

WESTERN Recorder

April 3, 2012

Shine Like Stars * Philippians 2:15

Volume 186, Issue 13

Students step in to help neighbors

Storm victims get hand from Morehead State BCM

By Amy Payne

West Liberty—Long, hot days outside may not always seem enjoyable, but helping neighbors in need is well worth the sweat and sunburns accumulated.

Students from Morehead State University's Baptist Campus Ministry, teaming up with Virginia and Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief workers and other MSU faculty and staff volunteers, spent spring break cleaning up debris in nearby towns affected by the March 2 tornado outbreak.

"The whole process was definitely a roller coaster," BCM Student Missions Coordinator Mitch Hammond, explained. "Originally, we had 52 students signed up to travel to Tuscaloosa, Ala., to work on tornado relief from the storms that hit that area last April."

In an unfortunate irony, the recent tornados in West Liberty and the surrounding counties prompted a change of plans. The Morehead State Center for Regional Engagement asked for volunteers to help clean debris in the region during spring break.

"When we were asked to help out, we jumped aboard without hesitation," Hammond said.

The spring break cleanup was open to other students, as well as faculty and staff. MSU Dean of Students Kevin Koett worked as a team leader.

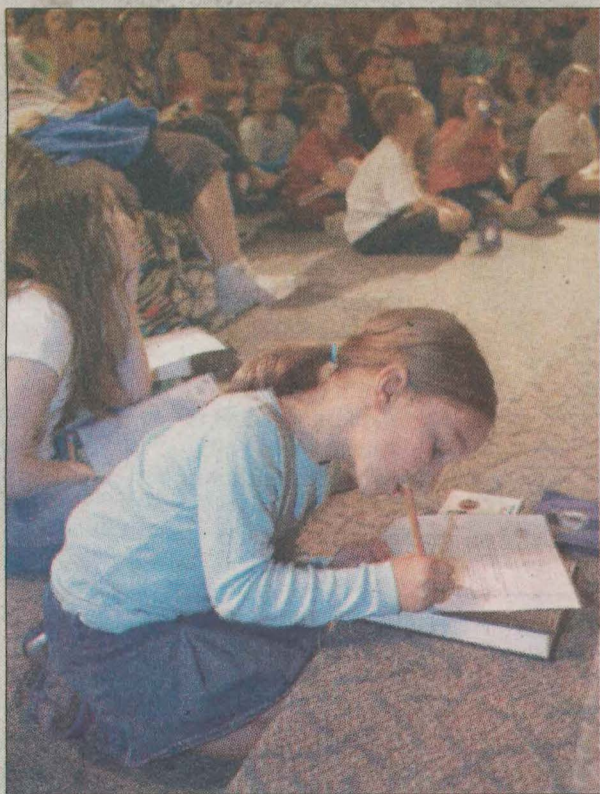
"To put it simply, this experience has changed my life for the better," Koett said. "During our time in Menifee and Morgan counties, we assisted

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Amber Vance (foreground), a Morehead State University Baptist Campus Ministry student from Williamstown Baptist Church, and Hannah Thompson, who attends Mela Baptist Church in Pikeville, haul away metal from a destroyed roof in West Liberty. (Photo by Amy Payne)

Raising them up right



Katie Golden, 8, a second grader from Beacon Hill Baptist Church in Somerset takes copious notes during the "Welcome Children!" portion of the recent Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union Missions Celebration and Annual Meeting. Those who attended the meeting at Katie's home church, Beacon Hill, heard from a number of missionaries, both domestic and foreign, and were encouraged to pray for them year-round. Katie is a member of Girls in Action, a children's missions organization directed by the WMU. (Photo by Robin Bass)

For more photos and a wrap-up of the Kentucky WMU gathering, turn to page 6.



IMB welcomes 61 new missionaries

By Laura Fielding

Lake Charles, La.—He was a rebellious punk rock skateboarder who openly renounced his family's faith, telling his parents that "God was a joke."

But God had a plan for Charles Drake. During college, he met a friend who also listened to punk rock but didn't act like a punk rocker. He was loving, kind and compassionate—and he invited Drake to join a men's Bible study group.

Drake started reading the New Testament and "was blown away by Jesus—His

power to raise the dead, to calm storms ... His compassion to forgive sins, to die on a cross for my sins," Drake said. "He saved me."

As a new believer, Drake's natural reaction was to tell others about Christ. He started with his friends, but after a trip to Russia, he knew God was calling him to something bigger.

After serving as a journeyman missionary for two years, Drake, his wife, Renee, and their two children now will live among East Asian peoples.

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Crisis in Mali

Southern Baptist family in country waits for calm

By Don Graham

Bamako, Mali—Southern Baptist workers in Mali are prayerfully waiting out the unfolding military coup that erupted in the West African nation last month.

Rebellious factions of Mali's army stormed the presidential palace March 22, announcing on state television the following day they had ended President Amadou Toumani Toure's rule, suspended the constitution and closed Mali's borders.

Cliff and Rachel Blunt*, Southern Baptist humanitarian aid workers in Bamako, Mali's capital, with their two young daughters, have endured the sound of nearly constant weapons fire since the coup began, but the fighting came especially close March 23 when the Blunts witnessed a group of men firing guns immediately outside the gate of their home. The Blunts' guard suspects the men were robbing a store. For Rachel, it was too close for comfort.

"We could hear everything the guys with the guns were saying. They were close enough to us that we could have carried on a conversation with them. ... I could actually smell gunpowder," Rachel said. "None of us are targets. The only thing you have to worry about is when already desperate people get (even more) desperate—they can do stupid stuff."

The Blunts awoke to heavy machine gun fire March 24 just a few hundred yards from their home.

"We've heard a good bit of automatic weapons fire," Cliff said. "From time to time we'll hear what sounds like an explosion." He said the family is "following the (American) embassy's recommendation to shelter in place, avoid unnecessary travel and lay low."

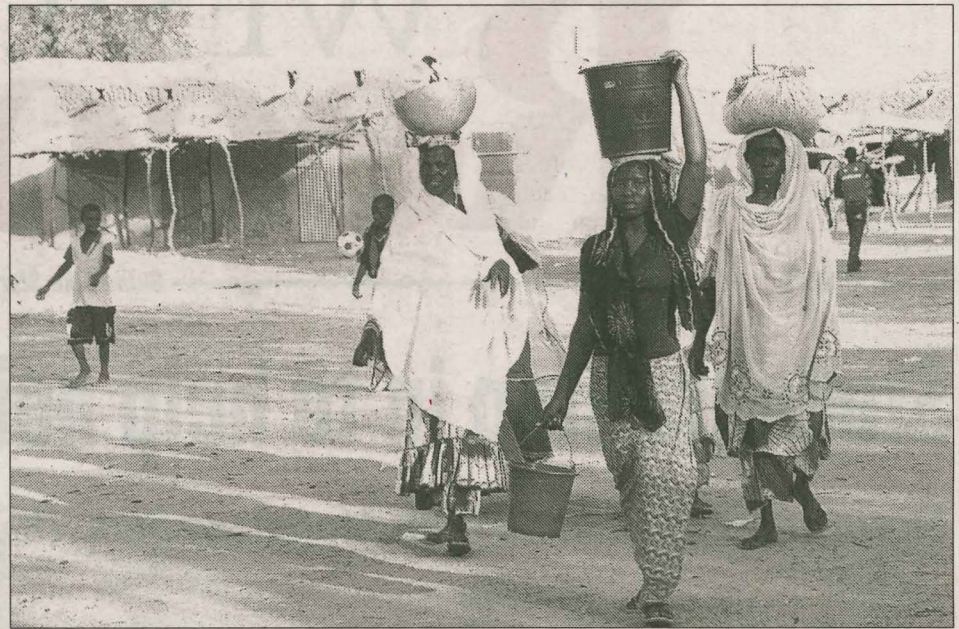
The Blunts said the biggest threat isn't from rebel soldiers; instead, it's crime that worries them—thieves, bandits and roaming gangs who could take advantage of the police vacuum. Isolated reports of looting have surfaced.

Renegade soldiers have imposed a curfew and shut down Bamako's airport. It ruined the travel plans of an Arkansas church volunteer team due to depart Mali March 24. The team is part of Southern Baptists' efforts to share Christ with villages in Mali's bush, which is where the team will remain for now.

"Truthfully, being out in the bush is about the most secure place you can be in Mali right now," Cliff said. "They seem to be in high spirits."

This isn't the first time the Blunts have dealt with civil unrest during their short time in Africa. Less than a year ago, a military uprising hit Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, just four days after the Blunts arrived on the field for their first term as Southern Baptist workers.

"We knew that there were risks involved. But it's all a matter of your theology. If you really believe that God has a plan ... and that people need to be reconciled to Him through Christ ... it ought to



PRAYERS FOR SAFETY Women walk through a village outside Mali's capital city of Bamako. Southern Baptist missionaries in West Africa, concerned that women and children often are targets of violence and abuse during times of civil unrest, ask for prayer for their protection. (IMB photo)

compel you to act," Cliff said. "Some of this stuff might have been a surprise to us, ... none of it is a surprise to Him."

After the March 22 coup, Southern Baptist missionaries in West Africa asked Christians to pray for Mali.

Renegade soldiers took over the palace of Malian President Amadou Toumani Toure in Bamako, reportedly exchanging heavy fire during the offensive. The insurgents also captured Mali's state television station, taking to the airwaves to announce the end of Toure's regime, the suspension of Mali's constitution and the closing of the country's borders.

Among issues alleged by military forces staging the coup: blame of Toure for lack of support in their fight against an armed rebellion in the north by Mali's

nomadic Tuareg people.

The U.S. joined a chorus of voices—including the United Nations, European Union and many of Mali's West African neighbors—in condemning the coup and demanding return to constitutional rule. Mali's military pledged to hold elections once national unity is restored.

Brad Bessent, a Baptist pastor in South Carolina who has traveled to Mali as a missions volunteer, wrote on his blog March 23, "I still remember the last night of my first trip to Mali in 2007. A friend there said, 'Are you all right?' I said, 'How can anyone see what I have seen and be all right?' The hunger, the poverty, the fear, so many things that rip your heart. (IMB/BP)

*Names changed for security reasons

Morehead State BCM

Continued from page 1

several families with salvaging belongings, removing debris, and helped clean public areas. ... I have always sung the praises of the MSU community; however, students have truly touched my heart during this experience. Although they have been very tired, they have given up their spring break, and the students have been nothing short of amazing."

