, each of whom had just made a decision that assured them of eterni-

ty, to turn and look at their leaders and to discuss why they were standing. Those eyes bored into me and I realized I had little idea what to do.

Later on, God graced me with a little bit of perspective. Even though I had missed Sadie's first steps, I had been blessed with witnessing several of my church's students take the first steps in their Christian walks.

Since I've returned from camp, I've enjoyed seeing Sadie start to walk more than she crawls. She's still wobbly and falls down a lot, but most every time someone is there to help her back to her feet—or she does it by herself. Eventually, she'll be running around

the house non-stop with her big sister, Caroline.

These young Christians are no different. Early on, they will be just as wobbly as a 13 month old figuring out what it means to stand on two feet. But it's my—and the church's—responsibility to help them back up when they falter.

They soon will run alongside us. And it is the responsibility of all of us who are out in front right now to hand them the baton as they surge ahead and take the lead.

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

Ky. Baptist Assemblies



David Melber

Court rules against Christian group

Campus Christian society must allow non-Christians, gays to be recognized as official student organization

By Adelle Banks

Washington—The U.S. Supreme Court ruled June 28 that a Christian student group must accept gays and non-Christians as members if it wants to be officially recognized by a public university.

Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, writing for the court's 5-4 majority, said the "all-comers" policy at the University of California's Hastings College of the Law is "reasonable" and "viewpoint neutral."

The case pitted a campus chapter of the Christian Legal Society against the law school's nondiscrimination policy that requires registered student organizations to accept any student as a member or potential leader.

Registered student groups receive limited funding from the school, which is supported by public tax dollars.

The law school had argued successfully in lower courts that the Christian group was seeking special treatment in seeking an exemption from the rules. The Christian legal group—which bars gays and non-Christians from leadership positions—argued that if it followed the school policy, a student who doesn't believe the Bible could lead its Christian Bible studies.

Ginsburg said the school had made an appropriate decision in deciding not to grant an exemption. "Hastings, caught in the crossfire between a group's desire to exclude and students' demand for equal access, may reasonably draw a line in the sand permitting all organizations to express what they wish but no group to discriminate in membership," she wrote.

She was joined in her opinion by Justices John Paul Stevens, Anthony Kennedy, Stephen Breyer

and Sonia Sotomayor.

Stevens, writing in a concurring opinion as he retired from the court, added that the broader nondiscrimination policy on which the all-comers student club policy is based is "plainly legitimate."

But Justice Samuel Alito, in a harshly worded dissent, questioned the majority opinion, saying it upholds a principle of "no freedom of expression that offends prevailing standards of political correctness in our country's institutions of higher learning."

He said the decision, which he hoped would be an "aberration," would be a "serious setback for freedom of expression in this country."

"There are religious groups that cannot in good conscience agree in their bylaws that they will admit persons who do not share their faith, and for those groups, the consequence of an accept-all-comers policy is marginalization," Alito wrote.

Gregory Baylor, senior legal counsel for the Alliance Defense Fund, who helped represent the Christian Legal Society before the high court, said the ruling has not ended the conflict over nondiscrimination policies.

"Long term, the decision puts other student groups across the country at risk, and we will continue to fight for their constitutional rights," he said in a statement. "The Hastings policy actually requires CLS to allow atheists to lead its Bible studies and the College Democrats to accept the election of Republican officers in order for the groups to be recognized on campus. We agree with Justice Alito in his dissent that the court should have rejected this as absurd."

Nathan Diament, public policy director for the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, said the decision should "deeply trouble all those who cherish religious freedom."

"Today, the Supreme Court's majority has given state universities a green light and a roadmap to condition a religious group's rights on the state's preferred beliefs," he said. (RNS)

Seminary dean says Gulf oil spill could sound wake-up call for evangelicals

By Bob Allen

Louisville—The head of a committee that drafted a recent Southern Baptist Convention resolution on the Gulf of Mexico oil spill said on National Public Radio that the ecological disaster could be a "defining moment" for evangelicals and the environment.

