

WESTERN Recorder

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Shine Like Stars * Philippians 2:15

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Haiti Two Years Later

By Holly McCrae

Port-au-Prince, Haiti—Smiling through her tears, Madam Maris thanks and kisses the Southern Baptist volunteers as they hand her the keys to her new home.

For nearly two years, the 70-year-old Haitian woman has lived in a tent. She lost her husband, two nephews, her arm and her home in the earthquake that rocked Haiti in 2010. Now, she and her niece have an opportunity to start over.

There is one of many new beginnings Southern Baptists have helped provide since the 7.0-magnitude quake which killed 230,000 people and left millions more injured, homeless or both. To date, Southern Baptists have given more than \$11 million in aid. Many have volunteered their time and skills to help Haitians recover.

At first, Southern Baptist aid workers focused on the



While Southern Baptist volunteers set up an outdoor medical clinic to help earthquake survivors in Port-au-Prince with ongoing needs, a Haitian believer (left) leads waiting patients in a time of worship. In the two years since a 7.0-magnitude earthquake hit Haiti, Southern Baptist disaster relief efforts have helped thousands of Haitians rebuild their lives. (BGR photo)

Ky. lawmakers establish prayer caucus

By Drew Nichter

Frankfort—Dozens of Kentucky senators and representatives filed through the Capitol rotunda Jan. 10 to pledge their commitment to unite in prayer.

Witnessed by their fellow Kentuckians, 58 elected officials signed "A Call to Prayer for Kentucky" proclamation, signifying the formation of the Kentucky Legislative Prayer Caucus.

"The goal is simple," Rep. Jeff Hoover (R-Jamestown) said, "to defend the right of Americans to pray and to stand against attacks on faith across this land."

Lawmakers and citizens filled the Capitol rotunda to witness the birth of the prayer caucus. Kentucky's is only the fifth such group to be formed. Mississippi, Virginia, North Carolina and Colorado legislators also have established prayer caucuses.

Other states soon will follow. Maine legislators formed a prayer caucus this week; Oklahoma's will begin Feb. 9.

"It's really astounding what's happening as national, state and local leaders are joining together," said Lea Carawan, executive director of the Washington-based Congressional Prayer Caucus



PLEDGE TO PRAY As Senate President David Williams (left) looks on, Speaker of the House Greg Stumbo signs the "Kentucky Call to Prayer" proclamation. The document was signed by 58 state senators and representatives Jan. 10 at a gathering in Frankfort announcing the formation of the Kentucky Legislative Prayer Caucus. (Photo by Robin Bass)

Foundation. "And they believe as we do, that we are a nation that must pray and trust God to turn our hearts and our nation back to Him."

The state legislative prayer caucuses

See Ky. prayer caucus ... Page 3

Memorial for the Unborn seeks to provide place for healing, closure

By Drew Nichter

Frankfort—Nearly 20 years later, Kathy Rutledge finally named her child: Nathaniel.

Pregnant at age 18, Rutledge succumbed to pressure from family and friends to terminate her pregnancy. Knowing it was wrong, she went ahead with the abortion.

During the years that followed, Rutledge said she hid the grief that accompanied the decision she made.

"I was told by my family and friends to, more or less, get over it," she said, "that it was best for me and to get on with my life."

Rutledge did get on with her life. She gave birth to two sons, later raising them as a single mother.

But she never was able to forget about Nathaniel.

After attending a healing program for post-abortive women at a Lexington church, Rutledge

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Kentucky Baptists' gifts make possible new houses in Haiti

By Dannah Prather

Louisville—Two years after an earthquake devastated Haiti, Kentucky Baptists have given an additional \$15,000 to build houses for displaced residents.

According to Coy Webb, director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Baptist Men on Missions department, a gift of \$15,371 from Kentucky Baptists was given last month to Rebuild Haiti, a cooperative effort of Baptists in the United States and Haiti to build homes for 6,200 families by the end of 2013.

Webb said about \$2,500 is needed to build one house, meaning that with this most recent gift, Kentucky Baptists have made possible six additional homes for Haitians.

In addition to the new houses, the rebuild project has helped Haiti's lagging economy by putting people to work and purchasing building materials.

Kentucky Baptists now have given a

total of \$641,171 to help Haitians recover from the Jan. 12, 2010 disaster that claimed the lives of hundreds of thousands of people.

"Kentucky Baptists sent over 25 teams, gave hundreds of thousands of dollars for relief and rebuild, and collected almost 10,000 Buckets of Hope for survivors," Webb said.

Emergency relief communications and helped assess needs in the days after the quake. Other teams that followed provided emergency medical care and helped with clean-up and reconstruction efforts.

Buckets of Hope was a national Southern Baptist effort to provide food staples packed in plastic five-gallon buckets. One bucket of rice, cooking oil, flour and other items was enough to feed a family of four for one week.

In addition to the practical help, Kentucky Baptists helped spiritually by supporting the ministries of Haitian



HOME SWEET HOME A Southern Baptist volunteer (right) and a Haitian worker build a new house for earthquake survivors in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, as part of the Rebuild Haiti relief project. Since the 7.0 earthquake rocked the island nation on Jan. 12, 2010, Rebuild Haiti has constructed 2,800 houses in 30 hard-hit communities. (BGR photo)

Christians and sharing the gospel as they served.

"I am most glad that we could share a role in the greatest spiritual awakening

in Haitian history that has resulted in hundreds of thousands of people professing faith in Christ and over 250 new church plants," Webb said. (KBC)

Haiti anniversary

Continued from page 1

most pressing—medical care, food and basic shelter—that would serve as a witness to the love of Christ. But they also sought more long-term solutions to help Haitians break the cycle of dependency that keeps them mired in poverty.

Since the quake destroyed or damaged millions of houses, the vast need for housing captured the attention of relief planners. They developed a project called Rebuild Haiti, a joint effort involving Haitians and Southern Baptists. By the time the project ends this spring, teams will have constructed about 2,800 houses in 30 Haitian communities.

"This sounds like a lot, and it is a lot in such a short period of time," said retired missionary Carter Davis, who has worked with the project since the earthquake. "But the real effect is seen when we recognize how many persons are now in substantial houses and not in tents or other shelters."

Since the average Haitian family consists of six people, an estimated 16,800 Haitians now are in stable homes. Many of these were built on original foundations, keeping families from relocating and losing their properties. These projects also revived local businesses and put Haitians back to work.

"Almost all the labor was done by Haitians," Davis said. "This provided income for many and stimulated the local economy by purchasing the materials from local stores."

"It was a cooperative effort," agreed Jeff Palmer of Baptist Global Response. "Haitian Baptists and (other) Haitian workers actually built more of the houses than the volunteer teams. But the teams were good for coming down and interacting, sharing their faith, as well as just giving encouragement to the local people."

Florida and Haitian Baptists were able to make significant contributions, in part because of the 17-year partnership Florida Baptists have maintained in the country, Palmer noted. Just in the joint



DANCE OF JOY Southern Baptist volunteers and local Haitians show their joy after completing the construction of a new house for earthquake survivors in Port-au-Prince. The house is one of about 2,800 homes Southern Baptists and Haitians have worked together to build since a 7.0-magnitude earthquake two years ago. (BGR photo)

Florida-Haitian effort, 124 new churches were started, 56 church buildings were repaired and 1,000 homes will be built by the time Rebuild Haiti wraps up.

Using local materials ensures Haitians can continue to build and expand these houses even after Southern Baptists leave, Palmer noted.

"We've tried to break the cycle of dependency and entitlement by saying to the people who are the recipients of this goodwill and aid (that) they've got the same abilities and capabilities," he said. "The work will go on, but the Haitians will be the ones to complete it."

Haitians taking ownership of the rebuilding effort is one of the most important changes Palmer said he has seen during the two-year project.

"In some communities, there were folks in the earthquake areas sitting and waiting for someone to come solve their problem," Palmer noted. "When we got communities involved in helping one another, we found they started thinking of community first and themselves second. And seeing the church and the com-

munities come together, those are (ways) you can see an impact deeper than just people getting homes."

Workers encouraged Haitian Baptist churches to take the lead in identifying aid recipients. Since resources were limited, these churches began focusing on people who had the greatest needs.

"What we found over and over was they were choosing orphans," Palmer said. "They were choosing a lot of those we would have given priority to. We saw a real transition from dependency to more kingdom values."

"There was a great support to provide first for the widows and mothers with children," Davis said. "There was a tendency by some to provide only for the church members, but as time went on, I saw more and more (desire to) provide for others in the communities. This is the concept we stressed to the pastors and churches—to recognize that Jesus cared for everyone and we need to follow His example."

Davis recalled the generosity of one Haitian church in a town unaffected

directly by the earthquake. Many of the church members already had taken in displaced relatives from Port-au-Prince, but the church wanted to do more.

The congregation "asked if we could assist by providing funds for the church to construct houses on land that the church owned and would give" to the quake survivors, Davis said. "We constructed 50 houses on this land."