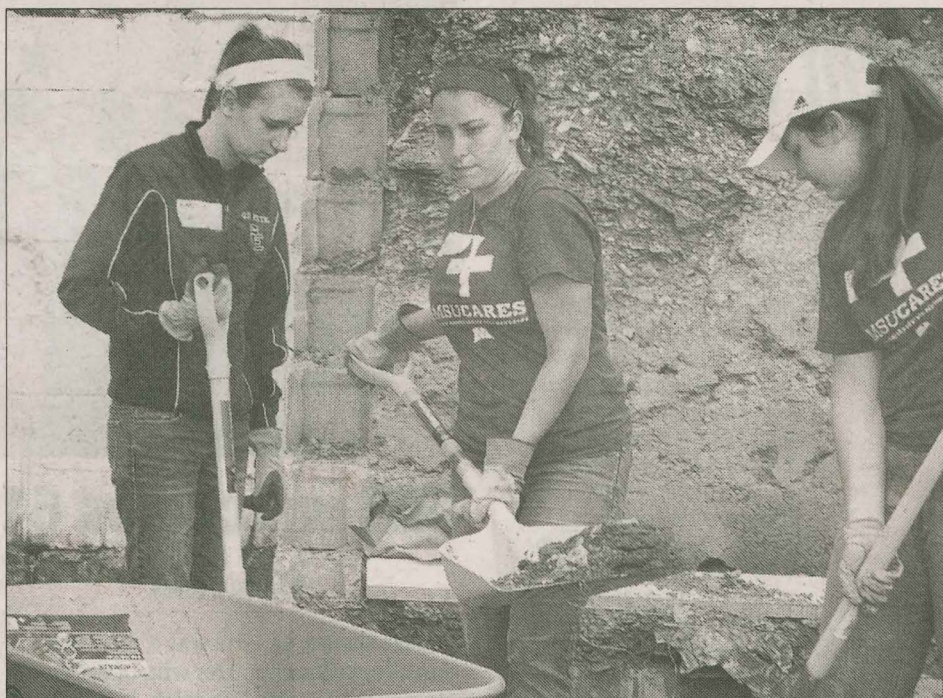
While not seen as the "ideal" vacation, the volunteers made the most of their experiences.

"This week has been by far the most fun of the entire semester," said freshman Brittany Couch. "I've made new friends, strengthened existing ones, joked, laughed and told stories. You can't get much better than this."

After eight- to nine-hour days in the sun, the volunteers returned to the BCM building for dinner and a worship service, courtesy of campus minister Gene Parr.

"Along with the other logistics of this disaster recovery week, the planning committee needed to provide meals for all of the students," Parr said. "The BCM at MSU is perfectly equipped to do this. So, we provided a full breakfast and dinner every day with the help of four different Baptist churches in the area, as well as help from some of our BCM alumni."

Each evening's dinner included time to hear from the volunteers as they reflected on the day, shared what they



CLEAN-UP EFFORTS Morehead State University Baptist Campus Ministry students shovel debris left behind by the March 2 tornados. The students are (from left) Courtney Hewitt, a member of Clough Pike Baptist Church in Cincinnati, Brittany Couch, who is from Lawrenceburg Baptist Church, and Chelsea Downey, who attends CrossPoint Church in Morehead. (Photo by Amy Payne)

did and talked about how the day's events affected them.

From these conversations, volunteers agreed the week's work was well received on both ends.

The volunteers' aid lifted great burdens from the homeowners, and the homeowners' gratitude gave the volunteers the encouragement needed to continue their week's work.

Greta Wilson, a Kentucky Baptist

Disaster Relief leader, said she was inspired by the college students' willingness to volunteer.

"More than the work, it's the work ethic of the BCM students that has impressed me," Wilson said. "They're committed to work and to God is astounding, and it's truly been a blessing to work with them and see the impact they've had on the families and cities."

Today's world often undervalues the

Disaster relief totals

Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief recently completed its initial response to the March 2 tornadoes that hit several eastern and northern Kentucky communities. The focus now shifts to long-term needs. The final numbers for the nearly month-long response were:

Volunteer Days	2,227
Meals Prepared	28,719
Debris Clean-up Jobs	141
Chainsaw Jobs	325
Children Cared For	68
Showers	438
Laundry Loads	190
Chaplaincy Contacts	15
Professions of Faith	28
Gospel Presentations	261
Other Decisions	8
Ministry Contacts	1,651

ability to make a difference, said Keith Inman, who directs college ministry work for the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

"People underestimate the difference Christian students can make when they exercise their faith. They can make a difference," he said.

Serving in Christ's name changes lives and impacts hearts, Inman said, and all week long, the student volunteers followed in Christ's footsteps by showing their love for humanity and serving those in need. (WR)

Campbellsville students use spring break to plant seeds for Christ

By Christina Kern

Campbellsville—Cleaning out homes, playing softball with prisoners, teaching English as a second language and, most importantly, planting seeds is how many Campbellsville University students spent their spring break.

The students' various mission trips took them to New York, New Orleans, Panama City, Fla., and Central Florida during the break week.

A group of football players ministered to prisoners in Central Florida through softball. Through their visits to prisons, correctional facilities and a ministry center, 84 people accepted Christ and "many others were exposed to the truth of the gospel," said trip leader Jim Hardy, who also is an assistant football coach.

The mission trip was a first for Rodrick Dickerson, a senior from Memphis, Tenn.

"The inmates we had come in contact with were definitely people, but the fact they were behind bars influences society to view them as outcasts," Dickerson said. "No sin is greater than another—the man who stole from a store became a thief and is just as guilty as the man who stole a life and became a murderer. No one can measure a man's heart but the man who gave us life."

CU's Director of Campus Ministries Ed Pavy, who was also on the trip, said a 70-year-old man they met was "hostile toward Jesus Christ."

"But after one of the football players spent six to eight hours talking with the man, he accepted Christ," Pavy recalled.

In New York, four students led



SPRING BREAK MISSIONS A team of Campbellsville University students work to remove a window from a damaged home in New Orleans. (Photo by Sarah Creason/CU)

English as a Second Language classes. Charity Powell, a campus-ministries graduate assistant who led the trip, said she met a Thai woman in the classes who had only been in the U.S. for three months. "I've been to Thailand, so I was able to say a few things to her in her

language, which brought an instant smile to her face," Powell said.

After sharing the story of Lazarus, Powell was able to share the gospel.

"In their eyes I could see that they were processing this new concept and taking it all in," she said. "I was

overwhelmed by the idea that God was allowing me to be one of the first people to introduce them to the love of Jesus."

Natalie Buckley, a senior from Louisville, helped a Bangladeshi child with her homework and in the process was given the opportunity to share about the birth of Christ.

"She was not converted to Christianity when I left, but I realized a seed has to be planted," Buckley said. "It is not up to me to convince her that Jesus is God—only the Holy Spirit can do that." Buckley and the girl have since become pen pals.

Meanwhile, the New Orleans' group worked on a termite-damaged home, completed yard work and spent time helping out at a homeless shelter and food bank, said Trent Creason, who led the trip.

The CU team worked alongside the *Communitas* mission group which "moves into neighborhoods with the intention of living daily life consistently and tangibly around those who are lost," Creason said.

Student volunteers were able to take care of two weeks' worth of work on a house in just one day.

"God really taught me the importance of building relationships and truly being Christ to people," said Mari-beth Milburn, a junior from Lawrenceburg.

In Panama City, Fla., CU students worked with the Beach Reach ministry offering rides to spring breakers who often had too much to drink and could not drive safely. They also served a free pancake breakfast each morning, avenues through which they were able to share Christ. (CU)

Cumberlands' student ministry focuses on children in need

Williamsburg—Children and families in material and spiritual need have long been a focus of ministry for students at University of the Cumberlands.

Appalachian Ministries was started in 1975 by a handful of students from Cumberland College (now University of the Cumberlands).

Magan Atwood is the outreach effort's current director.

Children and youth who participate each week receive from college students "a substantial snack and time to run off some energy with recreation and to be creative with crafts," Atwood explained.

Through that positive interaction, the children learn "that God loves them and that, no matter what, He will never leave them," she added.

During a typical week, 20 to 30 UC students minister to sometimes more than 100 children and youth.

On Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, teams of students serve in different communities in and around the Williamsburg campus, building relationships with families through Bible lessons, music, recreation, crafts and groceries.

Appalachian Ministries' students also work with local churches, taking part in worship, youth ministry and child care. Atwood said so far this year, they have assisted in a children's crusade, revival, a marriage retreat and rebuilding a local community park.

Students also are working with the Kentucky Baptist Convention to assist a church recently planted in the area.

Many UC students forego a full summer break to stay in the area to serve through Appalachian Ministries. They participate in community service projects with several Whitley County outreach organizations, hold Vacation Bible Schools and serve as camp counselors.

Deana Gabbard said she finds great fulfillment in serving through the program.

"A little girl was sitting in my lap while the Bible story was being told," Gabbard recalled. "I went to set her down and she told me, 'No don't let go, I never get to be held,' and she grabbed my arms to pick her back up and sit her in my lap."

"This broke my heart. These kids just want to be loved," she continued. "I have a passion for children and (for) sharing the love of Christ. Appalachian Ministries allows me to combine both of my passions, and I enjoy it greatly."

Although the purpose of Appalachian Ministries is to be an outreach to children and their families, the impact in the lives of UC students is just as great, Atwood said.

"I love watching the students grow as the summer progresses and they begin to discover their spiritual gifts and realize what a great purpose God has for them," she said. "It is truly a blessing to watch them learn, serve and grow." (UC)



TIME WELL SPENT An Appalachian Ministries student volunteer makes balloon animals for some local kids. (UC photo)

People want us to share Jesus with them!

An article in USA Today reported on a survey about evangelism conducted by LifeWay Research, a research firm of the Southern Baptist Convention. The survey polled more than 15,000 people and found two ways most people said they were willing to "receive information" about Jesus: 63 percent would hear it in a "personal conversation with a family member," or with a friend or neighbor from the church (56 percent).