"I remember once an evangelical figure spoke of the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision as the Pearl Harbor of the evangelical pro-life movement," Russell Moore, dean of the School of Theology at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, said on NPR's Weekend Sunday Edition June 27.

"What he meant by that was that prior to Roe, most evangelicals really thought of those issues of life and protecting the unborn as being a Roman Catholic issue—somebody else's issue," Moore explained. "But then after Roe v. Wade, suddenly evangelicals saw what was at stake and became involved. I think that this catastrophe in the Gulf could be that kind of defining moment."

Moore chaired an SBC resolutions committee that brought a resolution adopted by convention messengers June 16 calling on industry, the government and churches to work to prevent such a crisis from ever happening again.

He explained on NPR the rationale behind a statement that many observers view as out of character for a conservative denomination that in past years has downplayed environmental concerns like global warming.

"There's really nothing conservative—and certainly nothing evangelical—about a laissez-faire view of a lack of government regulation, because

we, as Christians, believe in sin," Moore said.

"That means if people are sinful, if all of us are sinful, then all of us have to have accountability—and that includes corporations," he added.

"Simply trusting corporations to go about their business without polluting the water streams and without destroying ecosystems is really a naive and utopian view of human nature. It's not a Christian view of human nature," Moore pointed out.

Moore, who also serves as teaching pastor at Louisville's Highview Baptist Church, said the call to creation care is grounded in theology.

"God cares about the creation," Moore noted. "He displays Himself in nature, and so the more that people are distanced from the creation itself and the more people become accustomed to treating the creation as something that is disposable, the more distanced they are from understanding who God is."

"People are designed to be dependent on creation and upon the natural resources around us," Moore continued. "In order to love future generations, in order to love cultures, we have to love the ecosystems that support those things."

Moore is a native of Biloxi, Miss., one of the communities under threat from the leaking hulk of the Deepwater Horizon offshore oil rig, which has been dumping oil into the Gulf of Mexico since an April 20 explosion that killed 11 workers and destroyed the platform.

"I have to tell you this is the most traumatized I've ever seen my hometown," Moore said. "And I'm including the devastation of Katrina in that. It's kind of like a slow-motion hurricane with no end in sight." (ABP)



Russell Moore



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MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **COVINGTON**—Decoursey Church recently called **Charles Cross** as pastor.

Latonia Church recently called **Dan Francis** as pastor.

■ **DAWSON SPRINGS**—Beulah Hill Church recently called **James McKinney** as pastor.

■ **ELIZABETHTOWN**—Tunnel Hill Church will celebrate its 65th anniversary with a homecoming service July 18, 9:45 a.m. A pot luck lunch will follow the 11 a.m. service, featuring special music from the **Gilbert Sisters**. **Nathan Whisnant** is pastor.

■ **GREENSBURG**—Bethlehem Church recently held a performance of the play, "Heaven's Gates and Hell's Flames," during which about 90 people made decisions for Christ. The church also recently held a Youth Fest at which 50 decisions were reported. **Gary Ervin** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Burnett Avenue Church recently called **Daniel Shull** as pastor.

Kimberly Robinson recently resigned as children's minister at Fern Creek Church.

■ **MOUNT VERNON**—**Jamie Cornelius** recently resigned as music director of First Church.

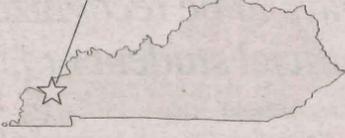
■ **PRINCETON**—**Wayne Duncan** recently resigned as pastor of Second Church.

■ **SHEPHERDSVILLE**—Sunnyside Church recently called **Matt Alexander** as pastor.

■ **WILLIAMSTOWN**—Living Stones Fellowship recently called **John Sheaffer** as pastor.

Spotlight on ...

Paducah



E. Lee James recently announced his retirement as pastor of Bellview Church at the end of September. He has served the church for nearly 19 years. James has been involved in gospel ministry for almost 50 years, serving as pastor of seven Kentucky Baptist churches. He was Kentucky Baptist Convention second vice president in 2008-09 and has served five terms on the KBC Mission Board. James also helped start nine church plants during mission trips to Kenya since 1987.