Although housing was one of biggest needs after the quake, Southern Baptists helped in many other ways as well.

Missionaries and volunteers donated supplies—such as benches, desks and chalkboards—to struggling schools. They also rebuilt damaged buildings, repaired roofs and installed bathrooms so thousands of children could return to school.

Women's groups across the U.S. sewed clothes for orphans while churches and other Baptist organizations provided food and medicine for needy children. Missionaries and volunteers even started a mini-farm and gardens to help some orphanages become self-supporting.

Despite all that has been accomplished, Haiti still faces years of recovery.

"For many people, things are improving and they are moving ahead with their lives," said Delores York, an International Mission Board missionary in Haiti. "For thousands of others who are still in tents or make-do shelters, help has not arrived. There is still a problem of unemployment and survival on a day-to-day basis. Cholera comes in waves, along with malaria, typhoid, TB and many other diseases."

The relief effort in Haiti is winding down, with the last volunteer team scheduled for March. Even though many Haitians remain in need, York and other workers said they believe the generosity of Southern Baptists will continue to encourage Haitians.

"It's been two years since the quake, and Southern Baptists have given generously to help with many other calamities in the world," York said. "Their generosity has changed lives in many ways. Even as we see the end to this work coming very quickly, it won't be the end of Southern Baptist work in Haiti." (BGR)

Associations vow to fight gambling expansion in Bluegrass

By Robin Bass

Winchester—A pair of Kentucky Baptist associations have taken a stand against expanded gambling by passing resolutions.

Boone's Creek and South District Baptist associations publicly opposed the further expansion of gambling in Kentucky during meetings last week.

Their actions were a response to Gov. Steve Beshear's "State of the Commonwealth" address Jan. 4 when he said voters should be allowed to vote on the issue. If state legislators introduce and approve a bill to place the issue before a referendum, Kentucky could have up to nine casinos.

"I've known people who lost everything," said John Ryder, director of missions for Boone's Creek Association. "Once someone's addicted to it, they will

spend every penny they got."

In his home state of Louisiana, Ryder said he has seen how destructive consequences increase as the number of gambling venues grows. Louisiana currently has 56 casinos. "I would hate to see it happen here," he said.

The director of missions said Boone's Creek pastor have expressed their full support of the association's resolution and will be encouraging members of their congregations to call state legislators.

"I think the most good can be done by people calling their elected officials," Ryder said. "They really go by what the people say."

Jim Clontz, director of missions for South District Association, said his association's resolution also encourages pastors to lead congregants to voice their opinions to lawmakers. In addition to

publishing the statement in an associational newsletter, Clontz said it will be sent to the local newspaper in Danville.

"Most directors of missions are actively doing something," noted Clontz, who said he has spoken with Rep. Mike Harmon (R-Danville) and left a voice mail for Sen. Tom Buford (R-Nicholasville) expressing his opposition to expanded gambling.

In an email last week, the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Committee on Public Affairs urged directors of missions to help spread the word about casino gambling. They were given several suggestions, such as placing calls to legislators and providing lawmakers opportunities to hear from concerned pastors and business leaders within the associations.

"Some people will gamble just a little for entertainment, but others will become addicted," said Robert Reeves,

communications director for the KBC. "The slot machine is the most addictive form of gambling ever devised. Families, churches and government will have to step in to pick up the pieces of broken lives at an ever-increasing rate."

Reeves noted that gambling is about more than morality; it is "simply bad public policy." In addition to its addictive qualities, he pointed out that a government dependent on the gambling industry for revenue could easily lead to corruption. Legislators would find themselves "beholden to these big corporations," he said.

"This year's threat is the most serious we have faced in many years regarding expanded gambling," Reeves wrote. "The gambling industry is going all out to lobby our legislators, so it is extremely important for Kentucky citizens to speak clearly to our elected leaders." (WR)

Hardage elected BGCT executive director

Dallas—The Baptist General Convention of Texas Executive Board elected David Hardage as its executive director Jan. 12. He will begin Feb. 1.

Hardage—a veteran Texas Baptist pastor, associational leader and seminary development officer—succeeds Randel Everett, who became pastor of First Baptist Church of Midland, Texas, last year.

Hardage has served as director of

development for Baylor University's Truett Theological Seminary since 2007. He was director of Waco Regional Baptist Association from 2004-07. He also served 13 years as pastor of churches in Texas and Oklahoma.

Hardage is a graduate of Baylor University, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. (Texas Baptist Standard/ABP)

Ky. prayer caucus

Continued from page 1

followed the lead of members of Congress who, in 2005, issued a "call to prayer" to all Americans. The Congressional Prayer Caucus now meets weekly for prayer in Room 219 of the U.S. Capitol building.

According to the CPCF website, the national and state caucuses are bipartisan efforts to avert the rise of secularism and religious exclusion that is "rapidly becoming America's reality."

"The concerted effort to expunge every vestige of God from government and the influence that the Christian faith had on establishing the principles upon which our liberties were secured puts America at odds with God," the website states.

Those who spoke at last week's gathering in Frankfort said they believe their efforts are stemming that tide. They pointed to a congressional resolution overwhelmingly passed last October that reaffirms "In God We Trust" as the nation's motto.

The resolution encourages the public display of the motto in schools, courthouses and other public buildings. Carawan noted. "They're saying put God back up in America."

Not only were lawmakers invited to sign the "Call to Prayer" proclamation, but citizens in attendance signed as well. One of them was Harrodsburg Baptist Church Pastor Wayne Spivey.

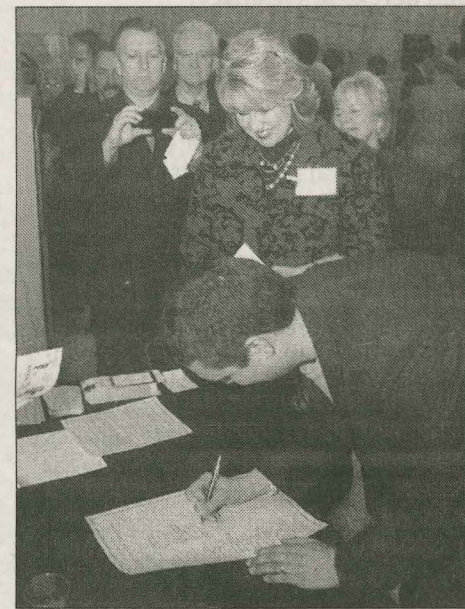
"Some of our legislators recognize that whatever they do as senators and representatives is not going to change our state," he said, "only God is going to be able to change our state."

Spivey said it's important that legislators petition God when addressing the issues with which Kentuckians struggle.

"What greater source of power can we unleash than through the power of prayer?" he asked.

Spivey joined several other members of the Mercer County Ministerial Association, of which he is president, at the Capitol prayer rally. He said members of the group regularly meet for prayer with their representative, Kim King (R-Harrodsburg).

King said she believes the caucus will



CITIZENS' SUPPORT Jon Burdette (foreground), youth pastor at Hickory Grove Baptist Church in Independence, signs the "Kentucky Call to Prayer" proclamation. Clark and Pastor Bill Clark were among the hundreds in attendance who signed the document at the Jan. 10 gathering in Frankfort. (Photo by Robin Bass)

give legislators a regular opportunity to pray about issues in the commonwealth.

"Human understanding isn't going to solve these human problems," she acknowledged. "We need divine intervention and guidance and discernment."

King said she hopes that through regular prayer caucus meetings, legislators will find "those God-centered decisions well grounded in His will and discernment rather than our own human understanding."

During his time at the podium, Senate President David Williams (R-Burkesville) shared about a particularly contentious General Assembly session that concluded with him asking those who were gathered for their prayers.

Asked afterward why he would make such a request, Williams said it was not meant to gain any political advantage.

"It's not a political statement," Williams said, "... we should all pray for each other and remember people in our prayers."

Williams then implored of the crowd on behalf of his fellow legislators: "Keep us in your prayers that we might have the wisdom to do the right thing." (WR)

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Expanded gambling has tragic consequences

The Kentucky legislature convenes in regular session each year on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in January for 60 days in even-numbered years and for 30 days in odd-numbered years. This year's long session began with a strong push from Gov. Steve Beshear to expand gambling in our state.

Together We are the KBC



Paul Chitwood

The governor keeps making the same argument, stating that money Kentuckians spend to gamble in other states should be spent in the Commonwealth. Most reasonable observers agree that the governor has significantly overestimated the amount of money Kentuckians spend on gambling as well as the amount of tax dollars that would fill the coffers of state government if gambling were to be expanded.

That aside, expanded gambling is no win for Kentucky. The tragic consequences for children and families are well documented. A recent article in the Canadian Medical Association Journal states, "Several populations are vulnerable to the impacts of gambling, in addition to lower socioeconomic groups. The cost to families in terms of dysfunctional relationships, violence and abuse, financial pressure, and disruption of growth and development of children can be great."