Together We are the KBC



Paul Chitwood

That is to say, more than half of those with whom we have a relationship would be willing to hear from us about Jesus.

While "relational evangelism" isn't the only way to share our faith, it is certainly one of the more effective ways. Sharing the gospel in the context of a relationship helps those with whom we are sharing to have a higher level of confidence in the message. It also allows us to bear testimony to the truth of the gospel with more than our words. Those who know us are able to see the evidence of the impact of the gospel upon the lives we live.

If more than half of the people in our communities are open to hearing about Jesus from a neighbor, I have to believe that at least that many would be open to accepting an invitation to attend worship, especially during Holy Week. In fact, this week, more than any other week on the calendar, presents the greatest opportunity for us to introduce lost persons to our Lord.

In his book, "The Unchurched Next Door," Thom Rainer discusses another study that indicates that an invitation to worship accompanied by an offer to "pick you up" or "meet you at the church" would be accepted gladly by more than 6 in 10 people who do not typically attend worship. Such an invitation offered for Easter Sunday, a day when most people are already thinking about going to church, could ensure even higher acceptance.

With those facts in mind, let me encourage you to invite your friends, family and neighbors to worship on Easter Sunday. Rather than lament that so many people only come to church on Easter and Christmas, let's see the opportunity these celebrations represent.

Pastors take advantage of the opportunity by intentionally making a very clear presentation of the gospel on Easter Sunday. Whether that serves to plow new spiritual ground, sow seed, water, or harvest, rest assured God will use it. His promise to you is stated in Isaiah 55:11: "So is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it" (NIV).

Editor's Note: The LifeWay article referenced can be found at http://www.usatoday.com/news/religion/2009-03-25-baptist-evangelize_N.htm

Paul Chitwood is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

'October Baby' captivates audiences with its moving story

This past week I went to see "October Baby," a Christian movie about a young college student who not only learns she was adopted but also finds out that she is the survivor of a failed abortion procedure. The compelling pro-life-themed story earned an impressive No. 8 finish during its debut weekend—an even more noteworthy accomplishment when one considers that it only played in about 400 theaters nationwide while most of the other films opened in an average of 2,500 and that it screened the same week as "The Hunger Games."

Though this is the first full-length film directed and produced by Jon and Andrew Erwin and it was made for less than \$1 million, the cinematography is remarkably well done and its pointed theme is on par with others promoted by Provident Films, which also marketed "Courageous" and "Fireproof." Their work has received ringing endorsements from FamilyLife's Dennis Rainey, the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission's Richard Land, LifeWay's Thom Rainer, and many other pro-family leaders.

"God shattered my heart over this issue," Jon Erwin told Baptist Press in a story written by Michael Foust. "I honestly didn't know that the words 'abortion' and 'survivor' could go together. It so shocked me and so motivated me, and the more I studied it, it so mesmerized me that I felt I had to do something about it," he continued. "I worked in a business called entertainment and we first have to entertain. So I thought 'What if we put this subject matter into a romance, into a coming-of-age story, and into a movie that will be entertaining to watch?' By them watching it, they would be exposed to an issue and kind of be forced to think." That it does—in a powerful and touching way.

After collapsing on stage during a college drama, Hannah (played by Rachel Hendrix) learns that many of the health issues she has been battling, including epilepsy and asthma, likely were the result of her having been born very premature. In a conversation at a doctor's office, her parents disclose that she was adopted, and Hannah begins an emotional journey of self-discovery. She embarks on a road-trip with some of her college friends to the hospital where she was born, in hopes of finding her birth mother and learning the truth about her past.

While the movie conveys a poignant pro-life message

about the beauty of life—as well as the messiness of our choices—it is able to do so without becoming overtly "preachy" in tone. It provides a soul-captivating look at the emotional and psychological angst of a young college student in search of her identity. For me, though, the pivotal scene comes in a chapel when an emotionally distraught Hannah, weighted down by overwhelming feelings of anger, guilt and lack of self-worth, ventures inside looking for grace and understanding—though she doesn't know this is what she desperately has been longing for. Hannah comes to realize that knowing the truth doesn't really set her free, but instead has brought an even greater burden. A compassionate minister gently leads her to see that it is only through knowing the Truth, the Son of God, that one finds healing grace: forgiveness and the ability to forgive others.

After Thought

By Todd Deaton



I've probably already given away too much, but when this movie ends, don't rush out. You will want to stay for these credits. There, viewers encounter the all-too-real, behind-the-scenes story of the heart-ripping pain and silent grief experienced by many women today. In an outtake, Shari Rigby, who plays Hannah's birth mother, confides that the captivating power behind one of the movie's most moving scenes was its depiction of something she actually had lived. Ironically, like the character she played, Rigby had worked in a law firm and had chosen to have an abortion many years earlier. She, too, has since struggled to find forgiveness and grace. After reading the script, Rigby asked the Erwins, "How did you know about my past?" They didn't, of course, but she still felt as though her role had been "God-ordained." She told Baptist Press, "I'm a believer, and I know the promises of God and I know He can do great things with our lives. When I sat down and I started reading this script—to have something on paper that was parallel to my life, I just knew it was ordained."

I don't know for certain how much longer "October Baby" will be in theaters, but if it is showing near you, this movie is one to see. And, it truly is worthy of the church's support. In concluding his review, Rainer wrote, "This movie is so powerful that it will move many to act. Lives will be saved. Lives will be changed." After having seen it, I couldn't agree more! Oh, and you might want to take a box of tissues—and a pair of sunglasses for when you leave.

Easter: Echoes from the tomb

By George Guthrie

Leaning forward, you strain to hear. The fresh, cool breeze of the garden morning brushes your cheek. Bending, and you look into that open, black-dark mouth of the tomb, its only light the sun's thin finger reaching past your shoulder to touch the corner of a bone box. But the bones for which it waits have changed, gotten up and walked away. No smell of death; only the sweet scent of

burial spices hanging in the air.

Bouncing off the walls of this vacated tomb, you may hear echoes from another garden where the lie, "Has God really said?" prevailed, and death was ushered in. But now, in this garden the lie has been silenced with a resounding, "Yes! His Word lives!" Death has been driven out, the curse of Eden swallowed up in this empty space.

And do you hear the echo of

righteous Noah, who built a deliverance to carry God's creations through the judgment, or Father Abraham, through whom all the peoples of the earth would be blessed? Do you hear the echoes of Egypt's oppressive slavery turned inside-out in powerful salvation, and at its peak an innocent lamb slain so that death would pass over? Do you hear the echo of new life found through parting waters, or of bread, water, and the Shekinah tent given in a wilderness? Do you hear the death-dealing law, unable to give life, at once fulfilled and filled full by the Life? Do you hear these echoes?

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FIRST PERSON

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The Lantern Bearers: Place of private thoughts & dreams

One of the highest compliments my father ever paid anyone was to say, "He is always the same." I think what my father meant was that in such people there was a certain transparency, a genuineness that transcended any tendency toward hypocrisy or falsehood. To say that someone was always the same meant that you could depend on that person. Such a person had character.

As much as we herald this sort of integrity, we must admit that most individuals have a secret nature known only to the closest of family and friends. Only those dearest to us see us as we really are. We are glad of it too, for we cherish such privacy. And we hope that our secret natures are honest and pure, although to be honest, we all know that our innermost beings sometimes include dishonesty and impurity.

Robert Louis Stevenson, the author of "Treasure Island" and "Kidnapped," knew about this dichotomy of character. After all, he also wrote "The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde." It is in his essay, "The Lantern Bearers," however, that he shows most forcefully the place of private thoughts and dreams—private thoughts and dreams that we share only with those we love the most.

The essay is about a group of boys in England who "congregated every autumn about a certain easterly fisher-village, where they tasted in a high degree the glory of existence."

"There was nothing to mar your days, if you were a boy summering in that part," Stevenson wrote, "but the embarrassment of pleasure." These boys, a group that included the budding writer, involved themselves in a clandestine, exciting and completely innocent activity.

According to Stevenson, toward the end of the summer, "when school-time was drawing near and the nights were already black, we would begin to sally from our respective villas, each equipped with a tin bull's-eye lantern. The thing was so well known that it had worn a rut in the commerce of Great Britain; and the grocers, about the due time, began to garnish their windows with our particular brand of luminary. We wore them buckled to the waist upon a cricket belt, and over them, such was the rigour of the game, a buttoned top-coat."

The boys went about the village with their

buttoned-up topcoats as if in a secret society, believing that it was only known between each of them that they hid beneath the coat a bulls-eye lantern. "But take it for all in all," Stevenson said, "the pleasure of the thing was substantive; and to be a boy with a bull's-eye under his top-coat was good enough for us."

For the Christian, it's not good enough is it? As reassuring as it might be to know about the light we have within us, how is it possible to hold that light within the fabric of a topcoat?

Perhaps Stevenson got the idea about the secret mystery of light and life while looking out the front window of his home in England just at dusk, as the lamp-lighter made his way in front of his house lighting one by one the gas lamps along the street. Young Robert, overcome with the spectacle, called out to his mother, "Come see the man punching holes in the darkness!"

Now there is a more useful metaphor for the believer, come straight from Jan Karon, a more recent writer, "Patches of Godlight," punched in the darkness of a sometimes frightful world.

For these boys, "the essence of this bliss was to walk by yourself in the black night; the slide [of the lantern] shut, the top-coat buttoned; not a ray escaping, whether to conduct your footsteps or to make your glory public: a mere pillar of darkness in the dark; and all the while, deep down in the privacy of your fool's heart, to know you had a bull's-eye at your belt, and to exult and sing over the knowledge."

The attraction of the game was the simple knowledge that only you and a few others knew the secret. "Justice is not done to the versatility and the unplumbed childishness of man's imagination," he wrote. Although "his life from without may seem but a rude mound of mud," inside "there will be some golden chamber of the heart ... in which he dwells delighted. ... And for as dark as his pathway seems to the observer, he will have some kind of a bull's-eye at his belt."

Stevenson knew that such privacy is important for anyone. Just think though. The man or woman we see everyday might have a secret spark of goodness, divined only by those who love them most.

Duane Bolin teaches in the Department of History at Murray State University.

A Letter from the Laity



Duane Bolin

Helping your teen be more active

By Scott Wigginton

Q: How do I help my teenage son who only wants to mope around the house, text, get on Facebook, and play video games?