Retired missionary remembered for her belief in the power of prayer

Ocean Springs, Miss.—At 102 years old, Ruth Carlisle still knew the power of prayer.

When one of the hospice workers tending to Carlisle told her about a grandchild who had been diagnosed in the womb with a serious birth defect, Carlisle did not hesitate.

"Let's pray," she said.

Seven months after the birth, the baby was completely normal.

The faith in prayer, concern for others and trust in God that Carlisle showed in that moment were constants in her life, which included 29 years on the mission field. The longest-living retired International Mission Board missionary, Carlisle died June 5 at the age of 102. Her passing sealed the legacy of an unassuming woman whose life and ministry continue to astonish those who knew her.

Carlisle, a native of Shawnee, Okla., and her husband, Robert, were appointed as missionaries to Uruguay in 1940 by the then-Foreign Mission Board. Their orientation was a 30-minute chat with the board's president, followed by a journey by ship to Uruguay.

Arriving in the South American country with no Spanish language or cross-cultural training, the Carlisles learned on the job while planting churches. In 1956, they started a Bible institute in their home.

It was difficult work in a country where most people were agnostic.

"Little by little, people came to the Lord. It wasn't fast," Carlisle told a reporter in 2007. "Uruguay has never been an easy place to win people."

In addition to raising a family that expanded to eight children, she managed a multitude of other tasks.

"I am the administrator of the kitchen, dietitian, adviser to the counselor of the students, teacher of various courses and, in case of sickness among the students, I help in the diagnosis and consultation with the doctor," Carlisle wrote in a 1964 report.

Her son, Jason, a Hispanic mobilization consultant with the IMB, remembers her devotion to her family, even after long days of work.

"Sometimes in high school when I was studying for a test, I would come downstairs around midnight to get a glass of water," he recalled. "My mother would be ironing clothes for all of us. Then I would get up in the morning and the biscuits would be made. It was just amazing."

Carlisle's service in Uruguay was punctuated by times of suffering, which included absence from family. She was notified by letter when her mother died, the only time Jason recalled seeing her cry. A devastating car accident left her and Robert in the hospital for weeks. It was all part of the calling that she willingly followed.

"It took a lot of hard work, a lot of loving the Lord and trusting Him," Jason said of his mother's time overseas.

The Carlisles retired from missionary service in 1969, returning to live in Louisiana. Carlisle supported her husband's ministry until his death in 1978, an event which compelled her to rely even more on the Lord.

"I remember after my dad died, (my mother) told me, 'That was the time when I felt God's closeness more than any other time in my life,'" Jason said.

She devoted herself to prayer, spending hours each day interceding for her children, Uruguay, people she knew and other things dear to her heart.

"We would ask her to pray for a new believer or someone who came to our church," Jason said. "Six months later, she would ask what happened to them when we had already forgotten."

Even though Carlisle lived on a fixed income, she continued to give generously. Jason recalled that his mother, then in her 90s, wrote him to announce that she had reached her annual goal of giving \$3,000 to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

Carlisle's physical toughness was legendary among her children, some of whom jokingly called her the "comeback kid." She survived the car wreck, a crushed pelvis doctors didn't even notice and a heart attack in 1969 that nobody knew about until years later. She initially refused to have open-heart surgery at 90, claiming it would likely add only "a year or two" to her life. Eventually she relented.

But she was, after all, only mortal. Jason recalled his mother's final moments, surrounded by family, and the unexpected way in which her life ended. As she approached death, the family began singing some of her favorite hymns. But there was one they couldn't remember.

"Finally somebody remembered it," Jason said. "When we started singing that song, she opened her eyes. She just looked straight up. When we finished singing, she almost closed her eyes, looked around, closed them, and that was it. It was almost like she was waiting for that hymn." (BP)



Ruth Carlisle

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11 Super Saturday, Lone Oak First Baptist Church, Paducah; University of the Cumberlands, Williamsburg.

