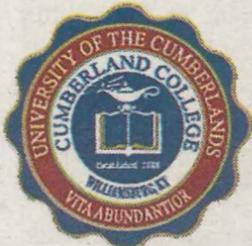


Shine like stars in the world
Philippians 2:15

WESTERN Recorder

April 26, 2011
Vol. 185, No. 16



See insert

FOR THE RECORD

Missions

New Kentucky Baptist program urges churches and its members to 'Go' on mission worldwide.
Page 2.



World

Southern Baptist workers in North Africa, Middle East call for 21 days of prayer and fasting for tumultuous region.
Page 6.

Nation

Survey reveals pastors' skepticism of global warming is increasing.
Page 7.

Find us on Facebook

and on

twitter
as westernrecorder

Western Recorder 4-26-2011

Storms pound the South



Boone's Chapel Baptist Church in Prattville, Ala., was heavily damaged by a tornado April 15. The original brick structure, which was used as a chapel and the children's education area, was a total loss, pastor Mike Johnson told the Alabama Baptist. (Photo by Jennifer Davis Rash/The Alabama Baptist)

Tornado outbreak kills at least 45, destroys churches

Prattville, Ala.—Tornadoes swept through the South for three days, killing at least 45 people in six states April 14-16, and damaging or destroying several Southern Baptist church buildings.

The storm system was the deadliest to hit the United States since February 2008 when 57 people were killed across the Southeast. In North Carolina alone, 62 tornadoes were reported and 23 people were killed April 16, according to USA Today.

Boone's Chapel Baptist Church in Prattville, Ala., was heavily damaged by a tornado that struck the community April 15. The original brick structure, which was used as a chapel and the children's education

area, was a total loss, pastor Mike Johnson told the Alabama Baptist newspaper. The newer multipurpose section of Boone's Chapel was damaged but should be repairable.

A father and his two adult children were killed in their homes on the edge of the Boone's Chapel property. The church's student minister lived in a home between the church and the two homes where the family members were killed, and his home was damaged by the tornado.

Members of Boone's Chapel were out the next morning, helping however they could, the Alabama Baptist reported. As he pulled a file folder from the damaged church building, Johnson said, "There's nothing like a

tornado to change your sermon." His sermon the next day was from Lamentations 3 on the unfaithfulness of God. The congregation met at a local high school but was expected to be back on their property for Easter Sunday.

"Our members are definitely saddened, because the chapel was a place with a lot of memories of baptisms, weddings and funerals," Johnson told the North American Mission Board. "But the church was insured and we will rebuild."

The church's music minister may have saved the lives of Johnson and his wife, who had planned to seek shelter at the church. "But he talked

Supreme Court opts not to hear Sunrise Children's Services case

Washington—The U.S. Supreme Court declined to review a lower-court ruling allowing Kentucky taxpayers to sue over public funding of the Kentucky Baptist Convention-affiliated Sunrise Children's Services.

The April 18 order left standing a 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals decision in a discrimination case stemming from the dismissal in 1998 of a former case worker who was terminated after it was revealed she was a lesbian.

The case was merged with a separate action filed by Kentucky taxpayers claiming that state funding to Sunrise Children's Services, formerly known as Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, violated the constitutionally mandated separation of church and state.

Courts denied Alicia Pedreira's religious-discrimination claim, saying it was unclear that her firing for being a lesbian had anything to do with her religious beliefs. The appellate court ruled, however, that taxpayers had a right to sue over what they view as religious indoctrination of children who are wards of the state.

Sunrise Children's Services, which operates 10 residential facilities and sponsors foster

See Supreme Court ... Page 2

Japanese fireman searches rubble to ease others' pain

Sendai, Japan—Masayuki Yamaki slowly picks his way through the slippery black mud toward his crew of yellow- and orange-clad firefighters. He deliberately tries to stay off the debris. It would be easier and faster to walk on the piles but he just can't bring himself to do it.

That's where the people are—the ones Yamaki and his crew search for each day in Japan. Those who did not escape the dark wall of crushing water that struck the coastal city of Sendai March 11. Those who now are known only as "the missing."

Their faces and names line the walls of evacuation centers and are plastered on phone booths and anything else that's left standing in the disaster zone. Local superstitions keep anyone from saying their names aloud. That only affirms the obvious—that the 14,589 still missing are, in fact, dead.

There's not so much as a land-

mark left to identify this once-scenic Japanese coastal village in Myagi prefecture. Yet, after five weeks of searching through the rubble for survivors and then bodies, Yamaki knows it like the back of his hand.

Yamaki, who happens to be a Baptist layman, points out an area of orange rubble where a business once stood. They couldn't escape the waves and now are part of the debris, he tells his longtime friend, International Mission Board missionary Tony Woods. The firefighter turns and points to the only building still standing on its proper foundation. A nursing home used to stand next to it.

"In the hour between the earthquake and the tsunami, we tried to get them ... we rescued a few, but many died there," Yamaki said. "Those first three days, we held out hope for survivors. That's what

See Firefighter searches ... Page 6



RECOVERY EFFORTS Outside of Sendai, Japan, a firefighter searches through the wreckage of destroyed homes, looking for bodies of the missing, presumed to have been killed by the March 11 earthquake and tsunami that devastated parts of the country.

Missions opportunities

Program urges Kentucky Baptists to 'Go'

By Robin Bass
Partnerships Director

Louisville—With all the project dates filled for this year's Go Puerto Rico missions initiative, the Kentucky Baptist Convention now is looking toward summer 2012 when churches and associations will be encouraged to help spread the gospel of Christ in Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique.

"Under our flagship program 'All the World,' our vision is for every Kentucky Baptist church to be deliberately engaged somewhere," said Scott Pittman, the KBC's partnership missions director. "The whole purpose of these initiatives is to expose Kentucky Baptists to a different area so that they can then form ongoing relationships."

Many churches aren't comfortable searching for foreign locations on their own while attempting to fulfill the Great Commission—and that is where KBC and the partnership missions department steps in, Pittman noted.

One of the reasons for getting the word out so early about next year's initiative is the estimated \$3,500 per person needed to transport team members to the region. Pittman said he wanted to give those interested in the project enough time to prepare, especially when considering teams can range from four to 20 people.

Plans are to schedule about 10 project dates with each mission trip lasting one week. Pittman said Cooperative Program

funds are used to keep costs as low as possible so that participating churches and associations will have opportunities to create partnerships of their own.

"What we hope is that while they are there the Lord speaks to them about coming back and they form relationships there that call them back," Pittman said.

Local churches going

John Smith, pastor of Munfordville Baptist Church, said his small church is seeking to develop those relationships with people from other countries. Recently, the congregation helped Bob and Bonnie Parker's Seed Ministry in Ghana build a church by raising \$8,000. But, Smith said, they now are being called to "try something bold for Christ."

At the KBC annual meeting, Smith said he came across information about Go Puerto Rico and thought the mission project was perfectly suited for his church because of the short distance from the U.S. When the 11-member team from Munfordville Baptist travels to Puerto Rico this summer, they will be helping Iglesia Bautista Oasis de Amor in Vallalba with a vacation Bible school for as many as 90 children.

"We're going to help with VBS and whatever else the pastor wants us to do," Smith said. "We're hoping to start a partnership with the (Puerto Rican) church."

Charlie Simmons, the Go Puerto Rico

team leader for High Point Baptist Church in Mayfield, said he has been on more than 50 mission trips. Not so for the nine others going to the U.S. island territory from his church.

"For some, this will be their first time," Simmons pointed out. "We're going to do a VBS and we hope to lead a lot of young people to the Lord."

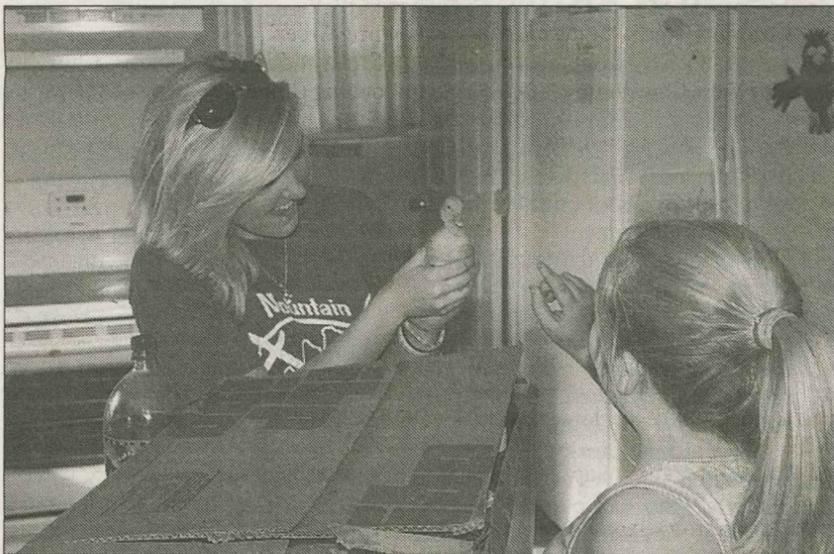
The members of Forest Baptist Church in Louisville was so encouraged to participate in the Go Puerto Rico initiative that they will be sending two teams this summer. Pastor Jamaal Williams said the ages of team members range from 16 to 65.

"God continues to use ordinary people to do extraordinary things," Williams said. He said his hopes are that God will "prick people's hearts" for missions not only during the trip to Puerto Rico, but afterwards when team members share their experiences with the congregation.

Others participating in Go Puerto Rico are teams from Lewisport Baptist Church, Little River and Pulaski Baptist associations and Korean Kentucky Mission.

Churches or associations interested in participating in the missions initiative to the Zimbabwe cluster in 2012 should contact Scott Pittman at Scott.Pittman@KyBaptist.org or visit Go2AlltheWorld.com.

"Our website is filled with opportunities for people to go anywhere in the world," Pittman said.



Sharing food & the gospel

Williamsburg—While delivering food to a family recently, University of the Cumberlands student Nicole McGinnis (left) spends time with a young and her Easter gift, a baby duck.

Students from Cumberlands' Mountain Outreach program used food baskets and vouchers to share the good news of the gospel last week with 100 needy families in Whitley County.

Mountain Outreach had been receiving donations specifically for handing out to families in need during the Easter season, according to director Marc Hensley. In addition to the food that was given primarily to shut-in families, vouchers were handed out, used to buy food such as turkey or ham, potatoes, rolls, vegetables, bread or milk.

Hensley said the student volunteers were responsible for purchasing the food items and making the boxes.

Campbellsville University to host 'Contagious' conference May 16-19

Campbellsville—Campbellsville University will host its "Contagious Churches and Leaders" conference May 16-19 at its Louisville campus.

The event for church leaders seeks to help those who want to improve the church to be relevant in a diverse and polarized society. The conference also will deal with how the gospel can be communicated to a generation that speaks a different language and places importance on a different set of values.

The keynote speaker will be Leonard Sweet, an evangelism professor at Drew University in Madison, N.J., who will discuss postmodern communications.

"This is the third year Campbellsville University has offered a combination class and conference to help equip and train pastors to be learn more about helping your church grow," said Jim Woolums, director of the Louisville Education Cen-

ter and assistant professor of Christian studies. "This year's emphasis is on how the church can use technology, social networking and more appealing worship styles to engage today's generation with the gospel."

Other church leaders at the conference include: Steve Ayers, pastor of Hillvue Heights Church in Bowling Green; Jeff Eaton, pastor of Hope Community Church in Lawrenceburg; Kevin Cosby, pastor of St. Stephen Church in Louisville, and president of Simmons College of Kentucky; and Shane Garrison, assistant professor of educational ministries at Campbellsville's School of Theology.

The cost is \$99 for the full conference and \$69 for a half conference. Contact Chris Conner at CConner@Campbellsville.edu or (877) 428-4723 for information or to register. More information is available at www.ContagiousChurches.com.

Training helps missionaries, others build support network

Louisville—Current or future missionaries, church planters, campus ministers or other full-time Christian servants who are semi- or self-supporting are encouraged to attend Ministry Partner Development School, May 17-20, at the Kentucky Baptist Building in Louisville.

"Men and women in full-time Christian service need ministry partners," said Eric Allen, director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's mission service and ministries department. "This training is about more than learning how to ask for financial support. Missionaries, no matter how they serve, need fellow believers to help them through prayer, hands-on assistance and in many other ways."

The training will be a mixture of lectures with hands-on practice and workshops.

"I think that after people complete this training, they will be equipped and feel more confident to ask others to support them in the work God has called them to," Allen added.

Ministry Partner Development School is made possible by the Kentucky Baptist Convention and the North American Mission Board. The registration fee covers only a portion of the cost associated with the training. The rest is provided by gifts through the Cooperative Program.

Registration fees are \$200 per person or \$225 per couple. Mission Service Corps missionaries pay \$125 individually or \$150 per couple. The cost includes the training manual, workshop and homework materials and lunch each day. Students are responsible for lodging, morning and evening meals and travel.

Online registration is available at NAMB's "Answer the Call" website, www.AnswerTheCall.net. Search "Adult Missionary Opportunities," and "Mission Service Corps" for "Training Opportunities."

Supreme Court declines to hear state funding case for Ky. Baptists' Sunrise

Continued from page 1

ter care with the aid of taxpayer funding, had asked the Supreme Court to reinstate a 2008 ruling by a district judge who dismissed the lawsuit based on new precedent that just being a taxpayer does not give someone the right to sue over a funding decision by government.

With the high court's refusal to hear the case, it now can return to U.S. district court to determine whether Kentucky acted constitutionally in providing funds to a religious organization.

Sunrise Children's Services President Bill Smithwick told the Western Recorder he was not surprised the Supreme Court did not hear the case, but that it was allowed to return to the district court. "It's not a victory or a loss, it's just the litigation process."

Sending the case back to the district-court level essentially puts it back to where it was four years ago, he said.

"So, we go back to that very important

issue" of weighing the constitutionality of state-issued funds for religious groups like Sunrise, Smithwick noted.

"It's an important issue for us (and) it's an important issue for faith-based organizations in Kentucky and across the country," he added.

Smithwick said Sunrise receives as much as 80 percent of its operating budget—which this year is approximately \$24 million—from the commonwealth.

Despite the more than decade-long litigation process, Smithwick insisted the court battle has not affected how Sunrise goes about its mission.

"We still care for the kids like we always have," he said. "We're not coercive in our religious education for the kids. ... That's a part of who we are, but it's not anything that we're pushy about. We just continue to provide good care for the kids, keep them safe (and) help them with their issues."

Compiled from reporting by Associated Baptist Press and News Director Drew Nichter

Kentucky Baptist All State Children's Choir

More than 130 kids from 39 KBC churches will perform at four sites May 1

The public is invited to free performances May 1 of the Kentucky Baptist All State Children's Choirs.

The East and West choirs are comprised of students in grades four through six who auditioned for the group. The choirs will rehearse April 29-30 at Cedarmore and Jonathan Creek Camp and Conference centers prior to the Sunday concerts.

The East choir will perform at 11 a.m., EDT, at Farmdale Baptist Church in Louisville, and at 3:30 p.m. at Union Baptist Church in northern Kentucky.

The West choir will sing at 10:45 a.m., CDT, at Immanuel Baptist Church in Paducah, and at 3 p.m. at Lone Oak First Baptist Church of Paducah.

This year, 131 boys and girls from 39 churches are expected to participate in the All State Children's Choirs.

Directing the East choir is Roxanne Naney, the Kentucky Baptist Convention's preschool/children's music consultant and minister of music at First Baptist Church of Brandenburg. Joyce Cordell of St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville is the assistant director. Lois Summers of First Baptist Church of Frankfort is the accompanist.