If we care about the poor, about families, and about children, every Kentucky Baptist should immediately pick up the phone and urge their governor to abandon his personal commitments to the gambling industry for the sake of those he has been elected to lead and protect. Moreover, I urge every Kentucky Baptist to contact their legislators and request that those legislators act responsibly by doing everything within their power to block expanded gambling in Kentucky.

I spend about \$25 per month to have my trash hauled away. I could save that money if I chose to dump it in my backyard instead, but I really don't want a trash heap where my kids play so I'll gladly see the money leave my checking account. My subdivision prohibits residents from having swine. I could probably make a little money raising pigs but, at the end of the day, I'm glad to live where I don't have to smell them. The economic gain from some things just isn't worth the cost.

Will some Kentuckians spend their money on gambling? It's a poor choice but, yes, some Kentuckians will spend their money on gambling. Does that mean we should invite the stench of corruption into our state? Should we bring the trash heap closer to our families? I don't think so.

If Kentucky Baptists speak with a clear and united voice, we can speak loudly enough to turn back the tide on expanded gambling. Please make a personal call to the legislative message line at (800) 372-7181 and leave a message for your state senator to oppose all gambling expansion efforts in Kentucky.

Paul Chitwood is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Supreme Court renders major win for religious freedom

Should a congregation or a church-related institution have the right to determine who will serve as its minister or teacher or to dismiss a minister or teacher without the government interfering in the decision? Sounds like a no-brainer, doesn't it? Particularly when the action of a church, school or denominational agency is based on theological convictions or the minister's immoral or unethical practices. But consider, what if the rationale behind the decision might be construed as a violation of legal safeguards preventing an employer from discriminating against an employee on the basis of age, gender, race or disability?

That question was at the heart of a landmark case involving a teacher who had been fired at a church school in Michigan that was deliberated by the U.S. Supreme Court last week (see news story on page 9). In what many religious leaders are heralding as one of the most significant rulings regarding religious liberty in decades, the Justices gave their unequivocal affirmation of a "ministerial exception" established in the First Amendment. "The interest of society in the enforcement of employment discrimination statutes is undoubtedly important," Chief Justice John Roberts Jr. wrote in the opinion. "But so, too, is the interest of religious groups in choosing who will preach their beliefs, teach their faith and carry out their mission." The text of the First Amendment gives "special solicitude to the rights of religious organizations," Roberts affirmed. "Requiring a church to accept or retain an unwanted minister, or punishing a church for failing to do so, intrudes upon more than a mere employment decision," he stated. "Such action interferes with the internal governance of the church, depriving the church of control over the selection of those who will personify its beliefs."

Many church legal experts are applauding the decision. Emphasizing that religious schools have a statutory exemption from the general duty of employers to not discriminate on the basis of religion in employment, Jim Guenther, attorney for the International Association of Baptist Colleges and Universities, clarified in an e-mail shared with the group's members, "This case has nothing to do with that subject. This case speaks to non-discrimination laws, state and federal, which contain no exemption for religious schools, and it says the Constitution provides the school with an exemption to those laws to the extent one who is deemed to be 'minister' would seek to use his rights under the nondiscrimination law against his religious employer."

Calling it "a robust view" of religious freedom, Richard Hammar, senior editor of Church Law & Tax Report and author of more than 100 books, highlighted several implications on the ChurchLawAndTax.com website: "It will reduce the number of employment discrimination and termination claims against churches. This is especially significant given the fact that most church insurance policies exclude 'employment practices' from coverage, meaning that churches must retain their own attorneys and pay any settlement or judgment out of church funds." Hammer added, "While the Court refrained from providing a definition of the term 'minister' for purposes of the ministerial

exception, it did note several factors that made the teacher in this case a minister, and this will provide church leaders with helpful insight into the application of the exception to other church staff members." In the Lutheran church's eyes, the teacher involved was viewed as a "called teacher" because of her theological training and academic duties in teaching a religion class.

Leaders of Kentucky Baptist colleges and agencies also seemed pleased with the Supreme Court decision, viewing it as a victory for the church and faith-based institutions. John Chowning, vice president of Campbellsville University and pastor of nearby Saloma Baptist Church, told the Western Recorder: "It is a victory for the right of churches to make employment decisions that are compatible with the faith and doctrine of the body, and since the case resulted from a private Christian school employment decision, it seems that Campbellsville University, and other Christian colleges and universities, are protected from undue governmental interference in the hiring of faculty and staff who are compatible with the institutional mission."

Likewise, David Melber, president of Crossings Ministries and director of Kentucky Baptist Assemblies, concurred: "As a gospel-centered ministry, we can only exist if we faithfully and unapologetically stand upon the inerrancy of Scripture and that salvation is found only in Christ. These truths must be lived out and boldly proclaimed by all the staff at Crossings. I am thankful for this ruling that allows the church and ministries such as Crossings to unashamedly hold and employ staff that espouse these core Christian convictions."

But does the Supreme Court's decision perhaps go too far in barring ministers from seeking legal action against churches and church-related organizations that they believe have wrongly dismissed them? Barry Lynn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, believes so. In this case, the Michigan teacher who had been on an extended disability leave due to narcolepsy sued the church, claiming her termination was a violation of her rights under the Americans With Disabilities Act, leading Lynn to warn that the court's decision could have pernicious consequences: "Blatant discrimination is a social evil we have worked hard to eradicate in the United States," he stated in an article in the New York Times. "I'm afraid the court's ruling today will make it harder to combat." In a Religion News Service article, Lynn further explained: "The really terrible thing about this decision is that if you fire someone and religion is just a pretext, it can't be addressed by courts."

Lynn raises a legitimate concern about the Supreme Court's decision, but this is precisely the point where church leaders, deacons or trustees should step in—not government officials or judicial bodies—to ensure that their "ministers," God's servants, are dealt with in a fair, just and godly manner that provides an exemplary witness to the individual involved, the congregation affected and the watching community. Still, whether or not one agrees with the church's particular course of action, the Justices made the right call: "The church must be free to choose those who will guide it on its way."

After Thought

By Todd Deaton



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Shine Like Stars * Philippians 2:15

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Want to know how to change our culture?

By Jim Denison

Do American Christians make a difference in our culture? A recent Pew Research Center report suggests that we want to.

The Center's findings indicate that "religiously active Americans are more trusting of others, are more optimistic about their impact on their community, think more highly of their community, are more involved in more organizations of all kinds, and devote more time to the groups to which they are active."

The author of the report notes: "Some analysts have been concerned that those who have active spiritual lives might not be as engaged with the secular world. We see the opposite. Those who are religiously active are more likely to participate in all kinds of groups and more likely to feel good about their communities."

Here's my question: If Christians are so engaged in our culture, why is our culture in the shape it's in?

America has the highest teen pregnancy rate in the industrialized world. Some 90 percent of our 8-to-16-year-olds have viewed pornography online, most while doing their homework. Property theft in America costs us more than \$15 billion a year. In 2010, more than 9.9 million Americans were victimized by identity theft, at a cost of \$5 billion.

There are several ways to explain this disconnect. One is a chicken-and-egg conundrum: Are religious people more likely to be "joiners," or are "joiners" more likely to be religious? Do we connect with our culture to make a difference for the kingdom, or do we join community groups because we like joining groups?

A second way to interpret our apparent lack of moral influence is to ask: How much worse would our culture be if Christians weren't so community-minded?

A third, more negative, possibility is that American Christians leave their faith at church. We may be

involved in our culture, but we bring little to it in the way of biblical thinking. According to the Pew Forum's 2010 Religion and Public Life Survey, when "conservative" Christians consider cultural issues, faith is seldom a significant influence.

I'd like to suggest a fourth option: Many of us don't understand how culture changes. James Davison Hunter's "To Change the World" is a provocative, ground-breaking analysis of the ways culture does and doesn't change. Hunter teaches sociology at the University of Virginia and heads the Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture. I consider him the most profound voice on culture change in America today.

According to Hunter, culture does not change by winning elections. For instance, during the presidencies of Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush, divorce rates escalated. Gay marriage made significant inroads in America during the presidency of George W. Bush. Neither fact is the fault of the presidents in office, of course, but both illustrate the limited capacity of political leaders to affect culture.

Culture does not change by evangelism and church attendance. More than 80 percent of Americans are identified with some faith community, yet our culture is intensely secular and materialistic. By contrast, the Jewish community has never comprised more than 3.5 percent of our population, yet its contributions to science, literature, art, music, film and architecture have been remarkable. At least 180 Jews have been awarded the Nobel Prize, constituting 36 percent of all American recipients.

Nor does culture change by popularity. For example, while more evangelical books are being sold than ever before, they target the faith community rather than the cultural mainstream. Few are ever reviewed by The New York Times or The Wall Street Journal.

How does culture change? According to Hunter, by "manifesting faithful influence." When Christians live as salt and light in our world, we wield an effect out of proportion to our size. If we seek our highest level of cultural achievement, then exercise that influence as faithful followers of Jesus, our Lord will use our witness in ways that will make a dramatic impact over time.