A: Every teenager needs to be involved in activities outside normal school hours that provide opportunities to serve, grow, develop skills, build self esteem, and connect with friends. Not requiring young people to get engaged sets them up for trouble that may take different forms, including depression, anxiety, substance abuse, negative attitudes, use of pornography, laziness, obesity, unhealthy relationships and poor social skills.

Let me encourage you as a parent to realize that your son should not have the unrestrained freedom to do as he wishes with his time. Solomon shares his wisdom in Proverbs 10:4-5, "Idle hands make one poor; but diligent hands bring riches. The son who gathers during summer is prudent; the son who sleeps during harvest is disgraceful."

Facebook, video games, television and cell phones are privileges, not rights. Sit down with your son and talk about your concerns. Together make a list of options for his involvement and be clear that involvement is not optional. Be willing to become involved with your son. Often teenagers are not involved because parents are not involved with them. Would you be willing to go fishing or take a martial arts course? Can you help him find a job or volunteer at your church? Will you take him and pick him up from practice and attend his games or band concerts?

Set limits on how much time can be spent on television, Facebook and video games. Have a cutoff beyond which texting and talking on the phone is off limits. Be willing to follow through on taking away these privileges for a period of time if they are abused. Most of all, spend time with your son as you model interest, self discipline and integrity.

Scott Wigginton is associate professor of pastoral ministries and counseling at Campbellsville University and minister of counseling at Campbellsville Baptist Church.



Why you need to make a will

By Laurie Valentine

If you die without a will, the state will decide how to disburse your estate. And if you have minor children, the state will decide who will raise them. If you haven't made a will, your plan to leave certain assets to specific persons or make charitable gifts to various causes won't happen; instead, the state's plan will govern.

Each state has laws directing how to distribute the estate of those who have not made a will. The state's plan may direct distribution of your assets to persons for whom you may not want to provide. The court will assign someone to oversee the probating of your estate. It will all be done "by the book." No special gifts to people outside your family. No provision for churches or other charitable causes you might want to honor with a gift at your death.

In effect, the state says, "You did not create a will while you were living and now it's too late. We will take over and make our own decisions about how it should be distributed."

Just imagine the difficulties this may cause for your family or friends. Imagine people you never knew making decisions about your most personal items.

There are many reasons people never create a will: fear of death, uncertainty about estate distribution, family conflicts, expense, procrastination, no lawyer. However, the plain fact is, no excuse is justified if it allows you to die without a will.

Make sure you have taken steps to accomplish the single most important act of financial stewardship a Christian can do—making a will.

Laurie Valentine is trust counsel for the Kentucky Baptist Foundation.



Easter echos

Continued from page 4

As you now kneel on this rough-hewn path leading into where Hope was dead for a moment, do you hear Joshua's name, bouncing 'round these walls, the same name as "Yeshua," "Jesus," whose very name shouts "salvation"? Walls have crumbled. Evil has been judged, banished from the land. Joshua led God's people to a promised place, a place flowing with all good things, as does now his namesake, who takes us to a promised rest harder bought. And the chaos of Judges, too, rings through this darkened grave, its "every man did what was right in his own eyes" now crushed under a staggering obedience, one Man having done what was right to give us new hearts, making us right with God.

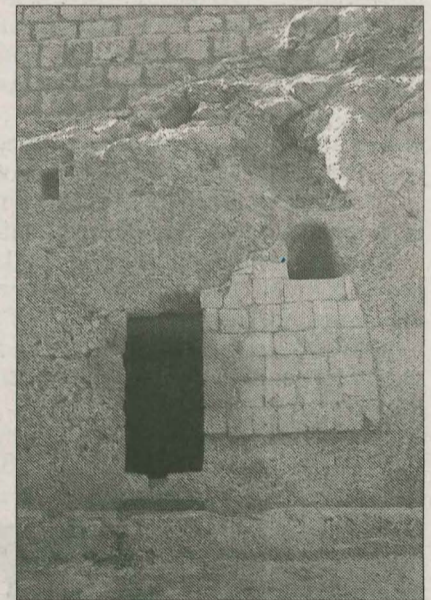
King David's words, "You will not allow your Holy One to see decay," hang in this sweet air, and His Son, the ultimate Man, the ultimate King, receives the coronation song and, finally, dominion of the world and of a different kind of kingdom. And this Easter tomb, having become a temple of sorts, housing God, echoes with the words of blessing over Solomon's temple, its walls now torn down but built up in flesh and bone, stone by stone, to go

walking through the world, taking the Light of the Gospel, the Presence, to all the black corners of the earth. The temple decisively cleansed by one offering, the Great High Priest intercedes, never to offer another sacrifice, the way into the holiest place forever opened by His trail-blazing life.

Here too, in this now-hollow crypt ring full the words of Isaiah, "On this mountain ... He will destroy death forever," and Jeremiah's "they will all know Me," and do you hear Ezekiel's bones rattle with hope? Exile having been exiled, this now is the true return, the kingdom come, God's people ruled by one ever-living King.

A baby's cry, warbling out from a dusty trough, warbles here, too, for the birth of salvation always was leading to death, thus to this place. Vulnerability led to and ended here. The Jordan with open sky and loving voice, the temptation to bow down, gain dominion, and avoid the terrible fate, and the transfiguration, shining and telling of His exodus—events that all anticipate this shaking of the earth, this shattering of our assumptions. Echoed in every inch of this tomb are Love's words, "no greater love," and Love's power that shushed a storm and raised a child. You hear them here in this cavernous glory.

And now you turn looking from



The Garden Tomb—a possible site of Jesus' burial and resurrection—sits just outside the walls of Jerusalem near the Damascus Gate. (IMB photo)

this garden to the outpouring, the Spirit come, and to the church spreading down the ages, and to those who die in Hope, and you see us. For all these echoes from the Easter tomb, you realize, are our story, and we, at the mouth of this conquered grave, stand at the center of His story. (BP)

George Guthrie is the Benjamin W. Perry Professor of Bible at Union University in Jackson, Tenn., and author of the book "Read the Bible for Life."

Living Letters

Sent from God

By Robin Bass

Debby Akerman was adept at multitasking long before the expression became a proudly worn badge of the modern woman. When she was a young wife and mother, Akerman worked a regular job, taught GAs and, at one point, volunteered as Woman's Missionary Union director at her church.



Debby Akerman

Now serving as the National WMU president, Akerman said she still remembers the day God spoke to her heart and told her to do more for Him. Akerman said she tried to rationalize with God. She had time to pray for and encourage the other WMU women as they sought to be missional at the crisis pregnancy center and the homeless shelter, but there was no way she could add one more responsibility to her already complex life.

"My plate was full. Everyone seemed to understand, but not God," Akerman said, as she spoke at the Kentucky WMU Annual Meeting March 16 held at Beacon Hill Baptist Church in Somerset.

The Lord would later convict her heart to begin a Bible study at a low-income apartment complex for senior citizens. In this mission field, an 81-year-old woman later would turn from her prodigal ways and renew her faith in Christ. It also was where another woman, a devotee member of another religion, stood up during a meeting one day and declared she believed in Jesus Christ and would not deny Him as Lord.

"God used that experience to send me on a 'Live Sent' journey with Him," Akerman said.

Drawing from Jason Dukes' book "Live Sent," which Kentucky WMU embraced as this year's annual meeting theme, Akerman said followers of Christ are like "a letter from God, created to receive and send His message of love and salvation to those with whom we do life."

Continuing with the analogy, Akerman explained that the job of the church and its WMU then is to be the post office sending out the letters and "making sure each reached their God addressed destination."

"If the church WMU had not been led to 'Live Sent,' many would not have been introduced to Christ or know the Lord today," Akerman said, referring to the changed lives resulting from her church's WMU ministering in soup kitchens, clothing closets and providing child care for Mom's Morning Out.

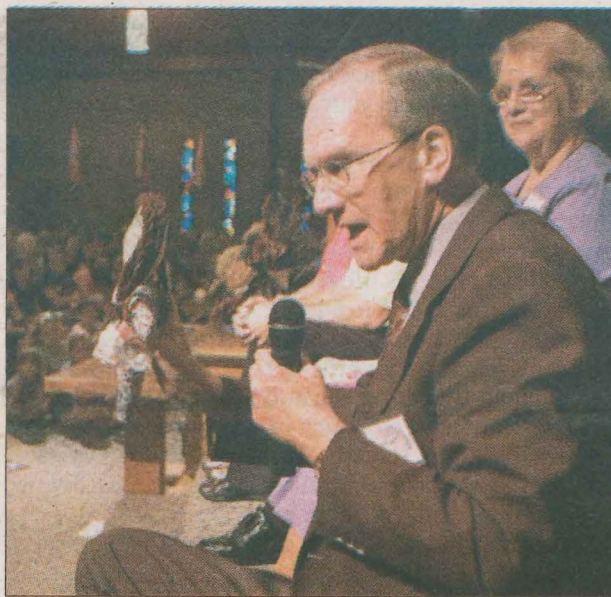
Paul Chitwood, executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, was the recipient of one of those God-sent letters when he was only five years old. Not at Akerman's Massachusetts Baptist church, but in Jellico, Tenn., where he grew up. Chitwood said he was living



Paul Chitwood



Linda Cooper, Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union president, addresses a large group of RA boys and GA girls attending the annual meeting March 16 at Beacon Hill Baptist Church in Somerset. (Photos by Robin Bass)



Missionary Bill Barker, of Appalachian Regional Ministry, shows a feelings doll to the children attending the Kentucky WMU Annual Meeting. Barker said the doll, which has a happy face on one side and a sad face on the other, is one of the tools he uses to minister to children facing stressful or difficult circumstances.

in a small, rented house with his father and two brothers when a couple of deacons knocked on their door one night and invited the motherless family to church.

"I found Mrs. Smith at that church," Chitwood said. "She was my Sunday School teacher in kindergarten, first and second grade. I didn't have a mother Monday through Saturday, but I had one on Sunday."

In third through fifth grades young Chitwood was taught Bible stories each Sunday by Mrs. McClary. Sixth through twelfth, it was Mrs. Cox.

"They were ladies who reached out to us when the storms left their devastations. They were the ones who came in the midst of the tragedy and in our time of testing. And I thank God for them," Chitwood said.