Directing the West choir is Lisa Hussung of Rich Pond Baptist Church in Bowling Green. Mary Suggs of First Baptist Church of Bowling Green is the assistant director. Bobbie Sue Chumbler of Lone Oak First Baptist Church of Paducah is the accompanist.

2011 East Choir:

- Alexis Adams**, First Baptist Church of Fisherville.
- Skyler Arterburn**, First Baptist Church of London.
- Nathan Bain**, Sovereign Grace Church in Lawrenceburg.
- Tilly Baldwin**, First Baptist Church of Richmond.
- Jake Ballard**, First Baptist Church of Richmond.
- Holly Blansette**, Fern Creek Baptist Church in Louisville.
- Cierra Bowman**, Parkland Baptist Church in Louisville.
- Chelsea Brak**, Springfield Baptist Church.
- Lauren Brown**, Valley View Church in Louisville.
- Bethany Cissel**, First Baptist Church of Versailles.
- Alex Cobb**, First Baptist Church of Owenton.
- Billy Conn**, Cornerstone Baptist Church in Lexington.
- Molly Cornett**, Emmanuel Baptist Church in Stanton.
- Anna Cox**, Cornerstone Baptist Church in Lexington.
- Mason Craycroft**, First Baptist Church of Brandenburg.
- Clayton Dalton**, Beacon Hill Baptist Church in Somerset.
- Abbey Daugherty**, First Baptist Church of Fisherville.
- Molly Denzik**, Valley View Church in Louisville.
- Anna Grace Ehr**, First Baptist Church of Lawrenceburg.
- Abigail Etherton**, First Baptist Church of Fisherville.
- Morgan Flecke**, Crescent Hill Baptist Church in Louisville.
- Jenna Goin**, Parkland Baptist Church in Louisville.
- Kayla Gravid**, Valley View Church in Louisville.
- Haley Hack**, Valley View Church in Louisville.



Malorie Hall, Cornerstone Baptist Church in Lexington.

Zoe Hall, Highland Baptist Church in Louisville.

Chase Harberson, Southern Heights Baptist Church in Lexington.

Faith Harris, Valley View Church in Louisville.

Missy Heke, Beacon Hill Baptist Church in Somerset.

Isaac Hopkins, First Baptist Church of Frankfort.

Alyssa Howie, First Baptist Church of Fisherville.

Whitley Howlett, First Baptist Church of Mount Washington.

Bradley Hughes, First Baptist Church of Frankfort.

Amiya Hunt, Pleasureville Baptist Church.

Bailey King, First Baptist Church of Brandenburg.

Rachel Kinman, First Baptist Church of Versailles.

Madison Lauer, Campbellsville Baptist Church.

Micah Lauer, Campbellsville Baptist Church.

Lindsey Leap, Southern Heights Baptist Church in Lexington.

Malinda Lemons, Cornerstone Baptist Church in Lexington.

Alley Loudenburg, Springfield Baptist Church.

Sam Midkiff, First Baptist Church of Frankfort.

Alec Poore, Main Street Baptist Church in Williamsburg.

Kelsey Powell, First Baptist Church of Richmond.

Kleine Powell, First Baptist Church of Richmond.

Jodi Ransdell, First Baptist Church of Owenton.

Parker Ridings, Millville Baptist Church in Frankfort.

Hannah Robb, Parkland Baptist Church in Louisville.

Michael Sainato, Southern Heights Baptist Church in Lexington.

James Sams, Millville Baptist Church in Frankfort.

Nicholas Settle, Millville Baptist Church in Frankfort.

Joshua Simpson, First Baptist Church of Frankfort.

Olivia Simpson, First Baptist Church of Frankfort.

Kristen Smith, Campbellsville Baptist Church.

Whitney Smith, Campbellsville Baptist Church.

Kaylee Snell, First Baptist Church of Owenton.

Joshua Spaulding, Greenup Fork Baptist Church in Owenton.

Hannah Stephens, Main Street Baptist Church in Williamsburg.

Evan Stewart, Parkland Baptist Church in Louisville.

Bryce Teate, Valley View Church in Louisville.

Garrett Theodore-Powell, First Baptist Church of Richmond.

Caryn Thomas, Living Hope Baptist Church in Louisville.

Jonathan Thompson, First Baptist Church of Frankfort.

Allison Tonkel, First Baptist Church of London.

Sydney Tucker, Campbellsville Baptist Church.

Paxton Vaughn, Highland Baptist Church in Louisville.

Anne Russell Waits, Springfield Baptist Church.

Elissa Warner, Cornerstone Baptist Church in Lexington.

Shelby Weathersby, Highland Baptist Church in Louisville.

Katherine Whitaker, Main Street Baptist Church in Williamsburg.

Sam Womack, Valley View Church in Louisville.

2011 West Choir:

Chandler Acquaviva, Beaver Dam Baptist Church.

Natalie Allen, First Baptist Church of Kuttawa.

Chelsea Arnold, Hartford Baptist Church.

Jacob Autry, Beaver Dam Baptist Church.

Silas Baird, Hartford Baptist Church.

Zane Birdsong, Immanuel Baptist Church in Paducah.

Ashton Blakeman, Rich Pond Baptist Church in Bowling Green.

Jaren Blakeman, Rich Pond Baptist Church in Bowling Green.

Karis Bogle, Rich Pond Baptist Church in Bowling Green.

Audrey Bondurant, Lone Oak First Baptist Church of Paducah.

Emma Brogli, Rich Pond Baptist Church in Bowling Green.

Anna Cate Brown, First Baptist Church of Murray.

Diana Brown, Cave City Baptist Church.

Forrest Burden, First Baptist Church of Bowling Green.

Joe Camiller, Lone Oak First Baptist Church of Paducah.

Cailee Carter, Cave City Baptist Church.

Kelsey Coates, Rich Pond Baptist Church in Bowling Green.

Morgan Collins, Cave City Baptist Church.

Liam Coursey, First Baptist Church of Madisonville.

Charlie Cummings, First Baptist Church of Bowling Green.

Ben Daniel, First Baptist Church of Bowling Green.

Erin Daniels, Cave City Baptist Church.

Emily Ruth Drew, First Baptist Church of Murray.

Cameron Durbin, Lone Oak First Baptist Church of Paducah.

Hannah Edminster, First Baptist Church of Murray.

Cade Estes, Lone Oak First Baptist Church of Paducah.

Layton Estes, Lone Oak First Baptist Church of Paducah.

Mollie Forbis, Cave City Baptist Church.

Julia Forsythe, Rich Pond Baptist Church in Bowling Green.

Alexis Fortner, First Baptist Church of Murray.

Asmita Gill, Rich Pond Baptist Church in Bowling Green.

Richard Gill, Rich Pond Baptist Church in Bowling Green.

Megan Graham, Rich Pond Baptist Church in Bowling Green.

Ashtyn Gray, Hawesville Baptist Church.

Ashton Howton, Hawesville Baptist Church.

Libby Lewis, Immanuel Baptist Church in Paducah.

Chloe Lovins, First Baptist Church of Murray.

Wil Lovins, First Baptist Church of Murray.

Mariah Lyons, First Baptist Church of Murray.

Ashley Madden, First Baptist Church of Bowling Green.

Keelie Martin, Rich Pond Baptist Church in Bowling Green.

Logan Mattingly, First Baptist Church of Murray.

Madeline McCay, First Baptist Church of Madisonville.

Lilly Minnich, First Baptist Church of Bowling Green.

Leah Mosgrove, Hartford Baptist Church.

Rachel Oakley, First Baptist Church of Kuttawa.

Ashlee O'Bryan, Macedonia Baptist Church in Owensboro.

Breeze Patterson, Beaver Dam Baptist Church.

Ethan Peck, Immanuel Baptist Church in Paducah.

Emma Robinson, Hawesville Baptist Church.

Jaymi Smart, Rich Pond Baptist Church in Bowling Green.

Anna Suggs, First Baptist Church of Bowling Green.

Grace Thornton, Rich Pond Baptist Church in Bowling Green.

Cody Tynes, Immanuel Baptist Church in Paducah.

Ashtyn Vandiver, Rich Pond Baptist Church in Bowling Green.

Gresham Veazey, First Baptist Church of Bowling Green.

Madison Wells, First Baptist Church of Bowling Green.

Matti Whitedge, First Baptist Church of Morganfield.

Cortney Withrow, Cave City Baptist Church.

Why belong to KBC?

I recently received an e-mail with a question posed by a local church to the effect of "Why should we cooperate with other churches through the Kentucky Baptist Convention?" For me, the following are compelling reasons:

Partners in the Mission



By Bill Mackey

Common purpose: Kentucky Baptist churches organize for the purpose of cooperating in carrying out the Great Commission. Churches realized that we can be even more effective working together. The KBC adopted a unified budget as early as 1915 to fund missions work and then joined with other state conventions to form the Southern Baptist Convention in 1845 to cooperate in national and international missions. In 1925, the SBC and state conventions created a unified budget plan called the Cooperative Program, which God has blessed.

Clear strategy: Carrying out the Great Commission requires more than just good intentions. Kentucky Baptists have consequently developed—in collaboration with church, association and denominational partners—clear strategic plans to reach out to Kentucky and the world with the gospel. These plans are regularly evaluated, adjusted and refined so they remain creative, relevant and effective.

Needs are met: Working together as a convention of churches ensures consistent support for missions and ministries. Because of the Cooperative Program and missions offerings, our missionaries do not have to raise funds or worry about losing support. Because Kentucky Baptists work together, every church is involved in ministering to abused children, providing higher education with a Christian worldview, planting churches, reaching language groups, developing and training church leaders, providing disaster relief and so much more.

Results: Lives are transformed every day and about one million people are baptized every year by Southern Baptists as a result of our state, national and international missions cooperation. In Kentucky, we are seeing results through outreach to internationals, ministry to college students, high impact church plants and many other efforts.

About 1,500 professions of faith and 3,000 other decisions were reported by KBC ministries last year beyond the thousands reached in churches. Additionally, more than 25,000 church leaders are equipped annually by the Mission Board staff. The "Find It Here" evangelistic efforts of the last two years have delivered a witness to about 1.5 million persons.

Accountability: A leader in a large independent church shared how his church was sending out many checks per month without adequate reports. This led to a decision by the church to become a part of the SBC and KBC. Accountability isn't glamorous, but it is so important. KBC provides receipts for every gift monthly. Reports are received twice each year from entities, and a Mission Board-elected audit committee reviews all entity and KBC annual audits.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

How do you see Jesus?

Last week, in a television show that aired on the History Channel, an Israeli-Canadian journalist claimed to have possibly tracked down two of the actual nails of Jesus' cross in an ossuary thought to be that of the High Priest Caiaphas—intriguing, but not likely. Still, a photograph of the nails was a stark reminder of the brutality and unfathomable agony that Jesus suffered, as the movie, "The Passion of Christ," so vividly depicted several years ago. I've read and heard the crucifixion story numerous times, and yet each time some detail always seems to recapture my fascination. This year, as I contemplated the seven last words of Jesus, I was particularly struck by the account of the penitent thief in Luke 23:39-43. In Matthew's and Mark's accounts, both of the thieves who were crucified with Jesus hurled insults at Him, but in Luke's account one turns penitent. "The Interpreter's Bible Commentary" notes that J.A. Findlay, who wrote a commentary on Luke, calls this passage "Luke's greatest contribution to the Passion story." I have to agree.



After Thought

By Todd Deaton

In just four short verses, we encounter both our human predicament and divine deliverance. It comprises a mini-gospel. In effect, the Gospel reader arrives at a disconcerting awareness that each of us is in the same predicament as the two thieves: "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). And, we all stand condemned; our deserved punishment, death: "For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). Like those two thieves, we find ourselves desperate for a Savior—whether we want to admit it or not. Some, unfortunately, will refuse to recognize Jesus as the Messiah.

One thief, however, made an amazing declaration of faith—incredible, but not implausible. "Remember me when you come into your kingdom," he requested. In essence, he was declaring Jesus to be the Messiah. What is so amazing to me is that he did this while they were suffering intense agony, despair and hopelessness as objects of pervasive scorn, insults, brutality and humiliation. How could anyone under this kind of physical and mental duress ever see someone who is dying in the same manner as the Savior?

What was it that he saw in Jesus that day? Was it His humble spirit and complete obedience to God? Was he moved by Jesus' prayer: "Father, for-

give them?" Had he seen how earlier they had cruelly beat and ridiculed an innocent man? Or, had he once seen Jesus heal the sick, bring sight to the blind, enable the lame to walk, and raise the dead? Had he sat on a hillside among the crowd listening to the Sermon on the Mount or witnessed Jesus feeding 5,000 people? Did he know about Jesus walking on the water or calming a storm? Luke doesn't tell us. We have no way of knowing what prompted this remarkable profession of faith.

This thief corrects the other: "Don't you even fear God? This man has done nothing wrong. We deserve our punishment, but he doesn't." If you had been there that day, with which thief would you have sided? Would you, too, have joined the masses in insulting and scoffing at Jesus? Would you have taunted the Savior: "Aren't you the Messiah? Save yourself and us?" Or, would you have been one to defend the rejected Messiah as He hung bleeding and gasping? Are we as quick today to stand up for Jesus—even in the face of persecution—or do we sit by and passively allow others to ridicule our faith in Him?

Don't miss Jesus' reply to the thief's request. "Today you will be with me in paradise," He assured. Herein is the hope and wonder of God's grace: "But God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us! Much more then, since we have now been declared righteous by His blood, we will be saved through Him from wrath" (Romans 5:8-9). The thief receives far more than he ever dreamed: not one day soon, but today! Jesus' words attest that our God is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine (Ephesians 3:20). Indeed, death is no longer an exit to life, but an entrance into eternity. And, because of Jesus' resurrection we have the assurance that "if you confess with your mouth 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Romans 10:9).

In the story of the penitent thief, we see the victory of Easter: "For this is the will of My Father: that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day" (John 6:40). Christ has opened paradise! Alleluia! But as with the two thieves, it ultimately comes down to our answer to the question: How do you see Jesus?

Flowers 'dancing' amidst the rubble

By Naomi Paget

The stench is terrible—mud, organic decomposition, mold, death and destruction. The roads are muddy, sickly and smelly. I will never forget the sights and smells of Ishinomaki, Japan, and the tsunami that has left its horrible mark.

In the manner of the Japanese, debris that has already been picked is neatly stacked along the narrow streets, waiting for proper disposal. This alone is a monumental task. Most of the block-long stacks stand 10 feet high and are at least four feet wide.

As we walk along the narrow, debris-lined streets, we see mile after mile of twisted metal, shredded wood, broken glass and crushed plastic. The sights don't change the farther we go. It seems like reruns of nightmares with little hope of waking up. Wrecked cars are stacked in piles, with mud acting as mortar to create walls—hiding the broken re-

mains of hurting lives.

We watch a small woman carry a two-gallon bucket of mud and debris from her home. During the last four weeks, she managed to clear her little yard. It's neat and tidy, even without the landscape of shrubbery and trees that certainly were a part of this traditional little home before the tsunami.

In the Japanese way, she carries her little bucket about 20 feet down the street to dump the contents in an "appropriate place"—maintaining the integrity of the wall of debris. I don't think she would ever have considered dumping it anywhere else. Convenience would never have dictated where she deposited the bucket of mud. Japanese would only dispose of it in the "right" way.