In this new year, I'm more committed than ever before to loving God and neighbor, and trusting the kingdom results to the King. Will you join me? (ABP)

Jim Denison is president of the Denison Forum on Truth and Culture and theologian-in-residence for the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

FIRST PERSON

What are "waist-high fences?"

By David Garrard

Rebecca Drinkard is a colleague in ministry to children at St. Matthews as well as a full-time student and a teacher. Recently, Rebecca shared an idea with me that she picked up in school: a concept known as the "waist-high fence." Rebecca discovered this idea in Marilyn Gootman's book, "The Caring Teacher's Guide to Discipline."

As Gootman explains in a chapter entitled Expectations, Limits and Rules, waist-high fences are behavioral boundaries based on what can reasonably be expected of a child. The idea supports research that shows that the best, most effective discipline finds balance between freedom and rules.

Unreasonable expectations set the stage for frustration on the part of parents, teachers and children. They are almost impossible to achieve or live up to on the child's part, and at the same time, difficult to enforce by parents or teachers. In contrast, the waist-high fence is high enough to do the job, but not so high as to cause the child to simply give up and rebel.

Life without fences can be dangerous. At the same time, fences that are too high shut out some of the adventure and wonder of life. Our job as parents is to strike a balance—protecting our children and helping them learn that life is full of rules and restrictions that exist for their benefit, while at the same time giving them appropriate freedom to learn, grow and experience life.

Children are happiest when life's fences are fair, as well as firm. The idea of a waist-high fence can help parents who are trying to find this balance and know when to say yes and when to say no. And as Wade Rowatt says, when parents do their job well, the fences can eventually come down because the boundaries they marked have been internalized.

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



Answer God's call to show the love of Christ in 2012

By Erich Bridges

Those who predict the future tend to be prophets or fools. I'm no prophet, so you can infer which category I fit into. Anyway, here

are my predictions for the new year:

- Renewed Israeli-Palestinian peace talks will stall. It happens every year.

- The economy will recover.

Or not.

- Fifty-nine countries will hold local, regional or national elections. Some of these will be honest.

- A Democrat or Republican definitely will be elected president, unless an independent wins.

- The world will not end in December. If it does, it won't have anything to do with the Mayan calendar.

Obvious, you say? OK, I don't know much about the future. But I do know a few things that could happen in 2012—if you help make them happen:

- Someone who has no clue about God, no hope, perhaps no desire to continue living, will

decide to follow Christ and go on to change the world.

"The next Jonathan Edwards might be the man driving in front of you with the Darwin Fish bumper decal," observes author and

theologian Russell Moore. "The next Charles Wesley might be a misogynist, profanity-spewing hip-hop artist right now. The next Billy Graham might be passed out drunk in a fraternity house right now. The next Charles Spurgeon might be making posters for a gay pride march right now. The next Mother Teresa might be managing an abortion clinic right now."

Is that person in your life? What will you do this year to show him or her the love of Christ?

- A comfortable, self-centered church will start to love and minister to the hurting people around it.

Will you be the person who helps turn the lukewarm heart of that church toward the burning heart of God?

- A people group somewhere in the world with no believers, no church, no Bible, no connection to

Handling finances with integrity

By Don Spencer

A big mistake of many church leaders is the assumption that they and those around them are above any temptations to mishandle funds. Unfortunately, experience teaches that at some point, most



churches must deal with some sticky questions regarding the handling of church finances. Sometimes nothing wrong has been done, but mere suspicion of wrongdoing permanently damages the reputation of leaders. The only way to protect oneself and others is to ensure financial integrity.

Below are some tough questions that should be asked:

- Do we make sure the same person is not involved in more than one of the financial procedures (collecting, counting, recording, authorizing expenses, writing checks, auditing)?

- Do we count and record offerings immediately?
- Are two or more unrelated persons present when offerings are counted?

- Are offerings always stored in a secure or well-supervised area?

- Do we place offerings in lockbags after counting and place the lockbags in a safe or night depository?

- If offerings are stored in a safe, do we strictly limit who has access and change the combination when someone is no longer authorized to use it?

- Is the number of authorized check signers limited and are all persons authorized to write checks held responsible through an accounting system?

- Do we provide the bank with annual updates of persons authorized to sign checks?

- Do we issue annual receipts for giving?

- Are all disbursements made by check and based on original invoices?

- Are two signatures required for large checks?

- Is the bank statement reviewed by someone who does not handle cash or disbursements?

- Are all expenses documented for future reference with the date, amount, purpose and name of the person who authorized the expenditure?

Painful experiences in too many churches have taught that unless these questions can all be answered with a firm "yes," your church might have a significant hole in its financial structure through which hundreds or thousands of dollars could be lost.

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

the gospel—and no one doing anything about it—will hear about Jesus Christ for the first time.

Are you the person God is calling to start that history-changing process? Is your church the mission team He has appointed to take on the challenge?

Most of us change little from year to year because we don't really believe, deep down, that personal change is possible. The same roadblocks tend to trip us every time, according to pastor Perry Noble: procrastination, past failures, fear of taking a step of faith, fear of what others will think, not believing God is who He says He is, not believing God wants to use us, concern about things of no eternal significance.

If you know Christ and stumble over these issues, Noble says, "You do not understand the fact that God's Holy Spirit lives inside of you and has gifted you and is calling you to do something greater than you could ever imagine."

Why not answer that call in 2012? (BP)

Erich Bridges is International Mission Board global correspondent.

Memorial to honor all unborn children

Continued from page 1

named her unborn baby and explored ways in which to memorialize Nathaniel.

That started her searching for cemetery plots in and around Lexington. But at every place, she heard the same response: "It's very hard to do a marker when there's no body."

One cemetery director suggested to Rutledge that she couldn't possibly be the only woman who wanted to memorialize her unborn baby. That idea sent Rutledge to the Internet, where she discovered a national memorial for unborn kids in Chattanooga, Tenn., as well as a handful of memorials in other states.

Rutledge's own search for peace and closure has led to the Kentucky Memorial for the Unborn.

Plans for the memorial began in 2006. After searching all over central Kentucky for a location, the monument has found a home at the Frankfort Cemetery.

The memorial still is under construction in a little-developed area at the back edge of the cemetery. But it overlooks the Kentucky River and the state Capitol building, and nearly everyone involved with the project has said there is a great deal of potential there, Rutledge noted.

Once completed, the memorial will include a curved granite and limestone wall where names and messages will be inscribed, as well as a seating bench and a place for mementos.

The centerpiece of the memorial is the "Rachel statue," the idea for which comes from Jeremiah 31:15-17. In the passage, the Jewish matriarch weeps for her

children who are "no more." But God tells Rachel, "They will return from the land of the enemy. So there is hope for your future. ... Your children will return to their own land."

Rutledge said she believes that's what the memorial will offer to parents and families who have lost unborn children—hope. "Yes, they're gone, but they are alive in heaven, and there is hope for our future."

The project has elicited strong support from many individuals and organizations, including Porter Memorial Baptist Church in Lexington, where Rutledge is a member.

Porter Memorial Pastor Bill Henard advocates for the project in a video posted on the Kentucky Memorial for the Unborn's Facebook page.

"I think this is a way that families who have lost a child can find a way to have a visible picture of hope and healing for their lives," Henard says.

Although Rutledge and many others involved with the project have experienced abortions, the memorial is not entirely devoted to post-abortive women.

One woman on the video shares about the day she miscarried her unborn twins. "This was a devastating day that has remained a huge, deep hole—a double hole—in my heart longing for these two unborn children whom I hope to be with some day in heaven."

Rutledge said the memorial is for all women who've experienced the loss of unborn babies, whether through abortions, miscarriages or stillbirths.



MEMORIAL PLANS Co-director of the Kentucky Memorial for the Unborn, Kathy Rutledge (right), and Heidi Reihing, who handles media relations, discuss the plans for the monument garden at the Frankfort Cemetery. The memorial is expected to be completed and dedicated by this summer. (Photo by Drew Nichter)

"We've made no distinction on the wall, and we don't want to so that there's no stigma associated with it," she noted. "The focus is unborn babies and honoring these unborn babies."

Through attending and now leading healing programs for parents who have lost unborn children, Rutledge said she has come to terms with her own grief and pain at giving up her child.

However, many parents are never plugged in to such programs and continue to suffer with the pain and questions that accompany the loss, Rutledge pointed out.

Even if they do experience the freedom that only comes through Jesus Christ, Rutledge said many parents, especially mothers, still find it difficult to

forgive themselves and get closure.

"You can accept the blood on the cross and that the Lord forgives you," she said, "but how in the world do you come to terms with yourself, with what's happened and what you've done?"


That's why Rutledge believes the Kentucky Memorial for the Unborn is so important. "We believe that this memorial will be a healing (place) for families and eventually a healing for our community and our state."

Rutledge said the memorial should be completed and dedicated by the summer. She encouraged churches or individuals that want to get involved in the project to visit the memorial's website at www.KyMemorialfortheUnborn.org or find the memorial on Facebook. (WR)

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Thank You!