The KBC leader later challenged more than 700 women in attendance at the annual meeting to be the ones who reach out to victims of life's storms—storms such as abortion and addictions to drugs or alcohol.

"Who will share the gospel with the hundreds of thousands Kentuckians who are facing storms? Who will step in the midst of that storm and share Christ to those whom that storm will be an eternal reality," Chitwood said. "Ladies, you've been sent. The clouds are gathering. The sky is threatening. The storm is coming. Go rescue the perishing."

In her closing statements, KyWMU President Linda Cooper asked, "Are you a Mrs. Smith or a Mrs. Cox to a little boy at your church? To truly 'Live Sent' we need to be encouragers and nurturers and we can do that through WMU because the Lord has gone before us and will instruct us in the way we should go to declare His glory among the nations."



Beacon Hill Baptist Church choir provides worship music during the Kentucky WMU Annual Meeting.



Daughters and sons of Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union members were invited to attend the annual meeting and learn how young people can be used by God to spread the gospel message.

The total registered attendance at this year's Kentucky WMU Annual Meeting was 755. The amount given to the Offering for Kentucky WMU Ministries to Missionaries was \$6531.22. Other contributions included: \$4,315 collected through the Heritage Fund Silent Auction of baskets; \$1,118 toward the Heritage Fund (other gifts); and \$358 to the Eliza Broadus Offering. (WR)

Mississippi, Vermont at two ends of religious spectrum

Washington—If you're searching for the most religious Americans, head to Mississippi. And if you want the opposite, visit the least religious state, Vermont.

According to a new Gallup Poll, 59 percent of residents in the Magnolia State were considered "very religious," with almost 90 percent of the state affirming that religion was an important part of their daily life.

Vermont came in as the least religious state, reporting that only 23 percent of the residents were listed as "very religious" and more than half—58 percent—were considered nonreligious.

The more than 350,000 adults in the U.S. and the District of Columbia interviewed in 2011 by the Gallup Daily tracking survey were asked if religion was an important part of their daily lives and how often they attended religious services.

Based on those responses, residents were categorized as very religious, moderately religious or nonreligious, said Frank Newport, editor-in-chief of the Gallup Poll.

Many of the "most religious" states are in the Bible Belt, including Alabama (56 percent), Louisiana (54 percent), Arkansas (54 percent) and South Carolina (54 percent), but heavily Mormon Utah ranked second overall, at 57 percent. Kentucky tied with Texas as the 11th most religious state (47 percent).

In general, New England and the West

tended to be the least religious, with all six New England states scoring in the bottom 10. Following Vermont, those states included: New Hampshire (23 percent), Maine (25 percent), Massachusetts (28 percent), Alaska (28 percent), Oregon, Nevada and Washington (all 30 percent), Connecticut (31 percent), and Washington, D.C., New York and Rhode Island (all tied at 32 percent).

While New Hampshire and Vermont tied at 23 percent in the "very religious category," Vermont (58 percent) had a higher share of nonreligious than New Hampshire (52 percent).

The findings for 2011 were unchanged from recent years. "Nothing surprised me too much," Newport said.

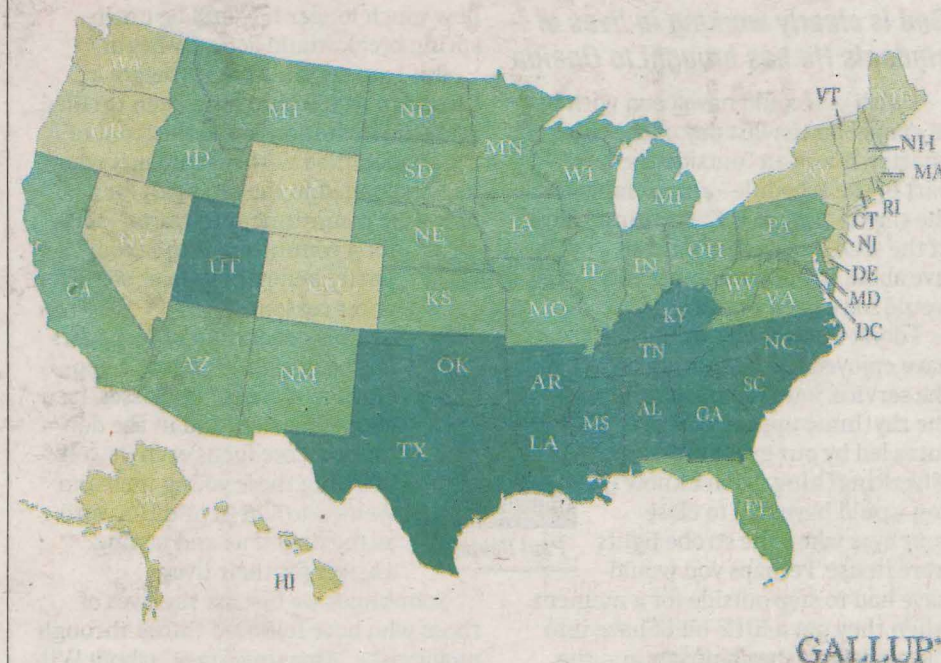
Gallup researchers found that overall, more than two-thirds (68.4 percent) of Americans were classified as very or moderately religious, with eight out of the 10 most religious states located in the South. But the differences in religiosity varied across the nation.

Newport said he believed the findings reflect the "culture in the states." For example, Mississippi has the country's highest percentage of African-Americans, who are known for being the most religious group.

"Most people say that's the reason why the state is the highest," he said, "but even people in Mississippi with no religious identity are more religious than people in Vermont who are religious." (RNS)

Religiosity, 2011

■ Above average ■ Average ■ Below average



A NEW DREAM Ryan and Kelley Day share their testimonies during an International Mission Board appointment service at Trinity Baptist Church in Lake Charles, La. The couple were pursuing the American dream—jobs, house, cars, family—but God called them "to do something of eternal significance." (IMB photo)

New missionaries

Continued from page 1

The Drakes were among 61 newly appointed missionaries honored March 21 during a service at Trinity Baptist Church in Lake Charles, La., which followed a meeting of trustees of the International Mission Board.

Though many of the IMB missionaries were called to vocational ministry early in life, several candidates, like Drake, came from unusual backgrounds. Others made radical shifts from previous life plans as God called them to missions.

Ryan and Kelley Day were living the "American Dream." After college, they started their careers—he worked for an environmental engineering firm and she was an architect.

After short-term mission trips to Thailand and Taiwan, God began to reveal His plan for their lives.

"It really broke our heart to know that we were so focused on ourselves here in the U.S.," Ryan said. "We had amazing redemption stories, both of us, and then we just fell right into the track of job, family, house, cars—the whole thing—and just forgetting that

there's millions of people out there who need that same redemption story."

God burdened both of their hearts for "investing in eternity," Ryan said. The Days left their jobs behind and now are preparing to serve as Southern Baptist missionaries in Japan.

IMB President Tom Elliff spoke to the new missionaries and their families about the importance of sharing the gospel and challenged the appointment service audience to "embrace" an unengaged, unreached people group.

"Of the 7 billion people on this globe, about half of those people have virtually no exposure to the gospel; ... 1.7 billion of those could actually die without ever hearing the name Jesus," Elliff said.

To embrace a UUPG, "it doesn't take a big church, it takes a big-hearted church," he continued. "So, you're that person—you're to be His heart, His hands and His voice in that church."

Elliff also spoke about the necessity of Jesus' death on the cross and the responsibility of all believers to share the news of that sacrifice.

"Will you preach the blood?" he asked.

**Names changed for security reasons*



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A generation in crisis

God is clearly working in lives of students He has brought to Oneida

I wish you could have been with us in chapel on the last day of the third quarter. It was an "outside-the-box" part of the schedule—an assembly on the theme "Image Is Everything." Most of the students were very positive about it. I don't know if you would have been or not.

I don't know if you would have enjoyed the beginning of the service: loud rap music and the rhythmic upper-body gestures led by our guest ministry, SilverRingThing. I don't know if you would have had to close your eyes when the strobe lights were in use. Perhaps you would have had to step outside for a moment when they put a little bit of haze into the air. When the chainsaw and the blowtorch were used to dramatize the long-lasting disastrous emotional effects of inappropriate sexual intimacy in the lives of teenagers, you might have felt uncomfortable.

Maybe you would have thought that too much personal information was being shared when one of the college-aged ladies from the SRT team modestly and sensitively shared about some of her mistakes in relationships with young men and how her life got turned around. I'm not sure if it would have gotten through to you when the young preacher used street slang and colloquial youth verbiage to talk about how a relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ was the only thing that was going to help our teenagers face and solve their problems.

Maybe you would have been looking at your watch to see just how much longer this bombardment of body, mind and soul was going to continue and

how much longer it would be until spring break would actually begin.

But I am certain that if you are a Christian, you would have been thrilled after the invitation to see the front of the chapel filled with 40 students who had responded to the altar call for a first-time commitment to Christ—some

for a commitment to sexual purity before marriage, some for other reasons.

This generation of teenagers has been rightly called "a generation in crisis." In classes, in chapel services and in the dormitories, we focus each day on pointing these young men and women to Christ and His word as the only true and lasting answer for their lives.

Sometimes we discuss the lives of those who have followed Christ through movies like "Amazing Grace" (about William Wilberforce) or "Not a Fan" (by City on a Hill Ministries). Sometimes we attempt to fill in the blanks on issues like marriage, sexual purity, the sanctity of human life or substance abuse with special chapel presentations.

Sometimes we go to extra lengths to make our students aware of the seriousness of their decisions by listening to the testimonies of those who continue to pay the price for wrong choices. The recently-watched video "Don't Waste Your Life Sentence" (from DesiringGod Ministries) is an example of these.

The Lord God Almighty is at work in the lives of the students whom He has brought to OBI. The spiritual harvest fields are ripening as the academic year moves to a close. Please join us in prayer for a bountiful harvest.

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

This is Oneida



Paul Davidson

Lessons learned

Soon-to-be graduate reflects on God's provisions while on campus

Todd Hatfield and his family will be leaving our campus in a few weeks when he graduates. When he first came here a few years ago, he thought he would only be focused on learning about things related to ministry.