We stop to visit with her, inquiring of her well-being and needs. She says she is managing

and doesn't need help. She bows to thank us for inquiring of her situation. That's when we notice her little flower bed with pansies and petunias gaily dancing in the breeze. The contrast is so great, we comment on their beauty.

"My world is so ugly when I look at my neighborhood. I could not bear to see it anymore. The flowers give me pleasure," she says. "There is still beauty in the world—somewhere."

This is a strong woman in Ishinomaki—a woman who waits patiently for her world to change.

How do I help her see the beauty that is Jesus? How do I help her be strong and take heart, waiting patiently for something truly worthwhile?

Jesus could be the dancing face of pansies in the middle of the mud and wreckage that is Ishinomaki. (BP)

Naomi Paget is a fellow with the American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress. She is a Southern Baptist disaster relief specialist and a member of First Baptist Church in Bellville, Texas, who is helping train Japanese Baptists to respond to the crisis in their country.



Box 43969
Louisville, KY 40253

DR. TODD DEATON
Editor

DREW NICTER
News Director

THOMAS C. TOWNSEND
Marketing & Business Manager

Board of Directors:
Floyd Price (chairman), Richmond;
Skip Alexander (vice chairman),
Campbellsville;
Duane Bolin, Murray;
Bill Edmonds, Louisville;
Dan Francis, Erlanger;
Chip Hutcheson, Princeton;
Lanna Kilgore, Bowling Green;
Paul Nunn, Prestonsburg;
Willis Polk, Lexington;
June Rice, Paintsville;
Wayne Spivey, Harrodsburg;
Dan Summerlin, Paducah.

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

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

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

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

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

www.WesternRecorder.org

Calling: Discovering what we're meant to do in life

I watch my university students closely in their academic struggles, and sometimes wonder about the values they take with them from their undergraduate years. Other than the grades on a transcript, what do they really gain from a Murray State education. As the perceptive Southern novelist and essayist Walker Percy claimed, "You can get all A's and still flunk life."

How will they make a living, but more importantly, how will they make a life? I am convinced that to make sense of our lives and to make our lives count, we must have a strong and sure calling. Not just a job. Not just an occupation. Not just a career. But a calling or a vocation, an English word derived from the Latin "vocare," which means literally "to call."

My father was called to be a Baptist minister. Ministers and missionaries speak of being called by God for a life of ministry—and I can think of no higher calling—but I believe that men and women can be called to so-called secular vocations, too.

For some, the call for a life's work comes as a sort of sudden epiphany. A school field trip to a hospital might convince a young girl or boy that medical school calls. An early morning visit to a barn might convince a teenager that life on a farm is the life for him or her. A student in a classroom or a player on a team might sudden-

ly realize that they could be a teacher or coach. God calls each of us, first to come into a saving relationship with Him, and then to a life's work, which may change at different stages of one's life. And epiphanies do happen.

For some, like me, a calling has come in fits and starts, with a door cracked open here and another door closed there. We all would like to be sure that we live and do and work in our callings, whatever those callings may be.

According to Oz Guinness in his book, "The Call," "The bricklayer with the trowel, the farmer behind the plow, the artist before the easel, the chef beside the oven, the magistrate presiding at the bench, the teacher in the classroom, the nurse by the bedside, the parent at the crib—each one is to live out his or her calling in joy and service."

The writer/theologian Frederick Buechner said that our calling is the place where "our deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." According to Buechner, a good rule for finding one's vocation is this: "This special mission in our life is usually (a.) that which we need most to do or love to do; and (b.) it is work that the world most needs to have done."

Buechner says "that if we really get a kick out of our work, we have probably met requirement (a.), but if that work is writing TV deodorant commercials, chances are we haven't met requirement (b.). If our work is being a doctor in a leper colony, we probably have requirement (b.) covered, but if most of the time we are bored and depressed by doctoring, the chances are we have not only bypassed requirement (a.), we probably aren't helping our patients much, either." Our calling is the place where "our deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."

The Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard wrote in his journal, "The thing is to understand myself, to see what God really wants me to do; the thing is to find a truth which is true for me, to find the idea for which I can live and die." Or as the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins put it, "What I do is me: for that I came."

If a college education is worth its salt, and if a church is on mission to win the lost and disciple the found, these institutions should also guide students and congregants toward a sense of calling, what they are meant to do in their lives, and how they are meant to live in adoration and service for the Lord.

Duane Bolin teaches in the Department of History at Murray State University and in Sunday school at Murray, Kentucky's First Baptist Church.

A Letter from the Laity



Duane Bolin

Help for marriages in crisis

By Valerie Vincent

Often couples in crisis seek out a marriage counselor. The problem is the time limitation. One 50-minute session per week is often not enough. When a couple is in major crisis, a marriage emergency room is needed,

rather than a doctor's visit. Several organizations now offer "marriage intensives," from one- to multiple-day events that provide a couple in crisis with the focused time and help needed until their marriage becomes more stable. Marriage intensives can be an essential investment to save a marriage from a trip to the attorney's office. Some intensives available for consideration:

- Imago workshops are offered in Indianapolis, Ind., and Lexington, Ky., in May and June. Imago workshops are based on the book, "Getting the Love You Want," by Harville Hendrix, a pastoral counselor and psychologist, www.gettingtheloveyouwant.com.

- Multiple marriage intensive workshops are offered in May and June in Branson, Mo., by the National Institute of Marriage, founded by Smalley Ministries. The Institute is a Christian organization, www.nationalmarriage.com.

- The Smalley Center offers one-, two- and three-day programs called Marriage Restoration Intensive. Led by either Amy or Michael Smalley or one of the Smalley marriage coaches, these marriage intensives are located in Texas, www.hope.smalley.cc.

- A New Beginning is a three-day workshop created by Family Dynamics Institute that is offered nearby in Nashville, Tenn. The Family Dynamics Institute is a Christian organization intent on transforming bad marriages, www.savemymarriage.com.

- The Center for Relational Care, a partner with Intimate Life Ministries, offers four-day marriage intensives. Intensives are offered regularly throughout the year at Chick-fil-A's WinShape Retreat in Rome, Ga., www.relationalcare.org.

- Retrouvaille is a Christian organization committed to the healing of marriages. It is a one-day event next scheduled for Owensboro in August and Louisville in September, www.retrouvaille.org.

- LovePath 911 Marriage Seminar is especially aimed at rescuing marriages hurt by an affair. The three-day seminars are scheduled for May through August in Nashville, Tenn., www.marriagehelper.com.

- MarriageRestored offers weekend events. The next one offered is May 20-22 in Lexington, Ky., www.marriagerestored.com.

The ReGeneration Experience is a Christian approach for couples in crisis. The next four-day experience is June 16-19 in Sevierville, Tenn., www.foreverfamilies.com.

Valerie Vincent is a Christian counselor with Hardy Associates in Louisville.

Widely differing views

By Doug Strader

In a recent issue of Leadership Magazine, there was an article entitled, Money, Meet Mouth. The article alleged that pastors and church members hold widely different views on tithing. The article uses a study that was conducted by Ellison Research and Gallup that shows a big gap in the 10 percent rule. The study found the following:

- 56 percent of clergy said that there was a biblical mandate for Christians to give 10 percent of their income to their church, but only 30 percent of protestant church members believe that the Bible mandates tithing. The study also found that the two denominations that adhere the closest to the tithing mandate in the Bible are Pentecostals and Southern Baptists.

- The study also found that generosity also shows in more ways than money. For instance, regular churchgoers are more likely to volunteer their time for charitable organizations; 62 percent of the respondents donate to both religious and non-religious groups.

- There are some disconcerting aspects to be gained from the research. Maybe the most disconcerting is the fact that only a little more than half of the protestant ministers surveyed believe that the Bible teaches tithing in the local church. If pastors do not preach tithing to their churches, how will they become good stewards of their resources on their own?

Another disconcerting fact is that only three out of 10 church members believe that tithing is a biblical mandate. Some surveys among Southern Baptists reveal that only a very small percent of church members actually tithe. Some people say that the average Southern Baptist gives only 3 or 4 percent of his/her income to the Lord through the church. That figure would tend to back up research by other survey groups.

Southern Baptists can find some consolation in the fact that in general we scored better in the research than most others. However, we cannot boast because the percentage of tithers among Southern Baptists is continuing to decline. In the average Southern Baptist Church, 15 to 20 percent of the members are giving 80 to 90 percent of the money that the churches receive.

Doug Strader, retired director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's stewardship department, is pastor of Farmdale Baptist Church in Louisville.



Confronting physical and psychological abuse in dating

By Carra Hughes Greer

I am a regular viewer of several reality shows including "Sixteen and Pregnant," "Teen Mom" and now "Teen Mom 2." I have been asked by many youth parents whether they should

allow their teenagers to watch these shows based on teens getting pregnant and becoming moms. My answer is always the same: "Yes!"

Some might assume these shows glamorize pregnancy or motherhood, but nothing about these shows is glamorous. Week after week, we see mostly dead-beat teenage dads walking out on their "Baby Mama" and teenage mothers left abandoned and alone.

Watching these shows week after week, a trend began to emerge. I began to notice serious verbal, mental and physical abuse between girlfriends and boyfriends.

One night, while watching a teenage girl on "Teen Mom 2" reduced to a shell of herself from the verbal abuse of her boyfriend I began to cry. And as the emotions in me stirred and began to boil over, I realized I had a story to tell.

As a young woman in college, I was constantly verbally abused by my boyfriend.

"Why didn't you just break up?" you might ask. These types of relationships are not easily exited. The mental abuse and manipulation happened so gradually. At the same time, my boyfriend was encouraging

FIRST PERSON

me to alienate myself from family and close friends.

Slowly, a transformation was taking place in me. I was changing from an independent young woman into a needy, co-dependent, numb, empty person.

One night, in the heat of an argument, my boyfriend grabbed my arm so fiercely and tightly I began to scream and cry. This only fueled his anger and tightened his grip. I remember his eyes and the rage behind them. I was so scared. He finally released me and I ran to the safety of my room. I sat, tearfully watching a bright red image of his hand appear around my arm.

I made myself a promise in the dark of my room that night, "No one will do this to you again."

Part of my calling into ministry and why I work with teenagers, is to share my story. Often times, youth ministers and parents focus their teachings on sex, either not having sex before marriage or safe sex prac-

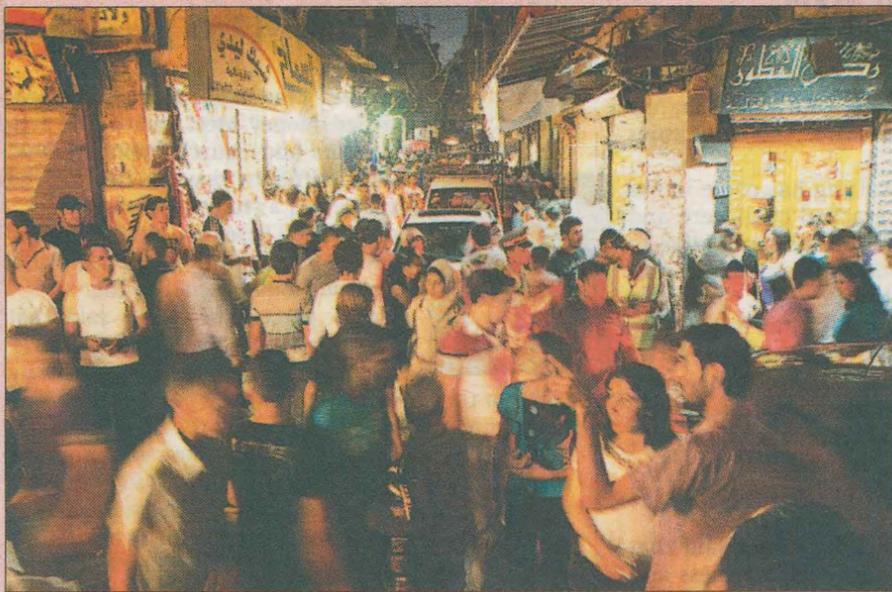
tices. We fail to teach teenagers about what constitutes abuse and how to respond if you find yourself in an abusive dating relationship.

Physical and psychological abuse can happen to anyone, even in a dating relationship. Often, mental abuse is overlooked because it does not leave physical scars, but the mental and emotional scars are very real to the victim. It is a myth that men cannot be abused by women. Abuse can happen to any person, of any race, any gender, any size.

It is my hope that by sharing my story, others will be compelled to share their stories as well. Victims of abuse often feel a sense of responsibility for what is happening to them, but open channels of communication and dialogue give women and men a place to share about the abuse they have experienced.

It is so important that we as Baptist ministers and leaders equip our teens with the resources they need to recognize abusive words or actions. These issues should be included in our "sex talks" and "dating talks" at youth group and at home. Please talk to your teenagers today. (ABP)

Carra Hughes Greer is minister to families with youth at Smoke Rise Baptist Church in Stone Mountain, Ga.



Workers in N. Africa, Mideast urge 21 days of prayer, fasting

By Ava Thomas
International Mission Board

In the crescendo of turmoil across North Africa and the Middle East, people have cried out for something different, something big.

It's time believers in the West do the same thing, said Drew Carson*, a Southern Baptist worker among people in that region.

That's why he and others have called for 21 days of prayer and fasting to ask God to do something big in the lives of the peoples of North Africa and the Middle East. The emphasis, stretching through Mother's Day (May 8), encourages believers to "pray outside the box" for the salvation of the region's peoples and for believers working among them.

"A question that is shaping my heart these days is, 'What can I ask of the Lord that only He can do, and if He does it only He can get the glory?'" Carson said. "As I watched the demonstrations across (the region), this question caused me to remember the children of Israel as they cried out while they suffered in the land of Goshen."

God reached out in response to their cries and prepared a way of redemption, Carson recalled. He said he hopes believers in the West will join workers in North Africa and the Middle East in crying out to God in the same way.

Intensive prayer is needed on behalf of people who are seeking change and salvation while believing they can get it from the government, Carson said.

"Join me as we ask the Lord to speak to us as we listen to Him," he said. "Also let us ask Him to see His kingdom come among our peoples as we lift them to Him."

Natalie Shepherd*, another worker in the region, said the 21 days are an opportunity for Christian workers to "be still and know that He is God in the midst of history-shaking events occurring among our peoples and governments all around us."

During this time, workers in the region are asking that God speak to them collectively about how to best reach their peoples amid the tumult, Shepherd said.

"We're saying, 'God speak to us, Your servants, so we know what You want to do in this critical hour among our peoples,'" Shepherd said.

All who pray are asked to send what they hear from the Lord to 4ThyName@post4us.com.

"Our plan is to compile these responses, look for the patterns, connect the dots and then celebrate what He says to us so we can rapidly obey His instructions," Shepherd said.

The church in the West likewise is challenged to pray for God's leadership for the workers as well as the salvation of the peoples they work among, Shepherd added.

For more information on how to pray for the peoples of North Africa and the Middle East, visit NamePeoples.IMB.org. *Names changed for security reasons

Firefighter's search for missing eases pain for Japanese people

Continued from page 1

drove us. By the fourth day, well, we knew."

For Yamaki and the 22,000 others combing through the wreckage, finding the missing and identifying them is a high priority. Yamaki explained that the Japanese place a particular value on the physical remains—no matter the religious beliefs.

"That's why by the fourth day, our focus was not for the sake of the victims but for the sake of the ones waiting and hoping to find someone they could grieve over," Yamaki said. "We continue the search for those still living—so they can grieve the dead."

"When a person dies and we don't recover the body, it's a tragedy many in Japan may never recover from," Yamaki added. "They don't have that physical presence to grieve over, to prepare (for cremation) or to say goodbye."