At the beginning of this new year, I want to say a special "thank you" to all Kentucky Baptist churches for your faithful support of missions work here at home, across our nation, and around the world through the Cooperative Program. During my first few months as your Executive Director, I have been excited to talk with pastors and church members across the Commonwealth, hearing about their deep commitment to reach the nations with the gospel of our Lord.

Through the Cooperative Program...

... you are putting feet on the ground in faraway places where Jesus is not known

... you are providing hands to help rebuild lives and families here at home

... you are molding minds of our church leaders, pastors, and missionaries through higher education

... you are touching hearts far and near with the message that there is abundant life awaiting in the arms of a Savior.

Although we are living in difficult economic times, many churches are indicating that they are increasing their giving to support missions causes through the Cooperative Program. In many cases they are making real sacrifices in order to do more for Christ.

Your Cooperative Program is a worthy and proven method for leveraging the giving of every church for maximum effectiveness. If you have questions about how the Cooperative Program works, what mission endeavors it funds, or need assistance helping your church understand the Kingdom impact it makes, please call on me. We would value the opportunity to help you promote the Great Commission work funded through the Cooperative Program.

Together, we are the KBC,

Paul H. Chitwood

Paul Chitwood
Executive Director



Find out more about the
Cooperative Program at
www.kybaptist.org/cpmissions

Our history, part 1

1899: Martha "Granny" Coldiron Hogg donated a quarter-acre of land, valued at \$25, to what was then called the Mamre Baptist College with the condition that a school or church building with a value of at least \$600 be built within two years. The first building completed was McMurray Hall. The first order of business for the trustees was to elect James Anderson Burns as president. Henry Hensley gave the first donation of \$50 to start the school.

1900: The first classes were conducted by three teachers: J.A. Burns, H.L. McMurray and C.A. Dugger. More than 100 students enrolled on the first day. Tuition was \$1 a month. Broadway Baptist Church of Louisville pledged \$70 a month to support the school.

1901: The faculty included J.A. Burns, L. Sandlin, D. Hacker, L. Hatton and L. Johnson. The salary was \$14 a month—when the money was available. Dr. and Mrs. J.B. Marvin of Louisville donated \$5,000 for a new school building and \$30 a month for teachers.

1902: Marvin Hall was the first brick structure in or near Oneida when it was completed. The building consisted of a chapel and six large recitation rooms. J.A. Burns wrote an article asking that furnishings for the new building be donated in the memory of loved ones. Elkhorn Cottage, a kitchen and dining area for boys, was built. It was a gift of Elkhorn Association in Lexington. Oneida received phone service.

1903: J.H. Walker, the first college-trained teacher, was added to the faculty. McMurray Hall was given a second floor and was used as a boys' dorm.

1904: The name was changed from Mamre Baptist College to Oneida Baptist Institute. The tuition was \$1-2 a month, depending on grade. Room was

free and board was \$1.50 a week.

1905: Carnahan Hall, a girls' dorm, was built. It was made possible with the gift of \$10,000 from Mr. and Mrs. Robert Carnahan. Seventy percent of all Clay County district teachers were trained at Oneida.

1906: The Big Creek Branch School was opened with Thomas Britton as principal.

1907: Big Creek had three teachers and 90 students. Aldridge's Rock Branch had one teacher and 40 students, and Oneida had seven teachers and 240 students.

1908: The first graduating class included M. Hensley, P. Houchell, P. Davidson, C. Craft and W. Burns. It was the first high school graduation in Clay County. J.A. Burns and Thomas Walker spoke in New York at the Ministers' Conference. Preston Jennings Jones returned to his native Clay County after medical school to serve as a doctor for the school and community until his death in 1943.

1909: J.A. Burns met Elizabeth Milbank Anderson at a New York conference. She was responsible for the \$5,300 donation that eventually produced Anderson Hall. Burns also met Adeline McConville in New York. She started raising funds for a hospital in Oneida.

1910: Donations from the New York trip resulted in the purchase of 1,000 acres of farm, coal and timber land and a building.

1911: Anderson Hall was completed to house the domestic science classes. It was the first building with electricity, which was supplied by the school's Delco electric generating plant.

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

This is Oneida



W.F. Underwood

Headed in the right direction

Turnmire grateful for Clear Creek to follow God's purpose for her life

New student Morgan Turnmire, from New Tazewell, Tenn., grew up just a short distance from our campus across the Tennessee state line. She is thankful she didn't have to go far to find God's purpose for her life.

"I was saved when I was 7 years old," Morgan recalled. "I remember very well the night of my salvation experience during a revival. When I prayed to give my heart to Jesus, everything in life looked so different after that. I can honestly say God changed my life that night."

"A few years ago, I began to sense a call to ministry from the Lord. At that time, my father was attending Clear Creek, and I began to pray about the direction the Lord would have me to go with my life. I felt like at the time that I needed a new sense of direction in my life—a new purpose. I just didn't feel I was where the Lord wanted me to be. God began to show me that He wanted me to attend Clear Creek, but I ran from that call."

"During this time, my grandmother passed away, and that really broke me.

She was constantly telling me that she was praying for me to be in God's will," Morgan recalled. "God showed me once again that I needed to be at Clear Creek, and I knew I needed to surrender to His call to have that purpose and direction in my life that I was looking for. I know I am where God wants me to be now."

"I believe God has called me to work with children and teach them music," Morgan said. "It seemed as though God had taken that desire away from me while I was running from His call to Clear Creek. After I surrendered and came to campus, God began to flood me with all those desires once again."

"I truly believe there is a small Christian school out there somewhere that will want to start a music program to teach their young kids music. God is using my time here at Clear Creek to equip me to be the one who can serve in that Christian school to help those young children learn about the joys of music."

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

Clear Creek Chronicle



Donnie Fox

NYC churches, booted from schools, 'scrambling' for space

By Michael Foust

New York—About 60 churches in New York City have less than a month to find homes before a court ruling takes effect and forces them to abandon the city's public school buildings.

The congregations, including six that are Southern Baptist, knew for years the day might be coming, but that fact hasn't made it any easier for them to move by Feb. 12. The case dates back to 1994.

The churches were meeting in the buildings on Sundays, when school was not in session.

"Effectively, they're homeless on the second Sunday in February," said George Russ, executive director of Metropolitan New York Baptist Association. "They're all scrambling to figure out where they can go and how they can make a good transition in their neighborhood."

The legal case drew to a close in 2011 when the U.S. Second Circuit Court of Appeals upheld a New York City Department of Education rule that prevents school buildings from being used for "religious worship services."

Conservative groups expected the Supreme Court to take the case and reverse the ruling, but the high court declined in early December to even hear the case. The city council or the New York legislature could nullify the rule, but Russ said he isn't optimistic that will happen.

The affected Southern Baptist congregations range in size from about 75 to approximately 400. The largest, The Journey, might have the toughest time finding space.

"You don't find that in too many places," Russ said.

Movie theaters are a possibility, he noted, but the hours aren't as flexible and also are more expensive. Movie theaters in New York City, he said, tend to

open for business earlier than those in other cities.

The schools were charging the congregations only a nominal fee. There are other possibilities: hotels, Elks lodges and receptions halls. All, though, will come at higher costs. And all need to be in the general vicinity of their current locations.

"A church needs to be in a neighborhood where your people come from," Russ said. "A church member is not going to commute from Queens to Manhattan just to go to church one day a week. Very few churches in the city are cosmopolitan in the sense that they draw from every borough."

The congregations, Russ said, had "extremely positive" interactions with the schools.

"The churches that I work with have excellent relationships with the school administrators and had even gone and done extra projects to express their appreciation," he said.

Metropolitan New York Baptist Association's office has a chapel with about 100 seats that can be used for one church until it finds a more permanent space, Russ said.

Perhaps surprisingly, church leaders are positive about the situation.

"It is an inconvenience, but they are saying, 'Our identity is not in a building,'" Russ explained. "Our identity is who we are as a body.' It forces them to rethink their whole ministry strategy. Some are thinking about decentralizing, saying maybe we need two locations instead of one because of where our people come from."

"I think some are looking at this really from a real prayerful and missional kind of way, saying, 'How can we best be the body of Christ in this city?'" Russ added. "I'm trusting that God's going to use this for His good." (BP)

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Supreme Court sides with churches in 'ministerial exception' case

By Bob Allen

Washington—A unanimous U.S. Supreme Court ruled Jan. 11 that churches can fire their ministers for reasons that for other employers would be job discrimination.

The decision marks the first time the high court has recognized a "ministerial exception" in laws banning employment discrimination. Justices

said the Constitution's religion clauses bar the government from interfering in the employment relationship between a religious institution and its ministers.

"Requiring a church to accept or retain an unwanted minister, or punishing a church for failing to do so, intrudes upon more than a mere employment decision," Chief Justice John Roberts wrote in the opinion. "Such action interferes with the internal governance of the church, depriving the church of control over the selection of those who will personify its beliefs."