"We knew when we first came here that God had called us and given us a passion for missions and evangelism," Hatfield recalled. "Now, as we look back over our time here, I can see how God was preparing us for a lot of things, both for ministry and our own personal spiritual formation. We have come to understand that God uses everything that happens here on campus to grow us in so many ways.

"One of the main lessons God has taught us through our years here is perseverance," Hatfield said. "We found out fast that it can be tough times here as a student. When you factor in having to manage your family obligations, your studies, work and ministry obligations along with everything else, you can get overwhelmed fast. One thing God has shown us here is that no matter how

much pressure comes, I just need to keep pressing on and persevere. I found it to be true that if I remain strong, He will see me through to the end.

"God has been faithful and provided for us in so many ways since we have been here," Hatfield noted. "First of all, He provided a way for us to even get here to attend classes. Since we have been here, God has provided our tuition to go to school and the finances to pay our bills each month. My wife and I both take online classes and our computer crashed. God provided another one so we could complete our classes.

"We will continue our studies when we start at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in the fall. We do not know specifically where God is going to lead after that," Hatfield pointed out. "But we are going to keep following God every day and allow Him to take us where He wants us to go. He has taught us that He is faithful to provide the way to get us to where He wants us to be."

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

Clear Creek Chronicle



Donnie Fox

Secrecy gone: Most adoptions today are 'open,' report states

By Michael Foust

New York—A new survey of adoption agencies confirms that the secrecy once associated with adoption no longer is a reality, with 95 percent of all domestic adoptions now being "open" or "semi-open"—that is, the birth parents and adoptive parents having at least some level of contact.

The data is a virtual reversal of what once was common, a time from the 1930s onward when families on both ends of the process did not tell others about the adoption. That secrecy even extended to the children.

A number of factors have forced adoptions into the open, according to the survey: adoptive children searching for information about their pasts, birth parents wanting updates on their children, adoptive families requesting biological medical history, and the decreasing stigma of illegitimacy.

The survey of 100 adoption agencies by the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute found:

- 55 percent of domestic adoptions now are fully open, with ongoing contact between the birth families and adoptive families.
- 40 percent are semi-open ("mediated"), with an adoption agency serving as a third party to facilitate the exchange of pictures and letters between the families.
- 5 percent are closed

("confidential"), with no contact between the families.

Adoption experts say open and semi-open adoptions can be beneficial for all parties involved. Kris Faasse, adoption services director for Bethany Christian Services, said she has been part of the adoption community for nearly three decades and has seen a dramatic rise in the percentage of open and semi-open adoptions.

For an adoption to be considered open or semi-open by Bethany, Faasse said, there must be face-to-face contact between the birth parents and adoptive parents at least once on the front end.

Despite the popularity of open and semi-open adoptions, Faasse said, adoptive parents often walk into an adoption agency fearful of having any contact with the birth parents. The reason is simple: "Adoptive families often will tell us that they're afraid that the birth family is going to come back later and take their child." Such adoption "horror" stories might make headlines, Faasse said, but they're "very, very rare."

The report said adoptive parents "as a group report positive experiences with open adoptions and high levels of comfort with contact." In fact, openness often lessens the fear felt by adoptive parents, the report said.

The report is only the first in a series of reports the Adoption Institute plans on releasing about domestic infant adoptions. (BP)

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Trayvon Martin situation stirs tragic 'ghosts of the past'

By Erin Roach & Diana Chandler

Nashville, Tenn.—Amid the backlash surrounding the killing of Trayvon Martin, Southern Baptist leaders said the case is a reminder of the need for the gospel and of the unique circumstances in which African-Americans live.

"We need to encourage the authorities to do a thorough investigation and make certain that justice is done," said Richard Land, president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. "We sadly in this country have a history where ... oftentimes when the victims were black, there was not justice."

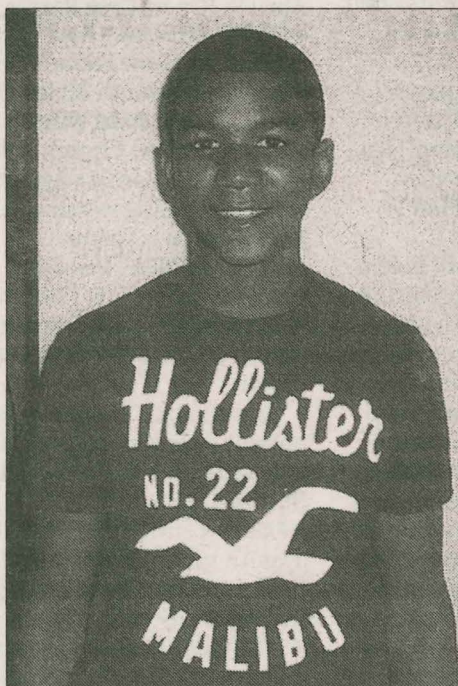
Kevin Smith, a black pastor and seminary professor from Louisville, said he hopes the tragedy reminds believers that the salvation Jesus offers is the only solution to the world's sinfulness.

"I'm so glad for the glory of the gospel," Smith told Baptist Press. "I have good brothers and sisters ... of every ethnicity; they have every kind of background, because we have a common heritage in the gospel of Jesus Christ."

"That is our bottom line, and it ought to give us more urgency for sharing the gospel because public policy and social engineering cannot fix the sinfulness of humanity," said Smith, the pastor of Louisville's Watson Memorial Baptist Church.

Maxie Miller, African-American church planting team strategist with the Florida Baptist Convention, said evangelicals must focus on brotherly love in initiating dialogue about the killing and about race relations in general.

"The conversation must exist. We must not just pray; we must talk about it," Miller said, because "sometimes evangelicals will use prayer as a tool for not doing something."

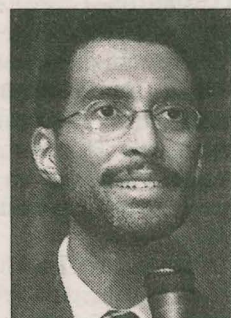


Trayvon Martin

The dialogue should focus on the biblical connection of God's expectations for His children to live in unity, as noted in Psalm 133:1, Miller noted, and should include prayer for all concerned.

Martin, a 17-year-old high school student, was killed by George Zimmerman, a Hispanic neighborhood watchman in Sanford, Fla., in February. Zimmerman has not been arrested and said he acted in self-defense. Nationwide, dialogue on race relations has erupted because of the case.

Land, in an appearance on CNN's "Starting Point" March 23, said his heart goes out to Martin's parents, and he was shocked that Zimmerman remained at large with his weapon and no restrictions.



Kevin Smith



Richard Land

"Whenever something like this happens, the ghosts of the past rise up and they haunt us because our past in this country is tragic. It is sad, and there's no question," Land said.

At the same time, he noted, "to call someone a racist is about the worst thing you can call somebody in our society, and rightly so. So, we don't want to throw that term around flippantly."

"When we scream racism at the drop of a hat, it cheapens the term and makes it more difficult to deal with racism when there really is racism," Land said.

The ERLC head said he has tried over the years to help white people understand that they and blacks perceive law-related incidents differently based on their experiences.

"When I see a policeman or I see someone in uniformed authority, I'm comforted because I've never had a bad experience with a police officer," Land explained. "I don't know any African-American personally who has not either had a bad experience with a police officer or has a close friend or relative who has had a bad experience with a police officer. So, because of the past historical experience, there's a fundamentally different immediate reaction."

Miller said African-Americans historically have been taught, as a survival mechanism, to respect authority and to understand their skin color automatically makes them suspect among the larger society. But younger African-Americans may not understand that principle, he said, not having lived dur-

ing the heat of the civil-rights struggle.

"As a black man, I am a suspect, not because of what I do or because of what I've done, but basically because of who I am—being black. I'm perceived a suspect just by being black," Miller said. "It was drilled into us: If you're stopped, answer the question, hold your hands away from your body; don't move; don't run."

Smith echoed the same sentiment. When he travels to preach at rural churches in Kentucky, Tennessee and Alabama, Smith said, he is mindful that his skin color matters in some communities. Often, he'll enlist some men from the churches to accompany him.

"I laugh about taking guys with me, but there's also a serious side to that—not regarding the Southern Baptist churches where I'm preaching but regarding everything I must do to get there; the gas stations where I'm stopping and the restaurants where I'm stopping and all those kinds of things," Smith said.

Smith referred to the Book of James and said the sinfulness of the flesh is what leads to strife on earth, and such strife should remind believers of the need for salvation found in Christ alone.

As poorly as George Zimmerman has been portrayed, "I think it's helpful for all of us to remember that all of us have the potential to misunderstand and stereotype people," Smith said. "I heard a pastor say there's some George Zimmerman in all of us, and that's a reality that we ought to be prayerful about as we continue to seek to be sanctified and more godly men and women ourselves."

Miller, in encouraging dialogue, recommended focusing on God's expectations for His children to live in unity.

"Unity does not necessarily mean uniformity. We may not all look alike and dress alike. We may not be biological brothers. We may not come from the same side of the track," Miller said. But all believers "are brothers theologically; there is one Lord, one faith and one baptism. We are brothers because we're heading toward one Father's house, heaven." (BP)

Mentor tributes

KBF can help Baptists honor those who have so influenced their lives

A mentor is a trusted counselor, tutor and coach. Throughout our lives, we all have one or more mentors, both in our personal lives and in our vocational lives. What we admire in our mentors may range from personal qualities to specific skills, from lifestyle habits to leadership abilities. Our mentors might include a parent, a grandparent, a friend, a sibling, a spouse, a teacher, an administrator, a church staff minister, an elected official, an employer, a co-worker or a fellow professional.

Oftentimes groups of individuals have the same mentor. For example, a beloved college professor may be the mentor of hundreds of students. A beloved pastor may be the mentor of hundreds of church members. A parent or grandparent may be the mentor of more than one generation of children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

A group of physicians, who were former residents at a hospital, decided to honor the surgeon who had trained them. They formed a society in the surgeon's name, which was designed to continue the tradition of excellence in

surgery taught and practiced by this beloved surgeon/teacher. They established an endowment named after their mentor to attract funds to assure the future of the chair of surgery at the hospital-related university. The testimonials of some of his former students were inspiring.