Yamaki explained that while Christians like him believe the spirit and "real person" have gone on to be with the Father, Buddhists believe the body carries the spirit. This makes the recovery of bodies all the more important.

The firefighter stops walking and spreads his arms out, gesturing to Woods that in this area alone, an estimated 1,000 still are missing. Many tried to escape the oncoming wave by jumping into their cars. Yamaki tells his friend there still are hundreds of cars, most likely with bodies, under the rubble.

"If you see a big mound of debris, you know there will be bodies," Yamaki said, pointing to a large pile.

He tentatively jabs his walking stick through an opening in the debris. The firefighter said the stick helps him know if there is a body buried.

"When you touch something organic, there is a different feel—soft and cushiony," Yamaki explained. "I always pray it will be a futon mattress."

His eyes grow teary. He regains his composure quickly, and Woods puts a reassuring hand on his friend's shoulder and asks if he's OK.

Yamaki nods and says that this search is personal for most of his crew. They grew up in this area. They are finding the bodies of people they know—fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, neighbors and friends.



HOPE CONTINUES Hirasuka Kiiko (left), a resident of Ishinomaki, Japan, and Nan Jordan, an IMB missionary in Kyoto, Japan, read descriptions of missing individuals more than a month after the March 11 earthquake and tsunami devastated the nation. Faces and names line the walls of evacuation centers and are plastered on any structures left standing in the disaster zone.

After several weeks, the search just gets more difficult. Decomposition makes it difficult to identify remains. Dental or medical records that might help were washed away in the tsunami.

Finding a decaying corpse is a difficult experience, even for seasoned rescue workers, Yamaki said. "It's really, really awful. We are professionals and trained to do this, but we are humans first."

"We hear words of support from all over the world," Yamaki continued. "What I want to hear the most is for people to say that they are praying for us. I know that prayer can be the most effective and powerful tool of all."

"I just want to hear that people are praying for us. We are down. We are sad and grieving."

Nighttime is hardest for Yamaki and his crew—that's when they are alone and their feelings finally come to the surface, when the enormous task they've been asked to do seems impossible.

No one verbalizes it, but they know not everyone will be found. Yamaki isn't even sure the estimated numbers are correct. If entire families were washed out to sea, who's left to report them missing?

The firefighter shakes his head and admits there's no way to really grasp the magnitude of the disaster and its lasting effects on his country. All he knows is that despite his best efforts, no one but God will ever know the true number or say all the names of "the missing." (BP)

Cuban pastor freed after three years in prison, told not to preach or leave

Havana, Cuba—A pastor in Cuba recently was released from a six-and-a-half-year prison sentence on the condition that he not preach or leave town.

Omar Gude Perez is the leader of a house-church network that is not recognized by Cuba's government. He originally was charged in May 2008 with human trafficking, but judges in Havana threw out those charges as baseless, according to a March 28 report from the Christian Solidarity Worldwide human rights organization.

Perez then was convicted in July 2009 on charges of "falsification of documents." Prosecutors claimed he had illegally taken his stepfather's family name, even though official records show his legal surname

actually is Gude Perez.

Perez and his family said they believe he was targeted because of his leadership position in the church network, CSW reported.

Motive for persecution?

"We are relieved to learn that Pastor Gude Perez has finally been released from prison after spending almost three years there, in horrendous conditions, on false charges," Stuart Windsor, national director for Christian Solidarity Worldwide, said following Perez's release.

"We are deeply concerned that as a condition of his release, Pastor Gude Perez has been prohibited from preaching, although this also exposes the government's motives behind its persecution of him." (BP)



We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints.

Colossians 1:3-4



Kentucky Baptists are invited to a retirement reception

IN HONOR OF
KBC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Bill Mackey and his wife, Kay

MAY 10, 12 P.M., EDT
KENTUCKY BAPTIST BUILDING
13420 EASTPOINT CENTRE DRIVE
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

FOR DIRECTIONS PLEASE VISIT
WWW.KYBAPTIST.ORG
(502) 245-4101 OR
(866) 266-6477 (TOLL-FREE IN KY)

Survey: Pastors' skepticism of global warming on the rise

Nashville, Tenn.—Protestant pastors are more skeptical about global warming today than they were two years ago.

That is the finding of a LifeWay Research survey which also found that pastors' views on the subject vary widely by denomination, education, location and political ideology.

When asked to respond to the statement, "I believe global warming is real and manmade," 41 percent of pastors strongly disagreed, up from 27 percent in a similar survey conducted in 2008. That marks an increase of more than 50 percent.

According to the 2010 survey, 19 percent of pastors somewhat disagreed with the statement, 13 percent somewhat agreed and 23 percent strongly agreed.

By comparison, a quarter of pastors strongly agreed in 2008 that global warming is real and manmade.

According to the Pew Research Center, this trend among pastors parallels a trend among Americans in general. Between 2008 and 2010, the percentage of Americans who said there is no solid evidence that the earth is warming increased from 21 percent to 32 percent. In addition, in 2010, 34 percent said the earth is warming because of human activity, down from 47 percent in 2008.

"Pastors' sentiments on global warming have shifted right in step

with Americans in general," noted Scott McConnell, director of LifeWay Research. "The number of pastors who are firmly convinced global warming is manmade has not changed much, but many who were beginning to agree during the 2008 election cycle now strongly disagree."

Evangelical and mainline pastors are divided on global warming. A majority of evangelicals (68 percent) disagree strongly or somewhat that global warming is real and manmade, compared with 45 percent of mainline pastors.

Almost 45 percent of evangelicals strongly disagree, but only 30 percent of mainline pastors feel the same. In contrast, more than a third (39 percent) of mainline pastors strongly agree that global warming is real and manmade, but only 14 percent of evangelical pastors strongly agree.

Pastors who are Democrats are most likely to strongly agree that global warming is real and manmade. Republicans are most likely to strongly disagree and independents are in the middle.

A full 65 percent of Democrats strongly agree, along with 24 percent of independents and 6 percent of Republicans that global warming is real and manmade. But 57 percent of Republicans strongly disagree, along with 36 percent of independents and 6 percent of Democrats.

Pastors in the South (17 percent) are least likely to strongly agree that global warming is real and manmade. Pastors in the Northeast (26 percent) are least likely to strongly disagree.

Level of education also corresponds to pastors' opinions of global warming. Those who have earned at least a master's degree are more likely to strongly agree and less likely to strongly disagree that global warming is both real and manmade.

Twenty-eight percent of pastors with at least a master's degree strongly agree, and 36 percent strongly disagree. By comparison, 14 percent with a bachelor's degree or less strongly agree, and 50 percent strongly disagree.

Half of Protestant pastors (52 percent) address the issue of the environment to their churches once a year or less—virtually unchanged compared to 2008 (50 percent).

Pastors with a master's degree or higher speak on the environment more often than those with a bachelor's degree or less. Fully 60 percent of those with graduate degrees speak on the environment at least once a year.

That includes 30 percent who speak on it several times a year, 14 percent who speak about once a year, 9 percent who speak about once a month and 7 percent who speak several times a month about the environment.



Churches, relief teams clean up in wake of Southern storm system

Continued from page 1

me into staying put in our home. It was an intervention of God."

At about the same time last year, Johnson was pastor at First Baptist Church of Albertville, Ala., when a tornado destroyed portions of that community. He said he believes that experience helped prepare him for the disaster and rebuilding process that is to come at Boone's Chapel.

At the request of the local school board, four Southern Baptist disaster relief chaplains were counseling adults and children at a school near Boone's Chapel last week, according to Mel Johnson, disaster relief coordinator for the Alabama Baptist Convention.

"We've even already had some decisions for Christ," Mel Johnson said, adding that 10 chainsaw and recovery teams with more than 100 volunteers have been deployed in Alabama.

In Virginia, the sanctuary at Zoar Baptist Church in Deltaville was destroyed along with 28 homes in the community. The Southside Sentinel reported that a tornado "tore the roof off of Zoar Baptist Church and knocked down the two side walls. A painting of Jesus above the altar was unscathed. The church fellowship hall also was damaged but not as severely."

In Atoka, Okla., Hillcrest Baptist Church suffered structural damage particularly to one corner of the building, according to a pastor in the area.

Jeff Self, pastor of First Baptist Church of Coalgate, Okla., told Baptist Press he drove by Hillcrest, and it looked like the parsonage behind the church was destroyed. He wasn't sure if the pastor had been living there.

"They had an educational building that was pretty well damaged, too," Self said. "Our area got hit pretty hard. I don't know of any other churches in our association that were damaged. There probably are some, but we're so spread out I don't know. The whole town of Tushka is pretty much

obliterated. I'm sure many church members have lost homes and lost everything."

Tushka Baptist Church, Self said, had some roof damage and some broken windows, as well as a damaged church van.

Richard Brunson, director of Baptist Men for the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, said tornadoes were responsible for widespread damage from Raleigh to the eastern part of the state.

At least 1,500 North Carolina Baptist disaster relief volunteers were mobilized in that state, Brunson said, and feeding stations were operating in Raleigh. Most of the feeding is for the recovery teams and volunteers, who are working out of Baptist churches in eight locations throughout North Carolina.

"We have a lot of good blue hats and coordinators in North Carolina who got the people out fast," Brunson said.

Many homes were completely destroyed, which necessitates a lot of chainsaw and clean-up work, Brunson said. To his knowledge, no Southern Baptist churches were destroyed in North Carolina.

In Clinton, Miss., about 10 miles west of Jackson, two subdivisions were hit particularly hard, said Don Gann, disaster relief coordinator for the Mississippi Baptist Convention. At least 30 homes were damaged severely in Clinton, and 100 families were displaced.

"It could have been a lot worse," said Gann, whose own Clinton home was spared damage when a tornado passed over it April 15. "Right now, we're doing OK and don't need any outside help. Mississippi folks just immediately started helping each other. But we know who to call if we do need help."

Feeding sites were set up in Clinton, Leakesville and De Kalb, Gann said. The units prepared 800 meals April 16 and another 600 the next day. In all, about 200 Mississippi Baptist volunteers were involved in feeding, chainsaw and assessment work in those three areas. (BP)

ISRAEL TOURS

MANY GUARANTEED DEPARTURES

Superb Biblical Guides

with a tremendous understanding of current and historical geography, culture, the Greek & Hebrew text and practical application of Scripture.

A "LIFE CHANGING" EXPERIENCE!

24 wonderful packages - year-round for the Evangelical Christian. Excellent value for small groups, large groups, and individuals.

Also, a large selection to Greece & Turkey Steps of Paul, Italy, Germany, Petra, Egypt Steps of Moses & Joseph.

www.pilgrimtours.com

Box 268, Main St., Morgantown PA, 19543 800-322-0788

"Christian Fellowship Tours Since 1987"

Obama invokes Christian beliefs at Easter prayer breakfast

By Kevin Eckstrom

Washington—President Obama said Jesus' death and resurrection on Easter "puts everything else in perspective," at a White House event last week that showcased the president's increasing comfort with discussing his faith.

Using the kind of personal religious language that he had once shied away from in public, Obama spoke of "the pain and the scorn and the shame of the cross" at an Easter prayer breakfast for about 150 guests and staff.

"And we're reminded that in that moment, (Jesus) took on the sins of the world—past, present and future—and he extended to us that unfathomable gift of grace and

salvation through his death and resurrection," Obama said.

The Easter event displayed the president's willingness to engage religion on his own terms, even as he has decided not to be a regular churchgoer or fully embrace public events like the annual National Day of Prayer.

The Easter breakfast—Obama's second, and following a Passover seder at the White House a day before—also reflects an ongoing effort to combat lingering doubts about the president's faith.

Last year's breakfast came in the wake of polls that revealed as many as one in five Americans believe he is a Muslim. Since then, Obama has talked more openly about

his personal faith, particularly around holidays like Easter and Christmas.

"He's had this problem with how to practice his faith; every president's had this problem," said Wesley Granberg-Michaelson, general secretary of the Reformed Church in America, who attended the April 19 breakfast.

"And I was thinking this morning that this sort of event is at least one way that he's found, very authentically, to have his faith nurtured," he said.

Obama quoted from the Book of Isaiah—"he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities," which Christians see as a prophecy of Jesus' death and resurrection.

"This magnificent grace, this expansive grace, this 'Amazing Grace' calls me to reflect," Obama said. "And it calls me to pray.

It calls me to ask God for forgiveness for the times that I've not shown grace to others, those times that I've fallen short."

White House officials said they held the event before Easter so the breakfast wouldn't conflict with participants' own worship services.

Those attending the breakfast included several members of the White House faith-based advisory panel, as well as several prominent conservatives who have not always seen eye to eye with the White House, including Southern Baptist Convention President Bryant Wright, Andy Stanley of North Point Community Church in Alpharetta, Ga., National Association of Evangelicals president Leith Anderson and Tim Keller of New York's Redeemer Presbyterian Church. (RNS)

With additional reporting from Baptist Press

Poll: Pluralism support grows in U.S.

Ventura, Calif.—A majority of Americans mostly reject universalism—the belief that all people will be saved—but nevertheless believe Christians and Muslims worship the same God, with a majority saying good works are the key to entrance into heaven, according to a new analysis of Barna Research surveys.

The data, released April 18, shows that millions of adults reject the clear teachings of Scripture that faith in Christ alone is necessary for salvation. Although Americans may distance themselves from universalism, they tend to embrace pluralism—the belief that different religions lead to heaven.

By a 48-44 percent margin, U.S. adults believe that "if a person is generally good or does enough good things for others, they will earn a place in heaven."

Also, 59 percent of Americans believe that "Christians and Muslims worship the same God," although only 43 percent believe that "the Bible, the Koran and the

Book of Mormon are all different expressions of the same spiritual truth."

Americans tend to reject universalism, although large percentages of adults accept it.

Among other findings:

■ 55 percent of Americans disagree with the statement that "all people will experience the same outcome after death, regardless of their religious beliefs."

■ 54 percent disagree that "it doesn't matter what religious faith you follow because they all teach the same lesson."

■ 50 percent disagree that "all people are eventually saved or accepted by God, no matter what they do, because he loves all people he has created."

Nearly 70 percent of adults surveyed agree that "in life you either side with God or you side with the devil; there is no in-between position."

Additionally, 51 percent of Americans believe they "have a responsibility to tell other people their religious beliefs." (BP)

Religious freedom ambassador confirmed

Washington—The U.S. Senate finally confirmed Suzan Johnson Cook as ambassador at large for religious freedom last week.

Senators approved the former New York City pastor in a voice vote April 14. Obama nominated her to the post in June 2010, but her nomination never moved out of a Senate committee last year. He sent her nomination to a new Senate in February.

When Johnson Cook first was nominated to the post, some advocates on the issue said she lacked experience on religious freedom and foreign policy issues, *The Washington Post* reported.

The ambassador at large for international religious freedom heads a State Department office that monitors religious persecution and discrimination

overseas, makes policy recommendations regarding regions or countries, and seeks to advance religious liberty. The ambassador also serves as a non-voting member of the U.S. Commission for International Religious Freedom, a bipartisan panel that reports to Congress and the executive branch on global religious freedom.

Johnson Cook, 54, served as senior pastor of Bronx Christian Fellowship Church from 1996 to 2009. She was a member of President Clinton's advisory panel on race.