The court said requiring a Lutheran school to reinstate a school teacher fired in a dispute related to medical issues would violate both the First Amendment's Free Exercise Clause, which protects a religious group's right to select its own leaders, and the Establishment Clause, which prohibits government involvement in church-

governance decisions.

The 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati had ruled against Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church and School in Redford, Mich. While recognizing a ministerial exception, the appeals court found it did not apply to former teacher, Cheryl Perich, because her primary role was to teach about secular subjects and not religion.

The Supreme Court reversed that decision. While declining to adopt "a rigid formula for deciding when an employee qualifies as a minister," justices said the facts of Perich's case were enough to prevent her from suing her employer under the ministerial exception.

The Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty, which filed a brief in the case describing the ministerial exception as a "clear and crucial implication of religious liberty," wel-

comed the ruling, as did the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission and International Mission Board, who also filed briefs in the case.

"It is a helpful decision explaining the important and unique way that the Constitution protects religious organizations in matters of internal governance," said BJC General Counsel Hollyn Hollman. (ABP)

Chief Justice John Roberts:

"Requiring a church to accept or retain an unwanted minister, or punishing a church for failing to do so, intrudes upon more than a mere employment decision."

Who will inherit your estate?

KBF can help Ky. Baptists properly plan where estates go after death

Unless you take the appropriate steps, much of what the Lord has entrusted to you to manage, namely, your net worth—that is, your estate—may not go to those whom you intended it to go.

What you may not realize is, even if you have a last will and testament, much of what you own at the time of your death may not pass according to the terms of your will. Therefore, it is of utmost importance you engage in some planning to avoid unintentionally disinheriting your intended beneficiaries from a significant portion of your estate.

Such planning is consistent with the Apostle Paul's admonition found in 1 Timothy 5:8, "If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."

Examples of accounts that will not pass according to the terms of your will are accounts for which you have named beneficiaries and accounts jointly owned with rights of survivorship. Retirement accounts and life insurance policies typically have named beneficiaries. If you intend for those funds to pass

to the same beneficiaries as the ones named in your will, then you must make sure you have coordinated the beneficiary designations with the provisions in your will. Bank accounts and real estate owned by married couples

typically are jointly owned with rights of survivorship (JWROS). As a result, those assets pass directly to the surviving joint owner at the death of the first to die regardless of the beneficiary designation in the will of the first to die.

Let me urge those of you who have a will to take the time early in this new year to review the beneficiary designations of your retirement and

insurance accounts and the way in which your other assets are titled, and make sure they all are coordinated with your intentions as outlined in your will to assure those you want to inherit your estate will do so. And furthermore, make sure your intentions are consistent with God's intentions.

The KBF is available for private estate stewardship consultation. Call us toll free or visit our website.

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

Ky. Baptist Foundation



Barry Allen

'Threethrowing'



Mark Mitchum "threethrows" at a busy street corner in Panama City, Fla. (BP photo)

Southern Baptist spreads word about new three-fingered Christian gesture

Mobile, Ala.—It's a simple idea: associating a three-finger hand gesture with the Trinity.

Mark Mitchum, creator of "three-throwing," said he believes it can be a clearly defined, unmistakable hand gesture for Christians when verbal fellowship can't occur.

"I came up with the idea while driving around," said Mitchum, a registered nurse in Panama City, Fla., and a member of that city's First Baptist Church. "I would see lots of Christian symbols, like the cross, fish or dove, or even a clever bumper sticker or two, and would think, 'Hey, that's cool. They're Christians, but what do they know about me?'"

"I figured a simple Christian hand gesture could connect us for a few seconds and allow fellowship and encouragement."

In researching Christian gestures, however, Mitchum said he found nothing in mainstream pop culture seen as "Christian." Until now.

Mitchum is on a mission to spread the three-finger Trinity sign to the Christian community.

"Mark has given the body of Christ a simple yet meaningful symbol for encouraging one another as we are walking in the world," said Craig Conner, pastor of First Baptist. "A simple 'three-throw' reminds us who we are and challenges us to fight the good fight of faith."

Mitchum said he hopes to see three-throwing used to promote fellowship and community among followers of Christ whether in "traffic, ballgames, concerts, photos or anywhere else the word can't be heard."

In order to raise awareness of the Trinity symbol, Mitchum created a YouTube video titled "Three Throw the Trinity Christian hand sign!" which shows it being used at a busy intersection.

In addition, Mitchum has given his three-finger Trinity artwork to the Panama City Rescue Mission to help raise funds for their ministries.

"We are inspired by Mark's generosity," said Amanda Harris Bawn, the rescue mission's director of development and public relations. "The Trinity sticker has the power to be a worldwide movement and we are honored to be part of it."

"We are especially thankful for the awareness Mark brings to issues of hunger, homeless, poverty and abuse here locally," she continued. "Mark is a great example of believers standing up for what Jesus called us to do."

Mitchum said he hopes the Trinity symbol also can spark the curiosity of nonbelievers, providing an icebreaker for questions and to begin dialogue.

"I think this expression of our faith has the potential to sweep across the nation and world," said Bruce Raley, national education ministry leader with Lifeway Christian Resources. "This simple sign is a means to let others know of our faith and life in Jesus Christ. There is encouragement in knowing that others in our community are Christians and not ashamed to proclaim so."

Matthew 18:20 serves as a cornerstone for Mitchum's threethrowing initiative: "For where two or three are gathered together, I am there in the midst of them."

Mitchum said he encourages believers to lift up Christ and promote a sense of Christian unity where it's never been evident before.

More than just holding up three fingers, the gesture can be a way of glorifying the name of Jesus in a creative, unconventional way, Mitchum said.

"There is just something different, eternity-centered and all-completing about helping initiate and establish a way for the king of the universe to be exalted in more places and by more people than before," he said.

"What we as Christians did for the glory of our Savior Jesus Christ will be the only true criteria for any effort worth remembering and celebrating." (University of Mobile/BP)



January

- 19-20** Disaster Relief Chaplain Training, Buck Creek Baptist Church, Calhoun.
- 19-21** Shepherding the Shepherd, Hilton Downtown Hotel, Lexington.
- 20** Disaster Relief Volunteer Training Phase I and II, Buck Creek Baptist Church, Calhoun.
- 26-28** Southeast Conclave, Chattanooga Convention Center, Chattanooga, Tenn.

February

- 3-4** Disaster Relief Chaplain Training, First Baptist Church, Shelbyville.
- 4** Disaster Relief Volunteer Training Phase I and II, First Baptist Church, Shelbyville.
- 6** Strength in Numbers Deacon Ministry Training, First Baptist Church, Danville.
- 7** Strength in Numbers Deacon Ministry Training, Westport Road Baptist Church, Louisville.

Correction

Claude Fox served as director of public relations and an administrative assistant to the president at Clear Creek Baptist Bible College from 1962-87.

Ferguson steps down as director of Louisville homeless ministry

Louisville—John Ferguson has stepped down as executive director of Jefferson Street Baptist Center, a homeless ministry in downtown Louisville.

Ferguson joined the ministry in January 2009. A news release from its board of directors said Ferguson left to spend more time with his family and "pursue other ministry opportunities."

"We are very grateful for his leadership and passion," the statement said of Ferguson. "He has been a catalyst for many strategic initiatives at Jefferson Street that have enhanced our core desire to provide help and healing to the hurting and marginalized through the love of Christ."

In the interim, the ministry will be led by an executive leadership team that will be supervised by the board of directors, according to the statement.

"We are confident that the mission and hope that Jefferson Street

has brought to Louisville for over 123 years will continue and thrive in 2012 and beyond."

Prior to arriving at Jefferson Street, Ferguson served with other homeless ministries in Lexington and Pontiac, Mich. He attended Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and is a North American Mission Board-appointed missionary.



John Ferguson

Jefferson Street Baptist Center was founded in 1888 as the Union Gospel Mission. It became a ministry of Long Run Baptist Association in 1943 and was renamed Jefferson Street Baptist Chapel in 1964, serving as a church to the local community.

In the mid-1990s, as homelessness in the area grew, the church became Jefferson Street Baptist Center and shifted its focus primarily to homeless ministry. The center still is supported by Long Run Association and receives much of its funding from Louisville-area churches. (WR)

Poll: Most Americans identify as Christian

Washington—More than three-quarters of Americans identify themselves as Christian, according to a recent Gallup survey.

Pollsters found that 78 percent of Americans identify with Christianity. Overall, more than 82 percent of Americans have a religious identity.

The findings show an increas-

ing percentage of Americans who do not embrace a formal religious identity. In 1951, 1 percent of Americans did not have a religious identity.

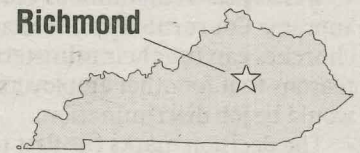
Gallup had found that 92 percent of Americans say they believe in God, which suggests that a lack of religious identity is not necessarily linked to atheism. (RNS)

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

Spotlight on ...