I wish more Kentucky Baptists, individually and in groups, would get serious and be more intentional about establishing endowments in honor of our beloved mentors. Not only would it provide a means of paying tribute to those who have made a difference in our lives, but also a means by which the influence

of that special mentor can live on and enrich the lives of countless others. Kentucky Baptists are fortunate to have a variety of worthy and deserving missionary, educational and benevolent ministries, through which our mentors' influences can be perpetuated. Call Laurie Valentine or me toll free for information on how you or your group can establish a lasting tribute to that special mentor in your life.

Barry Allen is president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, PO Box 436389, Louisville, KY 40253; toll-free (866) 489-8533; www.kybaptistfoundation.org

Ky. Baptist Foundation



Barry Allen

Garvon Golden selected to lead Dakota Baptist Convention

Rapid City, S.D.—Garvon Golden, a long-time leader in the Dakota Baptist Convention, has become its new executive director.

Golden was elected by a unanimous vote of the DBC's executive board March 3, after serving since last summer as interim executive director. Jim Hamilton, the convention's previous executive director, resigned a year ago.

Golden has participated in the growth of Southern Baptist work in the Dakotas since he arrived in North Dakota to be pastor of First Baptist Church of Dickinson in 1985.

"Here is what I want the churches to know," Golden said. "We value every church, every pastor and every leader in the Dakotas. We want them all to know that as a state convention and staff we care about them."

Though Dakota Baptist churches have nearly doubled their Cooperative Program gifts since 2004, Golden said the convention is facing a challenging financial time as it adjusts to a shift in North American Mission Board funding and in DBC staffing.

At the executive board meeting last month, members voted to increase from a ratio of 95 percent NAMB funding and 5 percent from Dakotas' churches to an 85/15 percent ratio by 2018. This and other changes in

funding mean the two-state convention will be taking more financial responsibility for its work and will be doing its work with fewer staff, Golden said.

Golden, 58, graduated from East Texas State University in 1974 and earned an M.Div. from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in 1980. (Dakota Baptist Connections/BP)



Garvon Golden



April

- 13-14 4:GO 2012, Campbellsville Baptist Church.
- 13-14 Exalt 2012, Campbellsville University.
- 13-14 Women on Mission Regional Retreat, Laurel Lake Baptist Camp, Corbin.
- 14 Disaster Relief Training Phase I & II, First Baptist Church, London.
- 19-21 Ministers in Transition, Louisville.
- 20-22 All-State Children's Choir—East and West, Cedarmore Camp and Conference Center, Bagdad.
- 21 Region 4 RA Congress and Rally, First Baptist Church, Mount Washington.
- 21 Youth and High School Bible Drill and Speakers' Tournament, Parkway Baptist Church, Bardstown.
- 23 Senior Living Celebration, Lone Oak First Baptist Church, Paducah.
- 24 Developing and Managing People, Kentucky Baptist Building, Louisville.
- 24 Iron Sharpening Iron, Bowling Green Ballpark.
- 24 Senior Living Celebration, Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.
- 26 Iron Sharpening Iron, Great American Ballpark, Cincinnati.
- 26 Senior Living Celebration, First Baptist Church, London.
- 26-27 Ministry Assistants' Training and Interest Conference, Cumberland Falls State Resort Park, Corbin.

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **BENTON**—Vanzora Church will present an Easter cantata April 8 during the morning worship service. **Randy McClure** is pastor.

■ **CAMPBELLVILLE**—Saloma Church will hold a Maundy Thursday communion service April 5, 7 p.m. **John Chowning** is pastor.

■ **HARRODSBURG**—Harrodsburg Church will hold a Maundy Thursday service April 5, 5:30 p.m. The Jews for Jesus group will serve a Seder meal and the Lord's Supper. **Wayne Spivey** is pastor.

■ **HODGENVILLE**—First Church will hold its annual community Good Friday worship service and luncheon April 6, noon, and the church's choir will present the musical, "Hallelujah, Praise the Lamb," at 7 p.m.

■ **JUNCTION CITY**—**Dale Denton** recently resigned as pastor of First Church.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Grace Church's choir will present the Easter cantata, "The Crucifixion," April 5, 6:30 p.m. **David Smith** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Deer Park Church will hold a "Behold the Man!" Passion and communion service April 5, 6:30 p.m. **David Platt** is pastor.

Fern Creek Church will hold a Maundy Thursday service April 5, 7 p.m., at which the youth choir will present "A New Commandment." The church's choir and instrumental ensemble also will present "Tenebrae: Jesus, Light of the World" April 6, 7 p.m. **Linda Barnes Popham** is pastor.

Green Acres Church's choir will present the Easter cantata, "The Crucifixion," April 5, 6:30 p.m. **Phil Ellis** is pastor.

St. Matthews Church will hold a "Resurrection Rally" for children

April 8, 10 a.m. **Greg Barr** is pastor.

■ **MOUNT STERLING**—Reid Village Church will host Boone's Creek Association's youth Bible drill April 7, 2 p.m. **Todd Wiley** is pastor.

Spring Street Church will present an Easter cantata April 8 during the morning worship service. **John Runyon** is pastor.

■ **MOUNT VERNON**—Freedom Church's adult choir will present its Easter cantata, "Champion of Love," April 8. **David Sargent** is pastor.

Maretburg Church's choir will present its Easter cantata, "Champion of Love," April 8. **Wayne Harding** is pastor.

■ **PARIS**—Central Church will hold a youth speakers' tournament and Bible drill April 10, 6:30 p.m. **Dan Russell** is pastor.

■ **SYMSONIA**—Symsonia Church will present an Easter cantata

Spotlight on ...

Elizabethtown



Severns Valley Church will hold a Good Friday experience April 6, 7 a.m., an all-day, self-guided tour through a depiction of the major events of Jesus Christ's life leading up to His crucifixion. **Bill Langley** is pastor.

April 8 during the morning worship service. **Rick Miller** is pastor.

■ **WILLIAMSTOWN**—Williamstown Church will hold a community Easter sunrise service April 8, 7 a.m. **Darrell Morgan** is pastor.

■ **WINCHESTER**—Allansville Church will hold a Passion play April 6-7, 7 p.m. **Ray Coates** is pastor.

2012 VBS to showcase 'God's Awesome Power'

By Jon Wilke

Nashville, Tenn.—Nearly 4,000 people attended Vacation Bible School preview events this winter to prepare for "Amazing Wonders Aviation: Encountering God's Awesome Power."

Jerry Wooley, VBS specialist for LifeWay Christian Resources, described VBS previews as "great moments of bringing people together from all across the country" to build momentum for this summer's outreach.

"We host classes on crafts. We

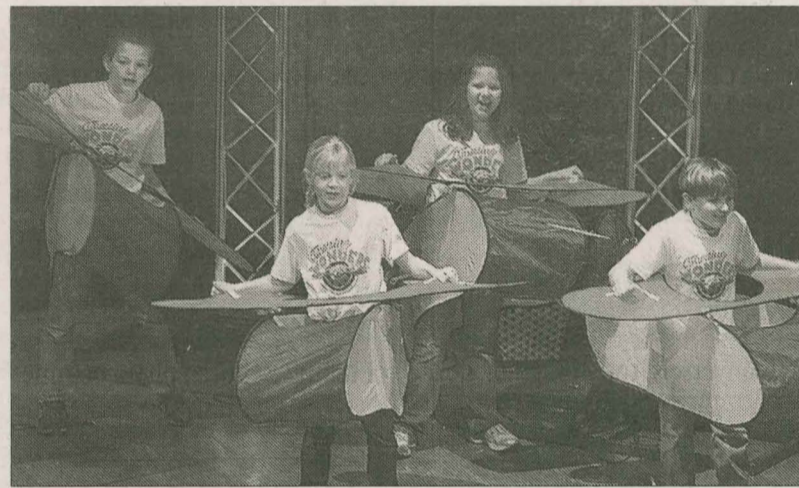


Jerry Wooley

sing all the music. We teach high-tech and low-budget decorations, and we look at the Bible content," Wooley said. "We do everything in VBS in a compact 24-hour period."

This year's VBS theme is drawn from Psalm 147:5: "Our Lord is great, vast in power; His understanding is infinite." The curriculum uses 1930s and 1940s aviation to help VBS participants encounter God and His power by exploring some of the world's greatest natural wonders.

VBS 2012 will immerse participants in daily worship before



READY FOR VBS In aviation-styled costumes at the Vacation Bible School preview in Nashville, Tenn., kids venture into "Amazing Wonders Aviation: Encountering God's Awesome Power." (LifeWay photo)

sending them on a make-believe journey from the Amazing Wonders Aviation airstrip to such wonders as the Grand Canyon in Arizona, Victoria Falls in Africa, the Great Barrier Reef in Australia, the Matterhorn in the Swiss Alps, the polar Northern Lights and Paricutin volcano in Mexico.

In addition to learning of God's power in nature, VBS participants will learn of His power over sin, death and life by exploring Bible stories with similar themes and lessons. "We want everyone who attends VBS to know the power of our awesome God," Wooley noted. (LW/BP)

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FOR SALE: Book, "The Journey of a Shepherd's Wife," by Virginia Cooper Stokes, a pastor's wife. Purchase at Amazon.com, TatePublishing.com or BarnesandNoble.com; or purchase direct for \$15 (includes postage) by calling (270) 487-0503.

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working knowledge of music; be able to play one or more instruments; and be responsible for providing worshipful music for all applicable services. Annual salary: \$5,200. Submit resumé to music@bullittsburgbaptist.org; or to Music Search Committee, 2616 Bullittsburg Church Road, Petersburg, KY 41080. Church phone: (859) 689-4945.

SEEKING: Camp director and staff for 2012 camp season at Boone's Creek Baptist Camp, Winchester, Ky. Camp starts June 4 and goes through July 20. Must be 18 years old or older. For application, go online to www.boonescreekbaptistassoc.com; or call (859) 744-0037. Applications must be received by April 23, 2012.

SEEKING: Full-time associate minister of youth and outreach for a growing Northern Kentucky church. Candidate should have love for Christ, calling to youth ministry and passion for building bridges to the lost and not-yet committed church members/attenders. Send resumé by April 21 to Union Baptist Church, PO Box 194, Union, KY 41091. www.unionbaptistchurch.org.

SEEKING: Part-time worship leader for blended services and leading an adult choir at Gamaliel Baptist Church, Gamaliel, Ky. Send resumé to carder@scrtc.com.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of music and youth. Responsible for the music worship and the growth and development of youth. A BS or BA in music or related field; master's degree preferred. Full job description is available upon request. First Baptist Church, Fulton, Ky. Email: office@fbcfulton.org.