In January 2010, Southern Baptist ethicist Richard Land and six other religious liberty advocates wrote Obama to urge him to appoint someone to the post after he failed to do so in his first year in the White House. (BP)

Meet the class of 2011

'David' turned a discouraging situation into success when he arrived at Oneida

People often ask, "What is the most common reason students come to Oneida?" We don't try to create a one-size-fits-all mold to describe all of our students. We typically say that there are as many reasons for coming to OBI as there are students. The most common reason, however, that students find their way to Oneida is they are not doing well academically.

After more than 27 years of asking students why they have not been doing well academically, I've discovered there are about six common reasons. In no particular order they are: "I'm lazy," "I don't like school," "I don't understand the material," "There are too many distractions in my classes," "My classes are too large and the teacher simply doesn't have the time to help me," and "Both of my parents work so there usually is no one to help me with my homework."

I would like to focus on the third one: "I don't understand the material." There are few things more discouraging to a student than to go to school every day and not be able to understand clearly what other students seem to be learning.

Our tutoring program is able to help many of those students, but I want to caution my readers that our Tutoring Lab has its limits. Not all students who have learning issues are a good fit for our program. But the Tutoring Lab was a good fit for "David" (not his real name). Here is part of his senior essay.

"About a month after my birth, my parents moved to Kentucky. From preschool to the fourth grade I was ridiculed by my classmates and my teachers. No matter how hard they and I tried,

seemingly I couldn't learn anything. ... Later my parents discovered that my brothers and I had dyslexia. In the fifth grade I switched to a special learning center where they helped me overcome my dyslexia. ... After I finished my freshman year, the learning center had some financial issues, so they had to close the school. ... Before they closed they told my dad about Oneida.

This is Oneida



W.F. Underwood

"I decided to check Oneida out with my younger brother, who was interested in enrolling. ... Coming to Oneida was the best thing that I've ever done. ... I was able to learn a lot better at Oneida. I also found friends that I could trust and who would help me. And the teachers made sure that I got the help I needed.

"Additionally, I've lost a lot of weight because of the sports program here at Oneida. I could play any sport because of their no-drop policy. Oneida also brought me closer to Christ. I will never forget what Oneida has done for me."

If you are reading this article and thinking of a young person with some learning challenges who may benefit from being at OBI, please keep two things in mind. First, we know the limits of our tutoring program. We are not set up to help a child who needs a program commonly referred to as "special education."

Secondly, for most students a critical factor is motivation. Over the years I've seen some students succeed in our program simply because they were highly motivated. On the other hand, I have seen some students who should have been able to do well in our tutoring program but didn't because of a lack of motivation.

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

Finals week

Senior students' journeys at Clear Creek nearing the end

Another academic year soon will come to a close at Clear Creek. This week our seniors are completing their final academic work here on campus with finals week. This is an exciting time for our seniors. They now are experiencing the culmination of a journey they started four years ago. We are proud of these students for their commitment to God's call on their lives. It is an honor for us to have a part in equipping those called of God to Christian service.

Most of these graduates came to us from churches right here in Kentucky. As they leave here in a few short weeks, many of them will transition right back into local churches to serve as pastors or in other leadership positions. As I reflect on this group of graduates that is getting ready to leave us, I want you to know we could not do what we do without your support that comes to us in many ways.

As I travel throughout the state, I always have people tell me they are praying for Clear Creek Baptist Bible College. It means a lot to all of us here on this campus to know you are constantly lifting this ministry up to the Lord in your prayers. We

are so thankful for your support that comes to Clear Creek through your Cooperative Program giving. Your CP support is a lifeline to the ministry of Clear Creek. We simply could not do what we do without the cooperative giving of Kentucky Baptist churches.

There literally are thousands of individuals who also support Clear Creek. These folks have been committed to this ministry for many years and continue to provide support for our students.

This group of graduates that we are getting ready to send out is a direct result of the support you have provided for us over these last few years in all these different ways. Each of these seniors will tell you this journey definitely has not been an easy one. But they also will tell you it is the journey God has called them to. On behalf of all of them, we thank you for your provisions which have helped them along the way.

Clear Creek Chronicle



Donnie Fox

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

USC students protest degree honor from alma mater for SBC president

By Michael Foust

Columbia, S.C.—Some University of South Carolina students say the school should not award an honorary doctorate to Southern Baptist Convention President Bryant Wright because of his and the denomination's stance against homosexuality and gay marriage.

The school's awarding of the honorary degree to Wright during graduation was the lead story April 20 in the student newspaper, *The Daily Gamecock*, which quoted a member of the Bisexual Gay Lesbian Student Association as calling the SBC "hostile to the LGBT community" and an "advocate for hate." Wright is scheduled to receive the degree May 7.

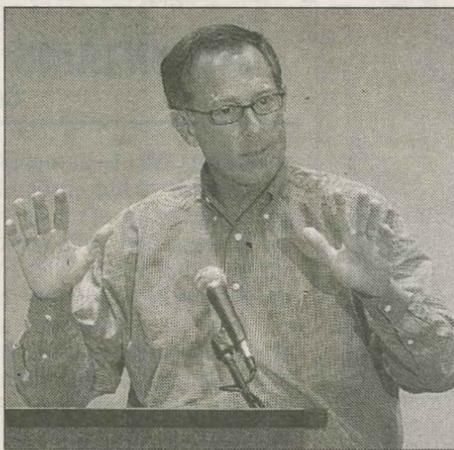
"Basically the Southern Baptist's platform is 'it's either this way or you're going to hell,'" said student Zac Baker, a public relations coordinator for the association.

The newspaper also published letters opposing and supporting the school's honoring of Wright.

Wright, pastor of Johnson Ferry Baptist Church in Marietta, Ga., received his undergraduate degree from USC.

"It's really a false charge that when you simply teach what the Bible says about sin, that you're a hateful person," Wright told Baptist Press. "Jesus Christ loves all mankind. He loves homosexuals that are engaging in homosexual activity. He loves heterosexuals that are engaging in immoral heterosexual activity. But He does call on us—because He has paid the penalty for our sins on the cross—to be willing to repent of sinful behavior."

The SBC is not alone in its stance on



homosexuality, Wright noted, pointing to other denominations and the Catholic Church.

"The gospel is a wonderful message of good news, but it is a message of truth, and sometimes people are not always open or perceptive to God's truth," Wright said.

The student newspaper story also quoted student Dustin Tucker as saying, "I feel like granting (Wright) a doctorate is a representation of every student here." Tucker said the SBC's message "is one of hate and intolerance and I really don't think that reflects well on the university."

Tim Stewart, director of the university's Baptist Collegiate Ministry, applauded the school for honoring Wright.

"Dr. Wright has been a strong leader in the Southern Baptist Convention," Stewart told the newspaper. "He's been a long-term pastor in his church and has led that with integrity (and) character. ... I think it's a really neat opportunity to distinguish one of our USC alumni."

Referring to the convention's stance on homosexuality, Stewart said, "We've made some resolutions backing it up with what God's word says. ... We do not intend any kind of harm on anyone."

In spite of the student response, Wright said he is humbled by the school's intention to honor him.

"I am just very thankful and amazed that a state university would be willing to honor a Christian pastor in today's world," he said. (BP)

New Boyce College dean named, Islam study center established

Louisville—Southern Baptist Theological Seminary trustees approved the appointment of Dan DeWitt as the new dean for Boyce College during their April 19 meeting at the Louisville campus.

DeWitt will lead Boyce College, the undergraduate arm of Southern Seminary. He previously served as the school's assistant dean as Southern's vice president for communications.

DeWitt "brings a considerable skill set, tremendous commitment and precisely the kind of background experience we need to be able to provide Boyce College with the leadership it needs in the deanship as we look to the future," Southern Seminary President Albert Mohler said.

Former Boyce College Denny Burk opted to resign from the role of dean in order to return to the classroom at Boyce

and expand his research and writing.

Southern Seminary also announced the establishment of a center for the Christian understanding of Islam. Mohler noted that the center, in addition to researching Islam, will host conferences concerning the Muslim faith.

"Why would Southern Seminary establish a Christian center for the study of Islam?" Mohler asked. "Every Christian ministry needs to have an understanding of Islam in order to be a faithful witness to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and to understand the mission field that is not only out there in the world, but here in our own neighborhoods."

Southern trustees approved a \$34 million budget for the seminary that includes a 5 percent increase in master's-level tuition and a 2 percent increase in faculty and staff salaries. (BP)

Book weighs denominations' future

Jackson, Tenn.—A new book edited by Union University President David Dockery examines the role Christian denominations play and where they are headed.

"Southern Baptists, Evangelicals, and the Future of Denominationalism," includes chapters from a variety of Southern Baptist and evangelical leaders based upon their presentations at a 2009 conference at Union University.

In the book's preface, Dockery writes that the world has seen significant changes over the past 50 years, and Christian denominations that reached their peak 50 years ago now are struggling to discover their places in a new age.

"The contributors to this volume are not pessimistic about the future; we are hopeful, largely because of Christ's promise to His church. Yet, we recognize that we find ourselves at a propitious moment when im-

portant questions about change, continuity, unity, and diversity need to be raised in light of the challenges around us. We not only want to raise the questions but look for answers that are faithful to our confession and our heritage."

Dockery cites the numerical decline of many denominations, including the Southern Baptist Convention, as well as a lack of denominational loyalty from the SBC's younger leaders.

"The disconnect has been created by rapid changes in our culture, which have been understood by a younger generation of leaders who desire greatly to engage these cultural shifts and respond to them in a gospel-focused manner," Dockery writes. "We want to encourage the next generation of Baptist and evangelical leaders toward wise stewardship of that which has been entrusted to them." (BP)

Camp season approaches

With new summer right around the corner, Crossings' work ramps up

Once again the time since New Year's Day seemingly has flown by. We are yet again in the midst of the final press to prepare for another summer of Crossings. This summer, like the past, will be another record year where we will be serving more people than ever, thus giving us a great opportunity to share the gospel with thousands of students.

I always feel a little overwhelmed at this point of the year as we have numerous tasks to complete, many of which can't be done until the last minute. All these last-minute details definitely create some anxiety with all of our staff members.

This year has been our single-largest year ever for capital investments at the properties. At Jonathan Creek we have renovated interior sections of every building we own. These renovations include carpet, paint, tile, bathroom upgrades and other such noticeable improvements. At Cedar-moore we are pressing to complete a new dining facility to replace the Boone Lodge dining hall and a new welcome center to house guest suites and offices.

We are looking forward to what these additions mean to our guests as the past

facilities just did not adequately serve the needs of our current attendance levels.

To all those who continue to support our ministry, we thank you and continue to need your support—especially your prayers. As our staff already has been working long hours for quite some time, the schedule will continue to be taxing on everyone. Please pray that we have health, strength and wisdom as we finish preparations for this summer. We also ask for your prayers that throughout the summer all that we do at camp would point people to the gospel of Christ. Pray that each student would be drawn to Him and respond in faith to the call Christ has for his or her life.

I would like to invite you to visit and see how God continues to use camp to eternally change thousands this summer. You may be amazed at what take place. Words simply can't describe all that God does.

Ky. Baptist Assemblies



David Melber

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

Recognizing foster care families

Sunrise, churches celebrate May as Foster Care Awareness Month

The lives of too many Kentucky children are plagued by abuse and neglect in their own homes. The very place where a child should feel loved, secured and valued too often is the place where they are beaten, ignored, shunned and hurt.

For more than 142 years, Sunrise Children's Services has existed to provide a refuge to these hurting children. While the methods we use to serve these young people have changed along with their specific challenges and situations, the need remains constant: Children must have a safe place where they can live, grow and learn.

Today, more than half of the 500 children we care for each day are in foster homes. Foster parents have opened up their hearts and their homes to children in need, and Sunrise works tirelessly to provide them with the training, support and resources they need to provide these children with the home lives they deserve.

Talk to most foster parents and you'll discover that many see fostering as a ministry in which they are able to meet the physical and emotional needs of a

young person who needs stability and a place to belong. Most also will be quick to admit that knowing they are making a real difference in the life of a child is the ultimate reward.

A number of our foster parents learned about Sunrise through their churches. Throughout our long history, the church has been a key supporter of everything we do. That includes helping us find caring and quality people who can share their homes and their lives with children who need them.

May is Foster Care Awareness Month, and we invite churches to learn more about Sunrise and foster care opportunities. We will happily supply your church with bulletin inserts and other materials to help educate your church members about Sunrise and our foster care opportunities. You also can contact Carmen Peckenpaugh, Sunrise's associate director of faith-based partnerships, at (502) 538-1046, or e-mail her at CPeckenpaugh@Sunrise.org. As always, feel free to visit our website, www.Sunrise.org.

Sunrise Children's Services



Bill Smithwick

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



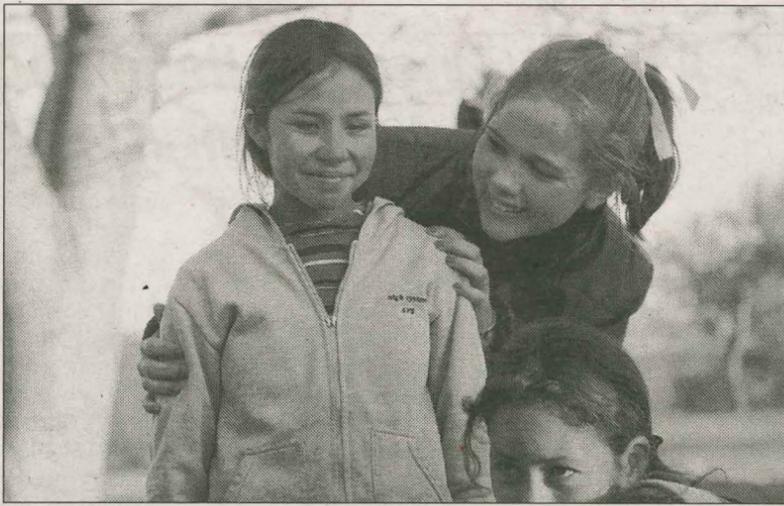
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April

- 29 Children's Bible Drill, St. Matthews Baptist Church, Louisville.
- 29-30 Sunday School Growth Academy, Paroquet Springs Conference Center, Shepherdsville.
- 29-30 Women on Mission Regional Retreat, Camp Schafer, Pellville.
- 29-5/1 All-State Children's Choir—East, Cedarmore Camp and Conference Center, Bagdad.
- 29-5/1 All-State Children's Choir—West, Jonathan Creek Camp and Conference Center, Hardin.
- 29-5/1 Equestrian Trail Ride, Mammoth Cave National Park.

May

- 3 Iron Sharpening Iron, Laurel Lake Grove Marina, Corbin.
- 3 Senior Living Celebration, Edgewood Baptist Church, Hopkinsville.
- 5 Iron Sharpening Iron, Kentucky Dam Village Lodge, Gilbertsville.
- 5 Senior Living Celebration, Parkway Baptist Church, Bardstown.
- 6 Children's Bible Drill, First Baptist Church, Somerset; Reidland Baptist Church, Paducah.
- 6 Senior Living Celebration, First Baptist Church, Richmond.
- 7 Children's Bible Drill, First Baptist Church, Bowling Green; First Baptist Church, Madisonville.
- 9-10 KBC Mission Board, Baptist Building, Louisville.
- 11-13 Directors of Missions Leadership Event, Mammoth Cave Hotel.
- 12 Iron Sharpening Iron, Great American Ballpark, Cincinnati.
- 12-13 Children's Ministers' Retreat, Cedarmore Camp and Conference Center, Bagdad.
- 14 WMU State Associational Leadership Training, Baptist Building, Louisville.
- 16 Kentucky Youth Ministers' Day at the Ballpark, Whitaker Bank Ballpark, Lexington.
- 16 When Helping Hurts Workshop, Baptist Building, Louisville.
- 17-20 Ministry Partner Development School, Baptist Building, Louisville.
- 20-22 Kentucky Baptist Conference of the Deaf, Cedarmore Camp and Conference Center, Bagdad.