Richmond



Kirkville Church will host Tate's Creek Association's Baptist Men on Mission team's wild-game supper for men Jan. 21, 5 p.m., with **Paige Patterson**, president of Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, as guest speaker and special music provided by the **Patriot Quartet**. **Butch Pennington** is pastor.

■ **CADIZ**—Canton Church recently called **Damian Phillips** as pastor.

■ **CENTRAL CITY**—Mercer Church will host the **Palmetto Quartet** in concert Jan. 20, 6 p.m. For more information, call (270) 338-6588. **James Branscum** is pastor.

■ **ELIZABETHTOWN**—Northside Church recently called **Kevin Roberts** as pastor. He previously was pastor of Cadiz Church.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Parkland Church will hold a wild-game feast for men and boys Jan. 21, 6 p.m. **Tom Curry** is pastor.

St. Matthews Church will hold a dad/daughter banquet Jan. 22, 6:30 p.m., with **Steve Tidwell**, a former FBI agent, as guest speaker. Tickets are \$12 for girls age 11 and older; \$8 for girls ages 6-10. **Greg Barr** is pastor.

Walnut Street Church will hold a Fore Talk financial seminar Jan. 21, 8 a.m., featuring **Barry Allen** and **Laurie Valentine** of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation; **Lee Richardson**, an elder law specialist; physicians **Steve and Pat Wheeler**; and financial guidance author and speaker **Tony Walker**. The cost to attend is \$15 per family. **Rusty Ellison** is pastor.

■ **PIKEVILLE**—**Connie Breahm** will

retire April 13 as secretary for Pike Association. She has served the association for 22 years.

■ **POWDERLY**—Woodson Church will hold a youth rally Jan. 20-22, 6 p.m., for students in grades 6-12. **Travis Fox** is pastor.

■ **SHELBYVILLE**—Dover Church recently called **Matt Smith** as pastor.

■ **WADDY**—Graefenburg Church recently called **Philip Meade** as pastor.

■ **WAYNESBURG**—Mount Hebron Church recently called **Casey McClure** as pastor.

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RESOURCES: If your church is in need of help with sound, projection, theatrical lighting, go to jamediasolutions.com; or call Jim Cottrell at (270) 862-9586 or 312-7492.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Clarkson Baptist Church, Clarkson, Ky. We are looking for a God-called man to work with all age groups and lead the church to reach others for Christ. CBC adheres to the 2000 Baptist Faith & Message and is affiliated with the GCBA, KBC and SBC. Send resumé to Pastor Search Committee, Clarkson Baptist Church, 5115 Elizabethtown Road, Clarkson, KY 42726.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of music to serve alongside four full-time ministers at First Baptist Church, a conservative Southern Baptist Church in Tullahoma, Tenn. Sunday morning worship includes one contemporary service and one traditional service. Contact Pastor Herb Hester at 108 E. Grundy St., Tullahoma, TN 37388; or herb@fbctullahoma.org.

SEEKING: Full-time senior pastor for Westside Baptist Church in Murray, Ky. Average worship attendance: 450. Seminary degree required; previous experience preferred. Send resumé to Westside Pastor Search Committee, PO Box 750 Murray, KY 42071; or email to thph048@gmail.com by March 31, 2012.

SEEKING: Part-time music director for High Point Baptist Church, Mayfield, Ky. Send resumé to Music Search Committee, High Point Baptist Church, 220 West Farthing St., Mayfield, KY 42066.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of education and music (blended worship service and choir, and overseeing educational programs) for Hillcrest Baptist Church, Lebanon, Mo. Send resumé to Hillcrest Baptist Church, 399 Hoover St., Lebanon, MO 65536; or email: dbrown@lebanonhbc.com.

SEEKING: College president. Creative and energetic minister to lead a young Christian healthcare school with a global vision located in Largo, Fla. Earned doctorate preferred. Visit www.cishp.org; contact Chancellor Gary Parker at (423) 773-9986.

SEEKING: Full-time Southern Baptist pastor for Grace Baptist Church, located 7 miles south of Pikeville at Shelbyville, Ky. (rural Pike County in Eastern Kentucky). Seminary preferred. Average Sunday worship attendance: 105-130. Church provides part-time secretary. Send resumé to Grace Baptist Church, c/o Larry F. Compton, 7129 Millard Hwy., Pikeville, KY 41501-8101.

SEEKING: Part-time youth minister at Trinity Baptist, Lexington. Resumé to: 1675 Strader DR, 40505; or tbc@yourtrinity.com

SEEKING: Part-time pianist for Parkland Baptist Church. Please send all inquiries: jason_stewart@bellsouth.net; or call (502) 969-1387.

SEEKING: Full-time director of missions for Greenup Association of Baptist Churches. Accepting resumé now through Feb. 18, 2012. Send resumé to 12127 Midland Trail Road, Ashland, KY 41102; or by email to gba@zoominternet.net.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of youth at Lakeland Baptist Church, located in the heart of the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex. Individuals considered will have a seminary degree and at least five years successful experience. Lakeland offers a competitive salary and benefits package. Please email resumé to Dr. Ron Osborne, rosborne@lakelandbaptist.org.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of church administration for Calvary Baptist Church located in Oak Ridge, Tenn. A degree in church administration with a minimum of five years experience in church administration is requested; Shelby computer software experience is a plus, as well as the ability to provide pulpit relief for the senior pastor. Please submit your resumé and salary requirements to personnel@calvarybapcbc.comcastbiz.net; or mail to: Personnel Committee, Calvary Baptist Church, 163 N. Jefferson Cir., Oak Ridge, TN 37830.

To place an advertisement:



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

SEEKING: Part-time interim middle school/high school youth minister for Pinckard Looking for someone to provide direction and leadership for our youth through Bible study, discipleship training, outreach, fellowship and mission action. This position has the potential to lead into a permanent part-time position. College or seminary degree is preferred, plus experience. Please send a resumé to Pinckard Baptist Church, 3401 Pinckard Pike, Versailles, KY 40383. Phone: (859) 873-6260. Email: pinckardchurch@aol.com.

SEEKING: Part-time worship leader for blended services and leading an adult choir at Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Nicholasville, Ky. Phone toll-free: (877) 770-1677 or (859) 224-0383. Email: stan.n.frazier@gmail.com. Web: www.mtpleasantbaptist.net.

SEEKING: Part-time music minister needed in Georgetown, Ky. Familiar with blending hymns, modern music and a choir. Send resumé to safeharborpastor@gmail.com.

With children, love is spelled T-I-M-E

By Brad Whitt

"Love is not spelled T-H-I-N-G-S. Love is spelled T-I-M-E."

I don't know when or where I first heard that, or even who said it, but that simple little statement has certainly stuck in my mind over the years. I understand it to say that true love isn't shown by the stuff you give, but by the time spent in giving yourself.

As a pastor of a young, growing church and the father of a young, growing family, I'm often tempted to give a toy instead of giving my time. Instead of rolling around on the rug wrestling with Jack or having a princess tea party with Laura Kate, there is the tug to take a shortcut and give some thing instead of myself. The reason I sometimes face this temptation is because it's easier and quicker, and many times after a busy day dealing with church folks or zoning officials or convention politics I just don't feel like I have much left to give. That may not make me sound like a nominee for Father of the Year, but it's the truth.

That's when that simple little statement about love and things and time comes to my mind and I remember that even though my parents may not have had piles of extra money lying around to buy stuff for me as I was growing up, I could always count on their time. I can't count the number of days I spent with my father messing with bird dogs or raising chickens for poultry shows. I remember several times sitting in class after lunch and hearing the principal come over the intercom telling my teacher that my dad was there to pick me up. When I ran out to the truck, my dad would be there with a member of the church, my hunting clothes and shotgun. We spent the rest of the day chasing bird dogs and hunting together.

Now that I'm an adult and have my own family and responsibilities, I've discovered that time is the much more expensive gift. I think that it was Benjamin Franklin who said, "Don't squander time, for that's the stuff life is made of." Well, it's not only the stuff that life is made of, it's really the most expensive and extravagant gift that we can give to those we love.

With all this in mind, I want to just share some very simple, and I pray meaningful, ways for you to share time with your children. These are really in no particular order and I don't claim that this list is exhaustive at all. This is just one parent's list of things that were meaningful to me as a child or things that I've noticed have struck an evident chord in the heart of my children.

■ Spend time reading to, or with, your children every day. It doesn't matter if it's only for 15 minutes. It's something that they will never forget, and it will help move them way down the road toward developing a life-long love of reading and books.

FIRST PERSON

■ Choose something that you can do together as a family. Horse shoes. Golf. Badminton. Running. Biking. Hiking. Playing music. Whatever.

■ Start a family memory book. Take pictures of the family on vacation, playing together. Write down stories to remember later on. Share favorite movies, quotes, colors, foods, etc. One very important thing for families with multiple children is to take lots of pictures of the children together. Those pictures will be worth more than gold to you and your children when they're grown and gone.