18 Children in Action Missions Day Camp, Pleasant View Baptist Church, Waynesburg.

18 Super Saturday, First Baptist Church, Bowling Green; First Baptist Church, Russell.

20-21 Kentucky Baptist Ministers' Golf Tournament, Cherry Blossom Golf & Country Club, Georgetown.

21 Understanding Other Beliefs, Unity Baptist Church, Richmond.

23-24 Kentucky Baptist Men's Chorale Fall Retreat, First Baptist Church, Owensboro.

24-25 Kentucky Baptist Women's Chorale Fall Retreat, First Baptist Church, Owensboro.

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

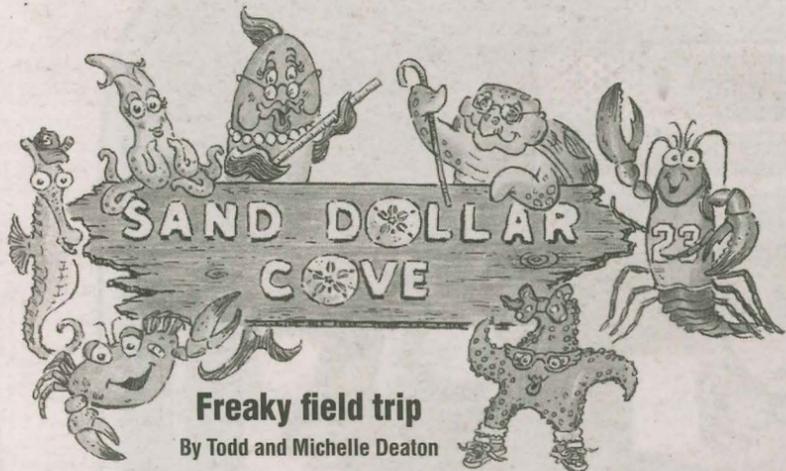
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Freaky field trip
By Todd and Michelle Deaton

Only a few minutes before the Cove Kids were to leave on their field trip, the bus arrived. The bus driver, Mr. Mackerel—everyone called him "Mr. Mack" for short—was in a big rush.

"Hurry up! Get in your seats. Let's go!" Mr. Mack yelled. "We have a lot to do today."

The first place that the Cove Kids planned to stop on their trip was Piranha Park. Piranhas once lived there, but now colorful tropical fish swim all around the coral reef.

"It's quite a beautiful sight. Look quickly, or you'll miss it," Mr. Mack shouted as the bus rolled passed the entrance.

"Hey, aren't we going to stop?" Syd Squid asked.

"I guess not," Sunny Starfish shrugged.

A few minutes later, the Cove Kids arrived at Sand Dollar Cove City Hall, where Mayor Mahimahi was standing on the steps waiting for them. As the bus screeched past the building, Mayor Mahimahi's lovely wife, Corky, was almost blown off the sidewalk.

"Hey, we were supposed to have a guided tour. What happened?" asked a bewildered Seamore Seahorse.

By then, the bus was three blocks down the street and headed for the Nautical Museum. The museum had a really cool pirate ship exhibit



that Lenny Lobster really wanted to see. "Please stop?" he begged.

But it was too late. Mr. Mack was off again. "You'll have to come back later," Mr. Mack said.

"It's really neat." "This is wacky!" Sunny exclaimed.

"I know," Syd

agreed. "Why did we come on this trip, if we can't even stop?" At Hammerhead Mountain, the Cove Kids were supposed to stop for a picnic and go on a hike, but Mr. Mack gave a pack of crackers and a juice box to each of them. "You can stay in your seats and have a picnic," he instructed.

"What about the hike?" Seamore asked. "You hiked to the front of the bus to get your snack, didn't you?" Mr. Mack snapped.

"But we can't see the volcano from here," whined Craig Crab.

"Sure you can," Mr. Mack said. "It's just up the hill, through the trees, beyond that fountain. You can't miss it ... when it erupts."