Chelsea Fitzgerald, 14, a volunteer from Trinity Baptist Church in Apopka, Fla., makes friends with Nancy, a Criollo girl who lives with her family on a river island in northern Argentina. (Photo by Wilson Hunter)

Volunteer families mix hunting, fishing, missions

By **Tristan Taylor**
International Mission Board

Esquina, Argentina—Miche Patricia was more accustomed to hunting parties of upper-class, middle-aged men treating her like an employee at best and a servant at worst. But the laid-back, laughing Americans and their children treated her differently.

God had a plan for reaching Miche, even though her heart had remained closed to Him for years.

Tears come to David Holt's eyes when he thinks about it. He and his wife Alisha, International Mission Board missionaries to Argentina from Mount Zion Baptist Church in Snellville, Ga., had been praying for their friend Miche for months.

"It's kind of the reverse view of what we normally find here in this culture," David Holt said. "In Miche's case, she was the one in the marriage who was not attending church. Her husband had gotten back in the church and given his life to Christ, and she's been resistant."

Miche works as a server and kitchen hand in a hunting lodge in Esquina, Argentina. The town is in the heart of river country and has been built around the hunting and fishing industry. Like most of the hunting guides and lodge employees, Miche is from the Criollo people group.

The Criollo people are not the privileged descendants of European immigrants, nor are they the indigenous people of Argentina. They are a mix of the two and claimed by neither. Shunned by the discriminating immigrant class and ineligible for government welfare programs available to the indigenous, the Criollo have learned to maintain a wary distance from outsiders.

"The Criollo are very down-trodden people," Alisha Holt said. "They've been told for generations that they're not worth anything."

But the Holts never gave up on Miche. They have worked with the Criollo long enough to know that gaining their trust and earning the right to speak into their lives is a long process. So for months they prayed for her by name and did their best to develop a friendship.

Then the volunteers came.

Four families including six kids from the United States came to ex-

perience the hunting and fishing opportunities in northern Argentina. But they came also with the intention of sharing God's love with the Criollo people who work in the hunting and fishing industry—people like Miche. Their plan was to share the Gospel with the people they meet casually while enjoying the outdoors.

The volunteer trip resulted from a collaboration of hunting ministries involving the Holts and Chuck McAlister, a former IMB trustee who hosts an evangelistic TV program for hunters.

"We are families helping people encounter Jesus," said McAlister, from the Church at Crossgate Center in Hot Springs, Ark.

At first Miche was shy and reserved around the volunteer families. They did what they could to make her job easier and expressed their appreciation for her service. It became clear that, unlike most of the tourists who come through the lodge, these people valued the lodge employees.

"It all boils down to just building relationships," said George Dubose, a volunteer from Trinity Baptist Church in Apopka, Fla., who came to Argentina with his wife and three children. "And the Lord's used our interaction to quicken hearts and minds to a decision (for Christ)."

When the volunteers traveled to the rural town of Malvinas to visit an agricultural boarding school, Miche went along to prepare their lunch. There she had the opportunity to listen as McAlister shared the Gospel with the students.

"It might have been the first time she ever heard the Gospel in a way she could understand in her heart," David Holt said. "When Chuck asked if anyone there had prayed to receive Christ for the first time in their life, Miche was one of the ones who raised her hand."

Miche wasn't shy with the group after that. She hugged the kids and joked with the parents.

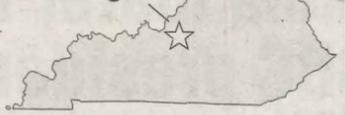
"This morning she came up to me and gave me a big kiss on the cheek and said good morning," said 14-year-old Chelsea Fitzgerald from Trinity Baptist. "She's just very loving and caring, and I'm glad she's going to be coming home (to heaven) with us." (BP)

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

Spotlight on ...

Farmington



Farmington Church will hold revival services May 1, 11 a.m. & 6 p.m.; May 2-4, 7 p.m., with **Jeff Noffsinger**, pastor of Dripping Springs Church in Olmstead, as evangelist. **Ben Stratton** is pastor.

- Lakeview Church in Auburn, Ala.
- **NANCY**—Lakeside Church recently called **Tim Fisher** as pastor.
- **TOMPKINSVILLE**—First Church will hold revival services May 1-5 with **Brett Miles**, pastor of Northside Church in Murray, as evangelist. **Tom Stokes** is pastor.

- **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Campbellsville University's string ensemble, under the direction of music instructor **Wansoo Cho**, will present its spring concert May 2, 8 p.m., at the Gheens Recital Hall of the Gosser Fine Arts Center on campus. The event is free and open to the public. For more information contact the School of Music at (270) 789-5237 or via e-mail at Music@Campbellsville.edu.
- **CLAY CITY**—Powells Valley Church will hold revival services April 28-30, 7 p.m.; May 1, 11 a.m. & 6 p.m., with **Don Mathis**, staff evangelist at Eastwood Church in Bowling Green, as evangelist.
- **CLINTON**—First Church will hold a Senior Adult Day May 1 with **Aubert Rose** as guest speaker. **Kevin Clark** is pastor.
- **LOUISVILLE**—Bethany Church recently called **Ken Vickery** as pastor. He previously was pastor of

CLASSIFIED ADS

To place an advertisement:
Rates are available upon request.
Call (502) 489-3428;
or visit www.WesternRecorder.org.
Claims made by advertisers are not necessarily those of the Western Recorder's staff or directors.

NEEDED: Donations of unused puppets and staging for small church starting youth group puppet ministry. Call (502) 319-0903.

SEEKING: Part-time (paid), enthusiastic minister of music for a small church of approximately 100 in Sunday service. Knowledge of at least one instrument is a must. Minister would be in charge of scheduling musicians for Sunday morning and evening services, along with special music throughout the year, including a blended selection of traditional and some contemporary music. Minister also would be involved in working with kids and youth to nurture talent within the church. Send your resumé to: Campbellsburg Baptist Church, PO Box 128, Campbellsburg, KY 40011, Attn. music minister; or e-mail to secretary@cbcky.net.

SEEKING: Full-time, experienced student/college pastor for FBC Murray, Ky. Please send resumé to [fbc-murray.org](mailto:fbc-murray@fbc-murray.org); or to Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 203 S. 4th St., Murray, KY 40271. Deadline is Sunday, May 15.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music for Grace Baptist Church, Lexington, Ky. The church is prayerfully seeking a qualified individual to lead and oversee the music programs of all ages from children to adults. Please submit your resumé by mail to: Minister of Music Search Committee, 811 Bryan Ave., Lexington, KY 40505; or by e-mail to: dfoley@gbclexington.org by May 15, 2011.

SEEKING: Senior pastor for Salem Baptist Church in rural Western Ky. (150+ attendance). Prefer 5+ years pastoral experience and seminary degree. Send resumé and references to: Glenn Gordon, Pastor Search Committee, 1145 Pinckneyville Road, Salem, KY 42078.

SEEKING: Director of missions for Upper Cumberland Association of Baptists. Pastoral experience required. Please send resumé to: UCAB-DOM, PO Box 309, Loyall, KY 40854; or uppercumberlandbaptist@yahoo.com. Until our Lord fills this position.

SEEKING: Bivocational pastor for Lynn Camp Baptist Church, Corbin, Ky. Applicants should be Spirit-filled, greatly interested and motivated in church growth and the uplifting of God's Kingdom. Prefer five years experience and seminary degree (or pursuing such degree). Applicants should have good leadership and communication skills relative to all age groups. Send resumé and DVD of recent sermon (if available) to: Pastor Search Committee, Lynn Camp Baptist Church, PO Box 306, Gray, KY 40734.

SEEKING: Bivocational pastor for West Covington Baptist Church. If interested, please send resumé to West Covington Baptist Church, 1003 Highway Avenue, Covington, KY 41011.

SEEKING: Pastor. Beaver Dam Baptist Church is a historic church at the heart of a small, rural community in Western Kentucky. BDBC is widely known for both its music ministry and youth ministry, led by two full-time ministers, and a growing Christian education ministry, including a preschool and K-6 elementary school. In 2010, BDBC contributed more than \$100,000 to local, state and international missions, with \$660,000 in undesignated receipts. BDBC affirms the 1963 Baptist Faith & Message. For more information or to submit a resumé, please contact the BDBC Pastor Search Committee, PO Box 242, Beaver Dam, KY 42320; or bdbpcsc@gmail.com.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of students for Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, Somerset, Ky. Candidate must be a God-called man who can provide leadership to all student ministries of PHBC from preschool through 12th grade. He must be competent in the areas of teaching, administration, and student pastoral care. Church Website is phbc-somerset.com. Send resumé to Personnel Committee, PHBC, 1685 Hwy. 3091, Somerset, KY 42503; or e-mail phbc@newwavecomm.net.

Sunday school key to growing churches

By David Francis

Transformational churches clearly have an intentional process for making disciples. Yet, the focus is less on the process itself than on the people who benefited from it. So, we

FIRST PERSON

coined the term "relational intentionality" to describe it. Why not two separate elements? The concepts of helping people develop relationships and doing so in the context of an intentional disciple-making process intertwine in transformational churches.

This finding was remarkably consistent with the research reported in "Simple Church," a book by LifeWay President Thom Rainer and Eric Geiger. Transformational churches have a clear and well-communicated process for helping someone move along a path of discipleship. That path is marked by different types of group experiences that serve as proxy indicators of spiritual growth. People can clearly identify where they are on the path and what kind of group represents the next step.

Sunday school for step 2

In most churches, the primary weekend worship experience is step 1 in the disciple-making process. Step 2 is some type of smaller group experience that helps people assimilate relationally, introduces them to foundational discipleship through systematic Bible study and provides them a channel to give and receive ministry. Sunday school is an effective step 2 strategy.

Eric Geiger and I conducted an analysis of the 400 "vibrant" Southern Baptist churches in the Simple Church research. We found that 87.5 percent of those growing churches operated Sunday school—or its functional equivalent by some other name—as the second step in their disciple-making process. The remainder primarily used off-campus small groups, at least for adults. Am I suggesting that all the transformational churches were also "Simple Churches" or that they all operated Sunday school as part of their process? No. But the findings were very consistent.

The assimilation ratio

A helpful ratio to determine the effectiveness of a church's step 2 strategy is the assimilation ratio. This ratio is calculated by dividing average attendance in step 2 by that of step 1, which is worship attendance in most churches. The benchmark for Southern Baptist churches is about 70 percent. On an average Sunday, about 4 million people will attend Sunday school. About 6 million will attend the primary worship service. Taking into consideration churches that don't have, or who under report, Sunday school provides the benchmark figure. Few other step 2 strategies reach that level, assuming both the numerator and denominator reflect actual attendance.

Thom Rainer's book "High Expectations" reported data gathered by tracking new Christians who had joined a sample of churches. Data showed that among those who only attended worship, 16 percent were still active five years later. However, among those who attended both worship and Sunday school, the figure rose to 83 percent. What could be simpler than accomplishing the first two steps of your disciple-making process with every member of the family on one visit to church?

Safety in social space

In chapter three of his book "The Search to Belong," Joe Myers elaborates on four "spaces" where people belong: public, social, personal and intimate. Public space is what you experience in an environment like a football stadium with lots of other people you may or may not know but are unified by your support for the same team. One of my favorite social spaces is Panera Bread, where I enjoy writing. I recognize and exchange greetings with several other regulars there, although I wouldn't describe them as close friends.

Personal space is for friends—people I enjoy being around regardless of how long it's been. Intimate space is reserved for close, accountable relationships, notably a spouse or best friend.

In essence, Myers' appeal to church leaders is to let people belong progressively and simultaneously in each of the spaces, rather than equating intimacy with spiritual maturity, or promising it as an expected outcome of small group experiences. Myers' candid perspectives provided me one of the most liberating insights I've ever had: Sunday school is successful as a safe Step 2 strategy precisely because it operates in social space.

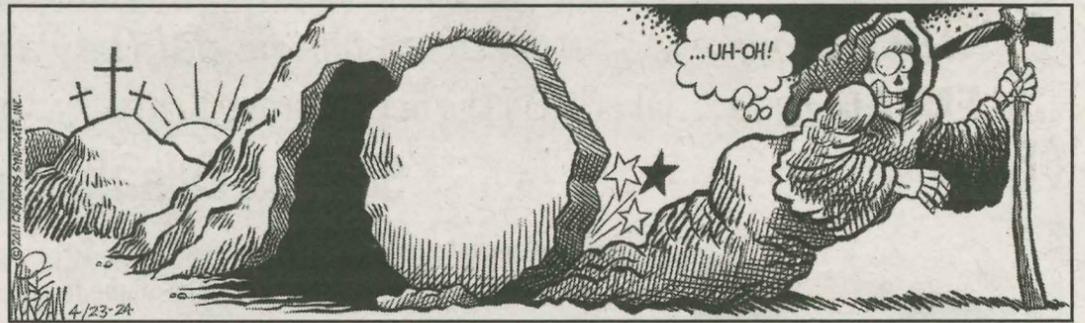
Perhaps trying to keep pace with the small-group movement's promises, I was defensive about Sunday school on this front. But now I'm comfortable with the reality that while a Sunday school class may provide an environment where a person might discover one or more close friendships, those relationships may develop elsewhere.