■ Think of ways to help make your neighborhood safer, and then spend time working on those things together. This will not only provide a great opportunity to work together, but will also help foster a sense of security, safety and responsibility in your children.

■ Find at least one extracurricular activity for each child to be involved in and help them become the best at that activity that they can possibly be.

■ Work on developing a family calendar together. Let everybody share input on what they'd like to do and when. Where will we go on vacation next year? What do you want to do on Family Day? It's so easy for one parent to do all of the planning and cause the rest of the family to miss out on a variety of things to do together.

Turn the cell phone off. Close the laptop. Turn the TV off and spend time with your family. When you do, you haven't just spent time—you've invested it, and the return will be greater than you could ever imagine.

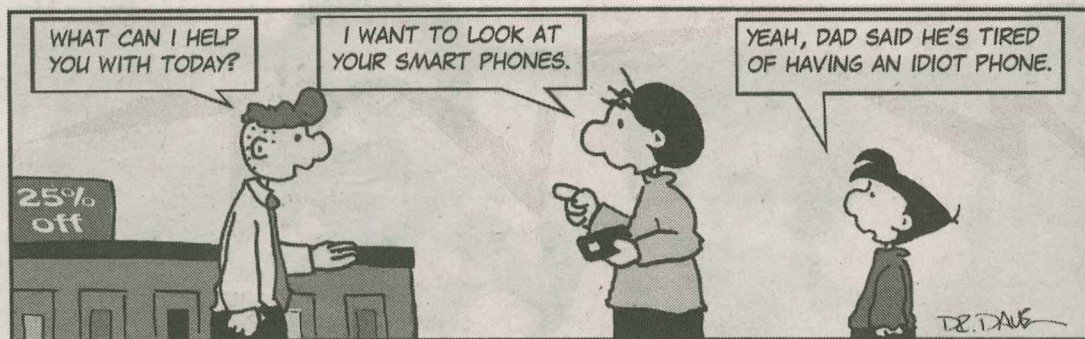
■ Spend time together outdoors. Walk in the woods. Go four-wheeling. Make snow angels or snow forts. Go picnicking at a park. Parents, don't take the cheap, shortcut way out. I know that our schedules are busier and free time is more valuable and scarce than ever before, but that's just the thing that makes it so meaningful when we share it together with our family.

Turn the cell phone off. Close the laptop. Turn the TV off and spend time with your family. When you do, you haven't just spent time—you've invested it, and the return will be greater than you could ever imagine.

So, with all that in mind, I'm closing up my laptop because there's a little boy who needs to be wrestled with and a little girl who's got a book in her hand wanting me to read. (BP)

Brad Whitt is senior pastor of Temple Baptist Church in Simpsonville, S.C.

Preacher's Kids



Joe McKeever



Dennis Daniel

Brother Bloop



Bible Crosswords

By Janet Kennedy

Across

- 1 "And the ferret, and the _____, and the lizard" (Leviticus 11:30)
- 6 "A living _____ is better than a dead lion" (Ecclesiastes 9:4)
- 9 "The _____ of money that Haman had promised" (Esther 4:7)
- 10 "As a _____ robbed of her whelps in the field" (2 Samuel 17:8)
- 11 Put into a capsule form
- 15 Man's name
- 16 "Judas ... drew near unto Jesus to _____ him" (Luke 22:47)
- 17 "And the river shall bring forth _____ abundantly" (Exodus 8:3)
- 18 Elevated railroad
- 20 "They all are brass, and _____, and iron" (Ezekiel 22:18)
- 21 Married woman's title
- 23 "And God created great _____," (Genesis 1:21)
- 28 Exclamation of doubt or surprise
- 29 Card that tells who you are, abbr.
- 30 "Five loaves and the two _____" (Mark 6:41)
- 33 Field officer, abbr.
- 34 Compound, abbr.
- 35 An explosive material
- 36 "The swine ... ran violently down a _____ place into the sea" (Mark 5:13)
- 38 "I am like a _____ of the wilderness" (Psalm 102:6)
- 41 "David took an _____ and played with his hand" (1 Samuel 16:23)
- 42 Gloomy; ill-humored
- 43 Egg, prefix
- 45 "The Lord had laid on him the iniquity of _____ all" (Isaiah 53:6)
- 46 Massachusetts neighbor, abbr.

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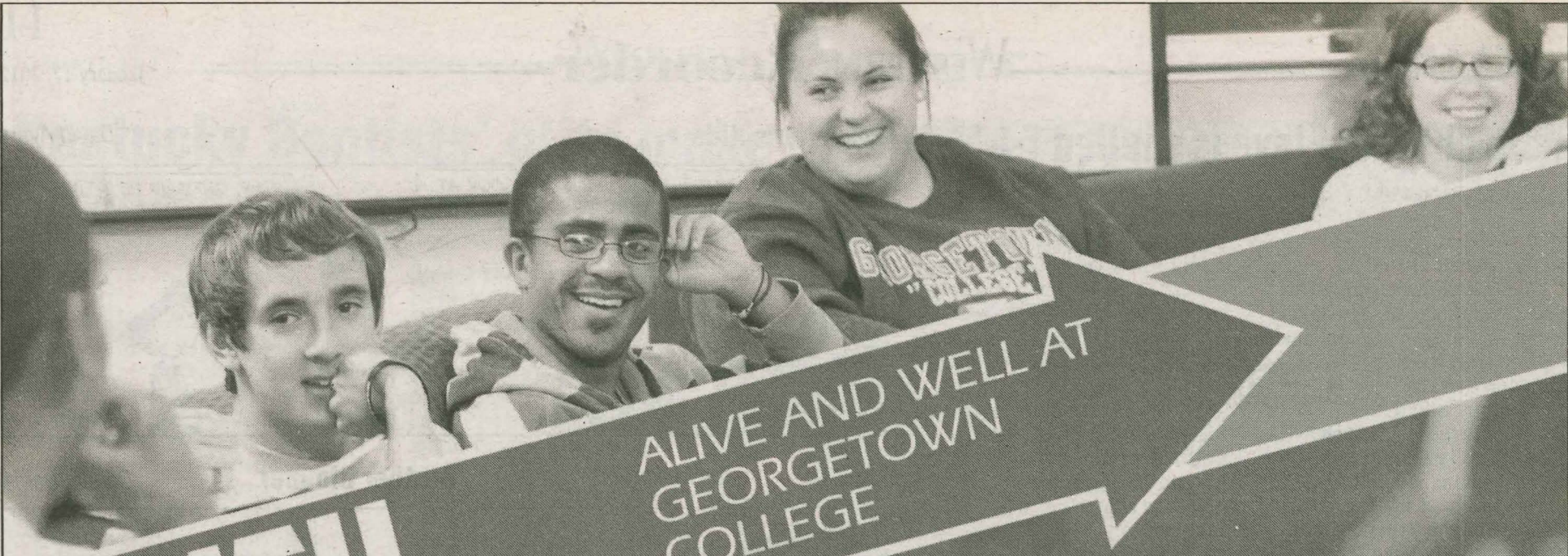
- 48 "There came a _____ out of the heat, and fastened on his hand" (Acts 28:3)
- 51 Dover's state, abbr.
- 52 A thought
- 54 "I have given _____ unto the children of Lot" (Deuteronomy 2:9)
- 55 "And the _____ shalt thou trample under feet" (Psalm 91:13)
- 56 "And the _____, and the pelican" (Leviticus 11:18)
- 13 At the back of the boat
- 14 A long period of time
- 19 A liberal or radical
- 22 To direct the attention
- 24 Large African mammals, for short
- 25 "And stingeth like an _____" (Proverbs 23:32)
- 26 "Have ye received the Holy Ghost _____ ye believed?" (Acts 19:2)
- 27 Esther, abbr.
- 31 Station, abbr.
- 32 Einsteinium, chem. symbol
- 37 Each, abbr.
- 39 One who loves
- 40 "For there is _____ respect of persons with God" (Romans 2:11)
- 42 "They have caused him to ride upon the king's _____" (1 Kings 1:44)
- 44 Eggs
- 47 "Why make ye this _____, and weep?" (Mark 5:39)
- 49 Dog's foot
- 50 Historical period
- 51 Doctor of divinity, abbr.
- 52 Inspector general, abbr.
- 53 To cause to be, prefix

Down

- 1 "The night hawk, and the _____, and the hawk" (Leviticus 11:16)
- 2 "The cruel venom of _____" (Deuteronomy 32:33)
- 3 A salt-water mollusk
- 4 A large Australian bird
- 5 "Or wings and feathers unto the _____?" (Job 39:13)
- 6 Belief God has no influence on man
- 7 "And all that handle the _____, the mariners" (Ezekiel 27:29)
- 8 "And the _____ shall be a burden" (Ecclesiastes 12:5)
- 12 "Joshua sent men from Jericho to _____" (Joshua 7:2)

Last puzzle's solution

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
A	N	T	O	A	T	U	M	B	S
J	A	H	A	R	I	S	E	S	A
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