"When's that?" Craig asked.

"Oh, about once every 300 years," Mr. Mack laughed. "It hasn't erupted in 100 years, and it probably won't today. And when you've seen one mountain, you've seen them all," he added.

"I guess we'll have more time at Riptide Reef," Sunny said hopefully. But the bus did not even slow down at the waterfall and pool.

"Hey, I thought we were going swimming," Sunny said. By now, even she was upset.

"This isn't fair," Craig complained. "We're supposed to stop."

"Can't! Don't have time," Mr. Mack snapped.

The Cove Kids looked at each other in disbelief. A few minutes later, the trip was over. As soon as the Cove Kids got off the bus, Mr. Mack sped away.

"That was a freaky field trip!" Sunny exclaimed.

"Yeah, Craig agreed. "Next time, I want to at least get off the bus once."



Treasure Hunt

What were some places that Cove Kids planned to go? Why was the field trip freaky? When are some times we rush and miss the beauty of God's world? How can we express appreciation to God for His wonderful creation? Read Job 37:14 together.

"That was a freaky field trip!" Sunny exclaimed.

"Yeah, Craig agreed. "Next time, I want to at least get off the bus once."

For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



Preacher's Kids

David Ayers



Bible Crosswords

Elaine Okupski

Across

- 1 Fiddling emperor
- 5 New Testament book
- 9 Noah's vessel
- 12 Dismounted
- 13 "For many ____ false witness against him" (Mark 14:56)
- 14 Gardening tool
- 15 "He shall not come ____ to offer the bread of his God" (Leviticus 21:21)
- 16 "Every beast, every ____ thing, and every fowl" (Genesis 8:19)
- 18 Leah's second son (Genesis 30:12-13)
- 20 Actor James ____ Jones
- 21 "Then he that had received the five talents went and ____ with the same" (Matthew 25:16)
- 23 "There met him ten men that were lepers, which stood ____ off" (Luke 17:12)
- 27 Get a perfect score on a test
- 29 Result of sunbathing
- 30 "And Jacob ____ away unawares to Laban" (Genesis 31:20)
- 31 ____-man, scary childhood character
- 33 Son of Dishon (Genesis 36:26)
- 34 Rhythm and ____
- 35 "T" in PTL
- 36 Newsman Koppel
- 37 "My couch shall ____ my complaint" (Job 7:13)
- 38 Height of Noah's ark in cubits (Genesis 6:15)
- 40 Eastern garment
- 42 "And over the course of the second month was ____ an Ahohite" (1 Chronicles 27:4)

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45	46	47					48		49			
50					51				52			
53					54					55		

- 45 "This is the token of the ____ which I have established" (Genesis 9:17)
- 49 Sudden attack
- 50 "And all went to be taxed, every ____ into his own city" (Luke 2:3)
- 51 Popular brand of sneakers
- 52 Biblical city
- 53 "But ____ unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" (Matthew 23:13)
- 54 "I am the Lord, and there is none ____" (Isaiah 45:5)
- 55 Being, Lat.

- 9 Son of Abdiel (1 Chronicles 5:15)
- 10 Actor/director Howard
- 11 Small cask
- 17 "And thou shalt make a ____ of pure gold" (Exodus 28:36)
- 19 Gives a grade
- 22 "For this is the ____ of the Lord God of hosts" (Jeremiah 46:10)
- 24 "I will cause it to rain upon the earth ____" (Genesis 7:4) (2 words)
- 25 Wings
- 26 "A time to ____, and a time to sew" (Ecclesiastes 3:7)
- 27 Abbot, Fr.
- 28 Soft drink
- 30 Scrap of pottery
- 32 "Silly" birds
- 33 Greek letter
- 35 Calls to mind
- 38 Pathway
- 39 Rich cake
- 41 Actress Bancroft
- 43 Haughty conduct
- 44 Thought, Fr.
- 45 Milk provider
- 46 Biblical plain (Nehemiah 6:2)
- 47 Type of neckline
- 48 Golf peg

Last week's solution

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
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