Sunday school is not enough

That acknowledged, I'd also affirm that Sunday school is not sufficient as a final step in a relationally intentional disciple-making process. Other groups, such as small discipleship groups and ministry teams, complete the process. Transformational churches encourage people to relate in these types of groups, too. A Sunday school class is not the end of a relationally intentional process, but it sure is a great option for step 2. (BP)

David Francis is director of Sunday School at LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

For Heaven's Sake



Preacher's Kids

David Ayers



Bible Crosswords

By Elaine Okupski

Across

- 1 "Do him no ____" (Jeremiah 39:12)
- 5 Abbott, Fr.
- 9 "Also I shook my ____" (Nehemiah 5:13)
- 12 Oil of ____, skin softener
- 13 "The ____ of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever" (Psalm 19:9)
- 14 "Do they not ____ that devise evil?" (Proverbs 14:22)
- 15 Puts on
- 16 "And it is a ____ thing that the king requireth" (Daniel 2:11)
- 17 "Now as he walked by the ____ of Galilee" (Mark 1:16)
- 18 Father of Enos (Genesis 5:6)
- 19 "Blessed ____ the pure in heart" (Matthew 5:8)
- 20 "And ____ ye not, but pursue after your enemies" (Joshua 10:19)
- 21 One of the sons of Gad (Genesis 46:16)
- 23 Librarian's whisper
- 25 "Ye have ____ treasure together for the last days" (James 5:3)
- 28 "For ____ is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:10)
- 32 "And it shall be unto them ... that have sworn ____" (Ezekiel 21:23)
- 33 Weird
- 34 Welcomes
- 36 "____, and be baptized every one of you" (Acts 2:38)
- 37 "He ... chooseth a tree that will not ____" (Isaiah 40:20)
- 38 "That which groweth of ____ own accord" (Leviticus 25:5)
- 39 "I will bless the ____ at all times" (Psalm 34:1)
- 42 "Let us ____ with patience the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1)
- 44 "And I will give unto thee the ____ of the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 16:19)

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

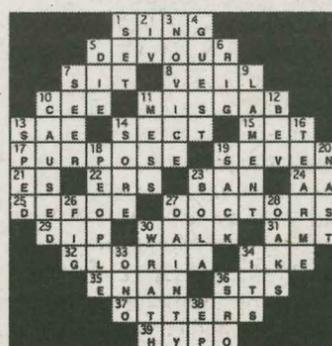
- 48 ____ Maria
- 49 Mongrels
- 50 "And the rest will ____ in order when I come" (2 words) (1 Corinthians 11:34)
- 51 22nd letter of alphabet
- 52 Swedish name
- 53 Nickname for Nathaniel
- 54 "Make thee an ____ of gopher wood" (Genesis 6:14)
- 55 "That the ____ men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith" (Titus 2:2)
- 56 "I will give thee ... a ____ of apparel" (Judges 17:10)

- 10 Length times width
- 11 "____ without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17)
- 20 "They wandered about in ____ and goatskins" (Hebrews 11:37)
- 22 "Return unto thy ____ my soul" (Psalm 116:7) (2 words)
- 24 "A great ____, knit at the four corners" (Acts 10:11)
- 25 Domesticated swine
- 26 "That which ye have spoken in the ____" (Luke 12:3)
- 27 "I ____ no pleasant bread" (Daniel 10:3)
- 29 Anger
- 30 ____-tin-tin, hero dog
- 31 "And God ____ them in the firmament of the heaven" (Genesis 1:17)
- 35 Put beads on a string
- 36 "It shall be both scoured, and ____ in water" (Leviticus 6:28)
- 39 Molten rock
- 40 "Stretch forth thine hand with thy rod ____ the streams" (Exodus 8:5)
- 41 To stink
- 43 "The Pharisees began to ____ him vehemently" (Luke 11:53)
- 45 Jacob's brother (Genesis 25:26)
- 46 Abominable snowman
- 47 Editor's instruction
- 49 Government agency

Down

- 1 Bricklayers' troughs
- 2 "Burn plant"
- 3 To speak vehemently
- 4 "The Lord is ____" (Psalm 23:1) (2 words)
- 5 "They fell on their face, and were sore ____" (Matthew 17:6)
- 6 "____ ye one another's burdens" (Galatians 6:2)
- 7 "Because thou ____ the ark of the Lord God" (1 Kings 2:26)
- 8 "And ____ the lamp of God went out in the temple of the Lord" (1 Samuel 3:3)
- 9 "Neither shall ye touch it, ____ ye die" (Genesis 3:3)

Last week's solution



© 1999 Barbour Publishing

Smile! In upcoming issues, the Western Recorder will showcase photos of people and events from our Kentucky Baptist churches, such as member recognitions, ministerial ordinations, significant anniversaries, sanctuary dedications, and missions projects. Submit photos in an e-mail attachment to Smile@WesternRecorder.org or through our website at www.WesternRecorder.org/info/submit-items.

UNIVERSITY of the CUMBERLANDS

"Open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for the harvest." John 4:35
 UC Students... laboring in the fields across Kentucky, throughout the nation and around the world.

Spring Break Missions

BCM students ministered in three teams to vastly different areas, with a variety of needs

Team New York experienced unique ministry opportunities while working with Urban Impact (a ministry to recent US immigrants). While riding the subways, the students also shared inspirational music and monologues.



Team Kentucky ministered at the Galilean Children's Home in Casey County, Refuge of Hope (a shelter for exploited women) in Lexington, and Jefferson Street Baptist Center (a homeless shelter and soup kitchen) in Louisville.



Team Illinois worked in Centralia at Kaskaskia Baptist Association's campground to help prepare for a busy summer of camp ministry, at Love Packages (an organization that sends Bible Study literature overseas to pastors and missionaries) and at Angel Care (a home for un-wed mothers.)



Mountain Outreach students ministered in Letcher County, Kentucky. Seeking to offer hope to those in need, this group of 33 students (including 4 international students) provided much needed assistance to 6 needy families. The team built 3 wheelchair ramps, repaired a leaky roof, fixed the underpinning on a trailer and built a landing, and constructed a set of steps with a handrail. Each project provided the families with a better quality of life through urgently needed repairs or by gaining safer access to their homes.



2011 SUMMER LEADER-SERVANTS

WHITLEY COUNTY

Seth Schilling, Appalachian Ministries
 Ezra Anderson, Appalachian Ministries
 Lee Sharp, Appalachian Ministries
 Jonathan Carmack, Appalachian Ministries
 Michael Marsh, Appalachian Ministries
 Abbey Cherry, Appalachian Ministries
 Michelle Pratt, Appalachian Ministries
 Stephanie Lawless, Appalachian Ministries
 Kirby Sowder, Appalachian Ministries
 Jonathan Bowman, Mountain Outreach
 Brandon Byrd, Mountain Outreach
 Tomas Clark, Mountain Outreach
 Ashleigh Collard, Mountain Outreach
 Cory Fleenor, Mountain Outreach
 Stephanie Florence, Mountain Outreach
 Jeremy Heming, Mountain Outreach
 Nic Irvin, Mountain Outreach
 Daniel Keith, Mountain Outreach
 Riley Perkins, Mountain Outreach

Amy Roberts, Mountain Outreach
 Nathaniel Whitaker, Mountain Outreach
 Josh Neace, Laurel Lake Baptist Camp
 Caleb Hetrick, Laurel Lake Baptist Camp
 Kelsey Day, Laurel Lake Baptist Camp
 Raul Maya, Laurel Lake Baptist Camp
 Jonathan Ssenkooto, Laurel Lake Baptist Camp
 Brandy Balkenbusch, Laurel Lake Baptist Camp
 Ryan Poynter, M-Fuge, Cumberland
 Jared Coleman, M-Fuge, Cumberland
 Kevin Lewis, Canadatown Ministry
 Ariel Robinson, FBC Williamsburg
 Brooke Jackson, FBC Williamsburg
 Jordan Brown, FBC Williamsburg Youth
 Justin Woods, Frankfort Baptist Youth, Corbin
 Emily Strunk, Corinth Missionary Baptist, Corbin
 Shonda Tharpe, Mt. Ash Baptist Church
 Megan Sasko, Whitley Co. Women's Detention Ctr.
 Mirissa Cumpston, Whitley Co. Women's Detention Ctr.
 Ashley Eversole, Whitley Co. Women's Detention Ctr.

KENTUCKY

Jake Brock, East Pittsburg Baptist Youth Minister
 Kenny Newton, ACTS 1:8 Shelbyville FBC
 Amanda Sickman, Mission Adventure Camp
 Grant Henderson, Camp Nathanael
 Patrick Rowe, Camp Nathanael
 LeAnn Wright, Children's Ministry
 Donte' Paul, Cave City, KY
 Mary Beth Lee, Barbourville Youth Camp
 Julie Paris, Camp Nathanael
 Machenzie Brown, Blackford Baptist Church

UNITED STATES

Keigan Gregory, ACTS 1:8 Colorado & California
 Kayla Smith, ACTS 1:8 Colorado & California
 Chris Bell, Knoxville, Tennessee
 Terrell Wilson, Calhoun, Georgia
 April Smith, Sojourn Church, Iowa
 Dylan Watts, Centri-Kid Camps
 Russell Ridenour, Egan Baptist Church, Tennessee

Lyndsey Green, M-Fuge
 Carla Fountain, Nebraska

INTERNATIONAL

Courtney Hamm, Romania
 Ashley Zamalloa, ACTS 1:8 East Asia
 Jill Tanner, ACTS 1:8 East Asia
 Milagros Zamora, ACTS 1:8 Central Asia
 Kenny Newton, ACTS 1:8 Mexico
 Rebekah Klatt, El Salvador
 Elizabeth Davis, Peru
 Mary Beth Lee, Honduras
 Tommie Thompson, Israel
 Casey Hamm, North Africa
 Megan Adams, China



1.800.343.1609 • www.ucumberland.edu

Leader-servants

Making a difference



"I was bold in the pursuit of knowledge, never fearing to follow truth and reason to whatever results they led."
-Jefferson



Christmas Box Angel overlooks the gardens at the President's home.



Look around University of the Cumberlands today will reveal some new faces, or rather some new, old faces on campus. Each of these in its own way reminds the entire community that individuals have the innate ability to make a real difference in the lives of others.

In front of the Correll Science Complex visible from the Forcht Medical Wing, stands a white marble statue of Hippocrates who is recognized as the "father of modern medicine." He stands to remind majors in pre-medicine, pre-pharmacy, pre-dentistry, or graduate students in the Master of Physician Assistant Studies program that they must "first do no harm." The author of the Hippocratic Oath is a perfect example to future medical professionals, as well as all students who pass the statue, of the overwhelming impact one person can make on the future of civilization.

Since the 2005 construction of Hutton School of Business, a replica of Independence Hall, an area to the north of the building has been set aside appropriately for Patriot Park. It is here that a full-size replica of the Liberty Bell stands as a memorial to the patriots who paved the way for today's patriots.

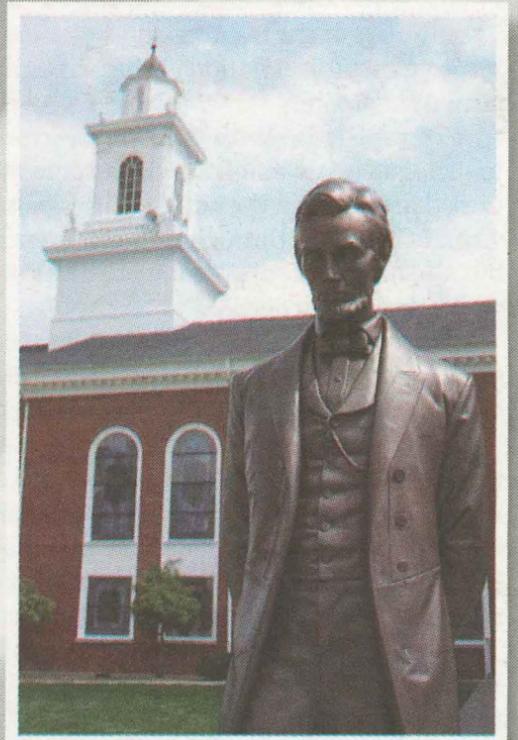
Another memorial, the Shaft of Steel, also stands here. An actual beam from the destroyed World Trade Center, it is a reminder that just as the Founding Fathers fought and gave us freedom, others contrive to take it away.

Flying over both, the American flag reminds one that freedom is not free and that many have given and continue to offer their lives to keep America free.

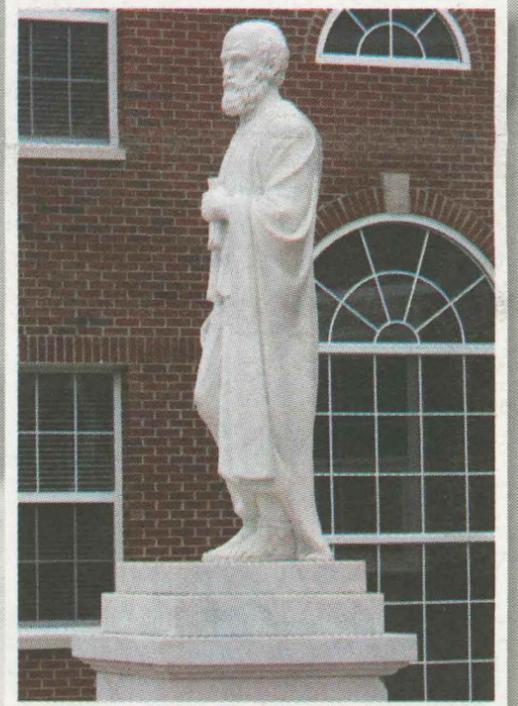
It is in Patriot Park with these important symbols that statues of two true difference makers have been erected: George Washington, our country's first president, and Thomas Jefferson, the framer of the Constitution and the third president.

Nearly every Cumberlands student, at some time during the day, travels the area between the Bennett and Gatliff buildings. Here, where two busy sidewalks cross, a new statue of a somber Abraham Lincoln stands with bowed head. The 15th president's thoughtful pose coupled with the statue's location at a crossroads serve as a reminder that sometimes people are faced with tough choices. Lincoln's pose cautions passers by that such choices should be made prayerfully. Although the statue has been in place only since the middle of March, the focal point has become a meeting place and the area around Lincoln has been used as an outdoor classroom on nice spring days.

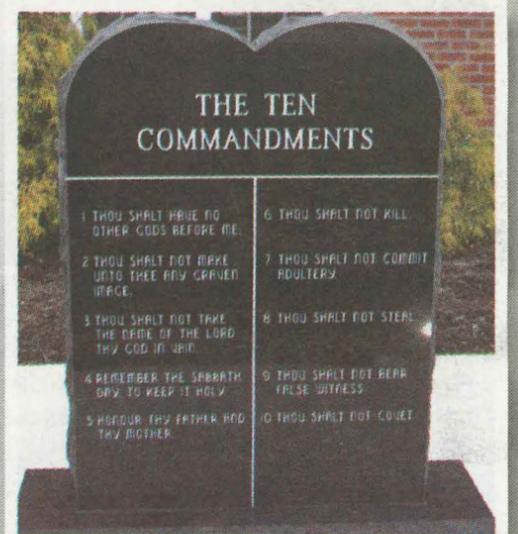
These new statues join other monuments on campus: the Servant Jesus, the Christmas Box Angel, and the marble tablets bearing the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes—all of which were purchased with gifts received from donors specifically for the monuments. Each statue or monument represents making a difference, from Jesus, the ultimate difference maker, to the angels among us who help individuals change direction every day, to those who adhere to the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes, making a impact in the lives of all they meet. Together these monuments demonstrate to our students that they, too, can make a difference, change lives and, ultimately, change the world.



"If there is anything that a man can do well, I say let him do it. Give him a chance."
-Lincoln



"Wherever the art of medicine is loved, there is also a love of humanity."
-Hippocrates



UNIVERSITY
of the
CUMBERLANDS

6191 College Station Drive, Williamsburg, Kentucky 40769

Leader-servant's

Making a difference

Online masters program utilizes video conferencing with Christian leaders

University of the Cumberland's new online Master of Arts in Christian studies program utilizes nationally known Christian leaders as guest speakers in the virtual classroom.

According to Dr. Keith Goforth, director of the program, "Students [are] able to dialogue [with] and learn from some of the most respected and influential Christian leaders in the nation. This is done by bringing guest speakers into the virtual classroom through web conferencing. It's like attending a conference but also having the opportunity to speak directly with the guest speaker [as one works] to obtain a degree."

An important element of each course is providing students the opportunity to dialogue in discussion boards and work on practical case studies related to real ministry experiences. Online guest speakers then have the opportunity to comment on these same discussions and case studies, imparting their expertise in specific ministry fields. Guest speakers during the program's first year have included Thom Rainer, Perry Noble, Leonard Sweet, Reggie McNeal, Shane Claiborne, Tony Merida, Marlene LeFever, Doug Fields, Paul Chitwood, Bill Henard, John Mark Toby and Voddie Baucham. Three of these individuals, Chitwood, Henard and Toby are former Kentucky Baptist Convention presidents.

According to Dr. Bob Dunston, chair of the Religion Department at Cumberland, "The Master of Arts in Christian Studies program is designed to blend both the academic study of the Bible and Christian theology with the practical application of Biblical faith and theology in ministry settings. Our program will challenge and encourage our students to think critically and creatively as they apply the gospel in the 21st century."

The program consists of 30 hours (10 courses) of graduate work. The core courses for the degree include two semesters of Old Testament survey, two semesters of New Testament survey and two courses in Christian theology. These courses account for 18 hours of the degree program. Each student will then choose an emphasis in Biblical studies, Christian education, youth ministry, missions, church planting or pastoral ministry. The student will take two courses from the chosen emphasis and an additional course from one of the other emphases. The final course for the degree is a capstone course in which the student will develop, implement and evaluate a project in a ministry setting that fits his or her God-given call and talents.

For more information, go to gradweb.ucumberlands.edu/religion/macs or call 606-539-4222.

Doctorate of Education candidates prepare for May graduation

December 18, 2010, marked a day in history for the University of the Cumberland as the first cohort gathered to take the comprehensive exams associated with the doctoral program. Six candidates presented oral defense of their dissertations on this date. Under the leadership of Dr. Barry Vann and Dr. Michael Eskay, these candidates were successful in reaching the goal of final presentation of their projects before their committees and continue toward graduation this May.

The Doctorate of Education program began in the fall 2008, under the directorship of Vann, and was designed for working professionals that desire to develop their research potential and seek to learn more about today's educational issues.



Pictured above are the Doctorate of Education candidates that defended dissertations Dec. 18: Carolyn West Reaves (front), Williamsburg, Ky.; (back from left) Matthew Ewers, Louisville, Ky.; Robbie Adell, Ashville, N.C.; Linda Keck, Harrogate, Tenn.; and Margie Langley, Rocky Face, Ga. Not pictured was Jason Reeves, Barbourville, Ky.

Physician Assistant Program



The first cohort of students in the Master of Physicians Assistant Studies (MPAS) program has reached the halfway mark and participants have begun their second year of studies. At the completion of their first year in the program, which focused on classroom and laboratory studies, each student received a white lab coat embroidered with his or her name during

an impressive ceremony held in Gatliff Chapel.

For the remainder of the program, these MPAS students will complete eight, supervised, clinical rotations, gaining the hands-on experience vital to the successful training of competent physician assistants. They will meet at the end of each rotation to share experiences and case-studies with their peers.

UNIVERSITY of the CUMBERLANDS

Leader-servant's

Making a difference

Taylor honored as a 'Difference Maker'



For an institution to truly make a difference in a region, outstanding leadership is required. In 2010, President James H. Taylor was honored as a "Difference Maker" by Hal Rogers, U.S. Representative Ky.-Dist. 5.

Taylor also received a Meritorious Service award from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

Congressman Rogers praised Taylor for his work on the transformation of "a sleepy little college in Southeast Kentucky into this dynamic university that we see today."

Rogers also praised the vision demonstrated by Taylor and the administration for proposing and hosting the "Rogers Explorers" program since 2006 and for the campus hosting Camp Unite for three summers.

"I'm here to pay tribute to one of my mentors—one of my chief mentors," Rogers said of the university president. "He's an educator; he's an entrepreneur; he's a public servant; he's a leader, and certainly, he is a difference maker."

Rogers reminded the audience, "Everyone is equipped with the potential to be difference makers, but it takes te-

nacity; it takes integrity; it takes courage of conviction to fuel a person's determination to go the extra mile, and to truly make a difference."

"Our desire is to be servant leaders, or better yet, leader servants who put service above self," said Taylor. "We want to tend the little garden God has given us on the face of this earth. We stand on the shoulders of many others such as our maintenance folks and support staff, our unusually gifted administration and faculty, our donors and our friends."

Dr. John Hilpert, chair of the SACSCOC Board of Trustees, thanked Taylor for his "involvement in all aspects of the Commission over the years" and for his "longevity as a successful president while also rendering voluntary service to the Commission."

Meritorious Service awards are presented to those in higher education who have demonstrated extraordinary commitment to and understanding of accreditation processes, who are respected by their peers for their integrity and the meritorious quality of their service, and who are recognized as models of competency, creativity and accomplishment.

Mountain Outreach Program

Mountain Outreach (MO), a construction mission of the university for nearly 30 years, has worked to make a difference the living conditions of many low-income residents in the region by helping them to have safer, more accessible and comfortable homes.

Each summer, the group works with volunteers to construct basic housing and make needed home repairs. They also complete smaller projects in the fall and during spring break. In the winter, they conduct two Christmas Gift Days to help make the holidays happier for many families.

In 2010, Cumberlands hosted LifeWay's M-Fuge camp for the first time. With the help of 790 volunteers from M-Fuge and seven individual church groups, our students were able to complete a long list of accomplishments during the 10-week summer session including three new homes and 43 individual improvement projects.

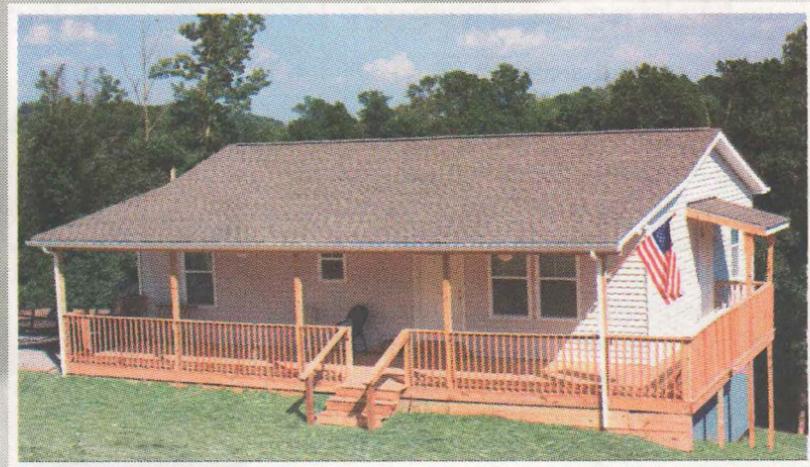
"There was a tremendous boost to our community, our program and our campus. This campus was abuzz with students," said Marc Hensley, Mountain Outreach director.

Partnering with M-Fuge enabled the MO summer team to reach more people than ever before. Team members supervised groups of M-Fuge volunteers in 30 projects, including roofing, painting, mowing yards and building sheds.

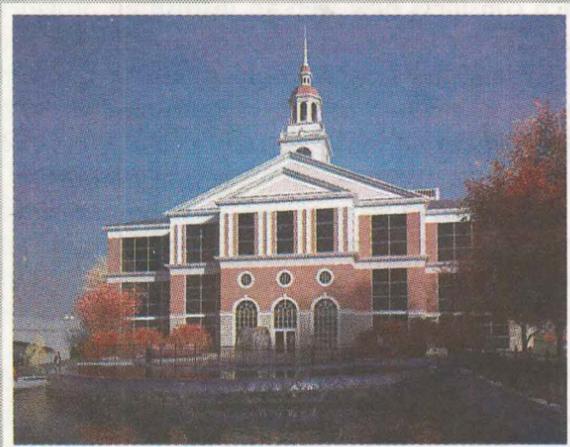
"M-Fuge was absolutely the biggest [community] impact I've ever seen," said Hensley. He noted that growth is a key aspect of MO. "It is God's plan that everything grows. God's plan for the church is growth, and God's plan for us as Christians is growth."

Since MO began in 1982, the program has been going strong. Despite changes in the economy, gift income and material costs, the focus of Mountain Outreach has remained fixed on the mission in Whitley County. The only times the team goes beyond the county is when they travel, usually to Eastern Kentucky for their spring break work trip, and when they construct a home in Laurel County in alternate years.

"Whether we build one home or three, we're going to keep on keeping on. There will always be need. It is our Christian obligation to serve," said Hensley. "We will always allow God to direct our program. We are going forward by leaps and bounds."



New Health and Wellness Center will be an asset to students and community



Artist rendering of new student health and wellness center.

Cumberlands' newest project is the Health and Wellness Center, which will bring together under one roof the college's student center, the intramural recreational program, general exercise and aerobic exercise areas, a test and measurement laboratory, a community outreach room and a counseling area for health issues such as nutrition, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, stress management, emotional health, and smoking cessation.

When completed, the facility and its programs will be made available to residents of the surrounding area, thus promoting good health and improving the quality of life for those who remain underserved. Lectures on health-relat-

ed topics, a regular part of the center's programming, will be open to the public.

Since its founding in 1888, Cumberlands has sought out the region's most pressing needs and has acted accordingly. First, the need was simply an education for area residents. More recently, through the university's education program and graduate programs, the need has been in supplying teachers to the area. In response, Cumberlands developed its Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MAPS) and its Master of Arts in Professional Counseling program (MAPC) to help supply a shortage of physicians and counselors in the region, affecting both the mental and physical health of Appalachians.

Making a difference

Service to others

University of the Cumberland seniors Tommie Thompson and Jared Stafford received the prestigious Mary Mildred and Algon Sydney Sullivan awards during UC's Founders' Day ceremony Jan. 17. The awards were given in recognition of their academic and spiritual excellence and their dedication to serving others.

Thompson is an elementary education major and a native of Jellico, Tenn. She is a member and scholarship recipient of the Kappa Delta Phi educational honor society, an active participant in UC's Baptist Campus Ministries, Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA), and Mountain Outreach. Thompson is also a member of the UC volleyball team and the Student Government Association's house council.

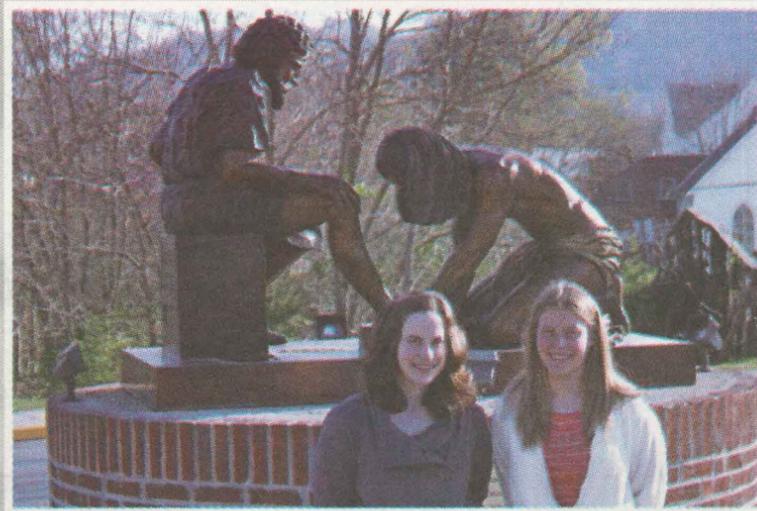
Thompson was last year's Angel Unaware recipient, an award that recognizes a University of the Cumberland student who selflessly helps others through acts and deeds of kindness; who goes far beyond what is expected; who is always there to lend a helping hand; and who does so without expecting recognition.

Stafford is majoring in Political Science, with minors in history and French. He currently serves as vice president of the UC Phi Alpha Theta history honor society and is a member of the FCA leadership team.

The Morehead native holds weekly prayer meetings with athletes at Whitley County Middle School as an FCA representative and is a member of the Patriots baseball team. Stafford plans to pursue a degree in law.



Examples of leader servants



Shannon Schaffer, a junior with a double major in religion and exercise science, has been named the recipient of the prestigious Fred Roth Half-Tuition Scholarship for religion majors for the 2011-2012 academic year. She is the daughter of Bobbie Schaffer, of Fairfield, Ohio.

Schaffer is a member of the cross country team and has given devotionals for the team before meets. She has also been involved in family group Bible studies through Baptist Campus Ministries, volunteered at Cedaridge Ministries, worked on the leadership team of Fellowship of Christian Athletes at Cumberlandds and served in Main Street Baptist Church.

Schaffer plans to attend graduate school to become an athletic trainer and

work with a local church in missions and youth.

Linda DeBakey was the Honored Religion Graduate for 2011. She is the daughter of Claire and Doug DeBakey, of Columbia, Maryland.

DeBakey is a member of the women's wrestling team and is scheduled to graduate May 7 with a double major in religion and art with a minor in Biblical languages. She served on the Mountain Outreach summer team in 2010, participated in winter break missions in Mexico in 2009 and spring break missions in Kentucky in 2010.

DeBakey has also been involved in Upward Basketball at First Baptist Church and active in the food pantry ministry. Her plans to attend seminary and serve in full-time ministry.

Making a difference by serving in local churches

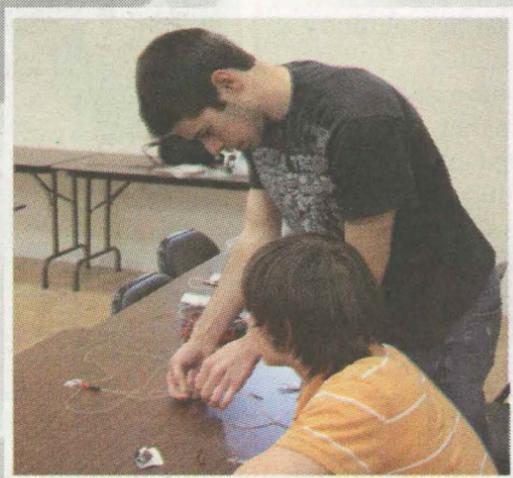
During the fall semester, some religion majors have the opportunity to serve in local churches. This not only provides a hands-on learning experience for future church leaders, but it also provides valuable service to the churches.

During the first semester of the 2010-11 academic year, Goldbug resident Robert Floyd served as an assistant in a ground-breaking after school program for teenage boys conducted through Comprehensive Care at Williamsburg First United Methodist Church. The program, Reclaiming Futures, is a community drug program under the auspices of Judge Cathy Prewitt and serves as a last hope for troubled youth who might otherwise be incarcerated or sent to an institution.

Although Floyd's official internship as a role model and assistant to a local crisis counselor concluded at the end of the first semester, the graduating senior continues his interest in the program.

Floyd, a religion major who plans to attend Asbury Theological Seminary in the fall, is truly passionate about film and hopes to bring that interest and his skill as a film maker into his ministry. Currently, he is completing a documentary for Reclaiming Futures.

"I'm not trying to stage anything. I'm trying to capture what it's actually like; the



rough and the good," says Floyd. "And to try to show other churches and other organizations what they can be doing—what we can be doing as people to help.

"Sometimes, we look down on trouble-making kids," Floyd continued, "but it's amazing how I get ministered to by these boys, these damaged boys. So, we're trying to capture the growth, the investment in these relationships, and what the church is doing to allow the program in its facilities, which is also amazing.

"I think if you do the right thing and seek God's will, He will open doors to let you do what your passions are; to put those to use," Floyd said.

UC ranks in top 20 for service to community and country

For 123 years, University of the Cumberland has developed leader-servants who made a difference wherever they chose to live, work and serve. Today, that tradition continues.

The most recent Washington Monthly College Guide ranked Cumberlandds in its top 50 baccalaureate colleges and universities overall and in the top 20 for service.

Unlike most college rankings, which position institutions according to how they benefit students alone, the Washington Monthly's Annual College Guide uses measurements that assess how well colleges and universities serve their communities and the country. According to its editors, the magazine uses public data to examine colleges through three lenses: social mobility (which considers how well an institution provides opportunities for first-generation and low-income students), research and service. Cumberlandds was ranked 13th in the magazine's service category and as 34th overall among the nation's baccalaureate colleges and universities.

"We are pleased to learn of this latest honor and we appreciate the Washington Monthly's recognition of Cumberlandds' contribution to not only our region, but also to the country and, ultimately, the world," said Dr. Jim Taylor, Cumberlandds' president.

The Washington Monthly, a Washington, D.C.-based magazine founded in 1969, began publishing its annual College Guide in 2005. This is the first year it has included both baccalaureate and graduate schools in its rankings.