SEEKING: Director of missions for Pike Association of Southern Baptists in Pike County. Email resumé to bill@eliteky.net; or mail to Bill Staggs, moderator, PO Box 2973, Pikeville, KY 41502. Resumé will be received by May 4. Pike Association consists of 25 churches and one mission. For more information, call (606) 434-8289.

SEEKING: Associate pastor for Greensburg Baptist Church, Greensburg, Ky. See website, greensburgbaptist.com, for job description and to forward resumé. Mail: Greensburg Baptist Church, Box 248, Greensburg, KY 42743.

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SEEKING: Full-time minister of music/youth. For more info, contact Rev. Tom Stokes, (270) 487-6538; or email tfbc302@scrtc.com. Email resumé or mail to First Baptist Church, 302 N. Magnolia, Tompkinsville, KY 42167.

Momentum for Easter fueled by missions

By Stephen Wilson

Southern Baptists originally did not attach much significance to Easter. This was much the same regarding Christmas. Both days were not recognized as a special day of worship in any of the historic Baptist confessions; allusions to them were rare in Baptist history volumes before the 20th century; and both holidays possessed an association with worldliness, and even paganism, in the minds of many Baptist ministers. As late as 1903, a writer for the North Carolina state Baptist paper, the Biblical Recorder, wrote an anti-Easter article that stated that "Baptists do not keep this day."

With the exception of the Sunday worship day, Baptist tradition before the late 19th century largely rejected or ignored "special days." Although the apostle Paul recognized that Christians had a Christian liberty option for special days in Romans 14:5-6, few Baptists ministers or writers of that day championed that option. Many Baptist ministers would have dismissed the idea of celebrating a special day for Christ's resurrection as unnecessary, since "every day should be a celebration of the Lord's resurrection."

Conversely, the slow embrace of Christmas by Southern Baptists in the late 1800s certainly led many also to take a second look at Easter. The late Victorian Age in the United States encouraged a re-examination of holidays in an era of a growing tendency toward leisure and celebratory events. It was only natural for Southern Baptists to look to festivals with strong historic Christian connections such as Christmas and Easter.

By the late 1800s, some Southern Baptist churches began celebrating Easter. Articles and advertisements in state Baptist papers acknowledged that some celebrated the holiday; others decorated their churches with Easter lilies; and sheet music for Easter was advertised. Nonetheless, most articles of this era were against celebrating Easter. One writer for the Western Recorder in 1890 called the new custom of celebrating Easter an "innovation," and he disapproved. Contributing authors to the Baptist state papers in Alabama and North Carolina also acknowledged their opposition to celebrating Easter, addressing their concerns to fellow Baptists. After 1900 the more vehement opposition slowly faded.

Paralleling their role in Christmas celebrations in Southern Baptist life, the Woman's Missionary Union played an important part in the embrace of Easter. Once again the catalyst was missions. When the WMU successfully won the Southern Baptist Convention over to a special collection of funds at Christmastime for foreign missions (eventually called the Lottie

Moon Christmas Offering), WMU Corresponding Secretary Annie Armstrong also began promoting a similar special collection for home missions. As early as 1895 the WMU began sponsoring a week of prayer for home missions that would be capped off with an offering.

FIRST PERSON

Nevertheless, the connection between an offering for home missions and the recognition of Easter by Southern Baptists took longer to unfold than the acceptance of Christmas that the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering engendered. Originally the prayer time and offering for home missions was suggested for January, but shortly afterward, the week of prayer was moved to early March to distance itself from the Christmas offering. The spring offering was renamed the Annie Armstrong Offering in 1933 for the upcoming 1934 season in recognition of her advocacy for home missions.

Reluctance to observe Easter faded as the 20th century unfolded. Ministers began preaching resurrection-themed sermons and voiced little objection to secular activities like the "Easter Sunday meal" and egg hunts. Recognizing that Easter Sunday was a day that many members dressed in their finest attire, the tradition of taking a church photo became an established custom in some churches. This charming custom reinforced the observance of Easter as a special time.

Into this growing pro-Easter climate, the Home Mission Board suggested to the WMU in 1968 that the Annie Armstrong Offering be renamed the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for the upcoming 1969 season. This solidified the Southern Baptist tradition started by the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering that holidays in Southern Baptist life can be best celebrated by supporting missions. The newly renamed Easter offering would play a critical role in funding domestic missions in the years to come.

As the latter half of the 20th century waned, Southern Baptists enthusiastically supported Easter. Many churches sponsored Easter musical programs, and larger churches produced elaborate pageants. Other churches instituted "sunrise services." Baptist Book Stores (now LifeWay Christian Stores) provided Easter-themed paraphernalia along with holiday books and materials for Easter programs.

The advent of the 21st century continued these developments, but the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering remained the cornerstone of Southern Baptist observance of Easter. About 5,000 North American missionaries are supported by the offering. (BP)

Stephen Wilson is dean emeritus and chair of the social studies/history department of Mid-Century University in Mayfield and a member of the SBC Executive Committee.

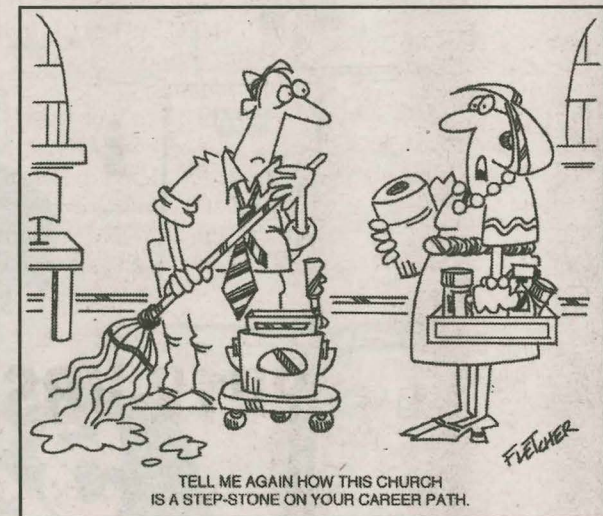
Preacher's Kids



Joe McKeever



Fletch



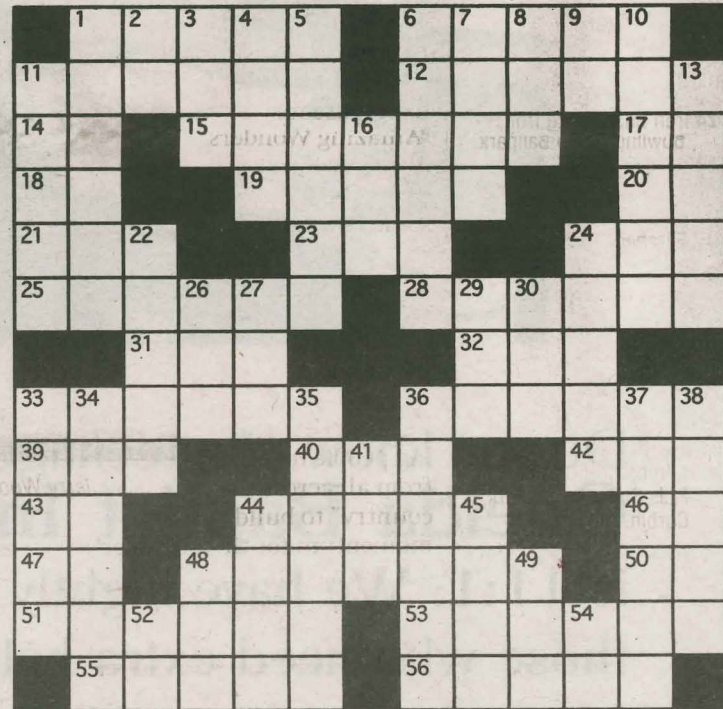
Dennis Fletcher

Bible Crosswords

By Teri Grottko

Across

- 1 Shoe parts
- 6 Greek form of Uzziah
- 11 Son of Levi (Genesis 46:11)
- 12 Father of Baruch (Jeremiah 32:12)
- 14 Masculine nickname
- 15 Son of Adiel (1 Chronicles 9:12)
- 17 School subj.
- 18 Vote
- 19 Father of Darda (1 Kings 4:31)
- 20 Pronoun
- 21 Family of returned exiles (Ezra 2:57)
- 23 Pilot makes one
- 24 ___ change
- 25 Assign (arch.)
- 28 They come in flights
- 31 Slangy denial
- 32 It gives a hoot
- 33 Cauterized
- 36 Address
- 39 ___ blond
- 40 Construction necessity (abbr.)
- 42 Jane ___
- 43 Phonetic sound
- 44 Exhibits
- 46 Hospital inits.
- 47 "The kingdom of heaven is ___ hand" (Matthew 3:2)
- 48 Son of Elioenai (1 Chronicles 3:24)
- 50 Biblical exclamation
- 51 Catch one's eye
- 53 Glided



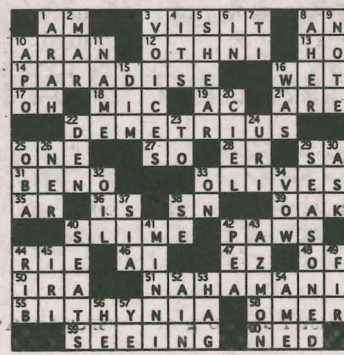
- 55 What Simeon was called at Antioch (Acts 13:1)
- 56 "The heifer ... which is neither ___ nor sown" (Deuteronomy 21:4)

- 22 Son of Asher (1 Chronicles 7:30)
- 24 Bribe
- 26 Wax or wig
- 27 Article
- 29 Big ___
- 30 Reverence
- 33 Antichrist
- 34 Son of Mehir (1 Chronicles 4:11)
- 35 Merchant
- 36 Contention
- 37 Became aloof
- 38 "When ___ had heard these things, he was troubled" (Matthew 2:3)
- 41 "Of Keros, the children of ___" (Nehemiah 7:47)
- 44 Visage
- 45 Father of Heber (Luke 3:35)
- 48 Verb for flower child
- 49 Mount where Aaron died (Numbers 20)
- 52 Polynesian woody plant
- 54 I (pl.)

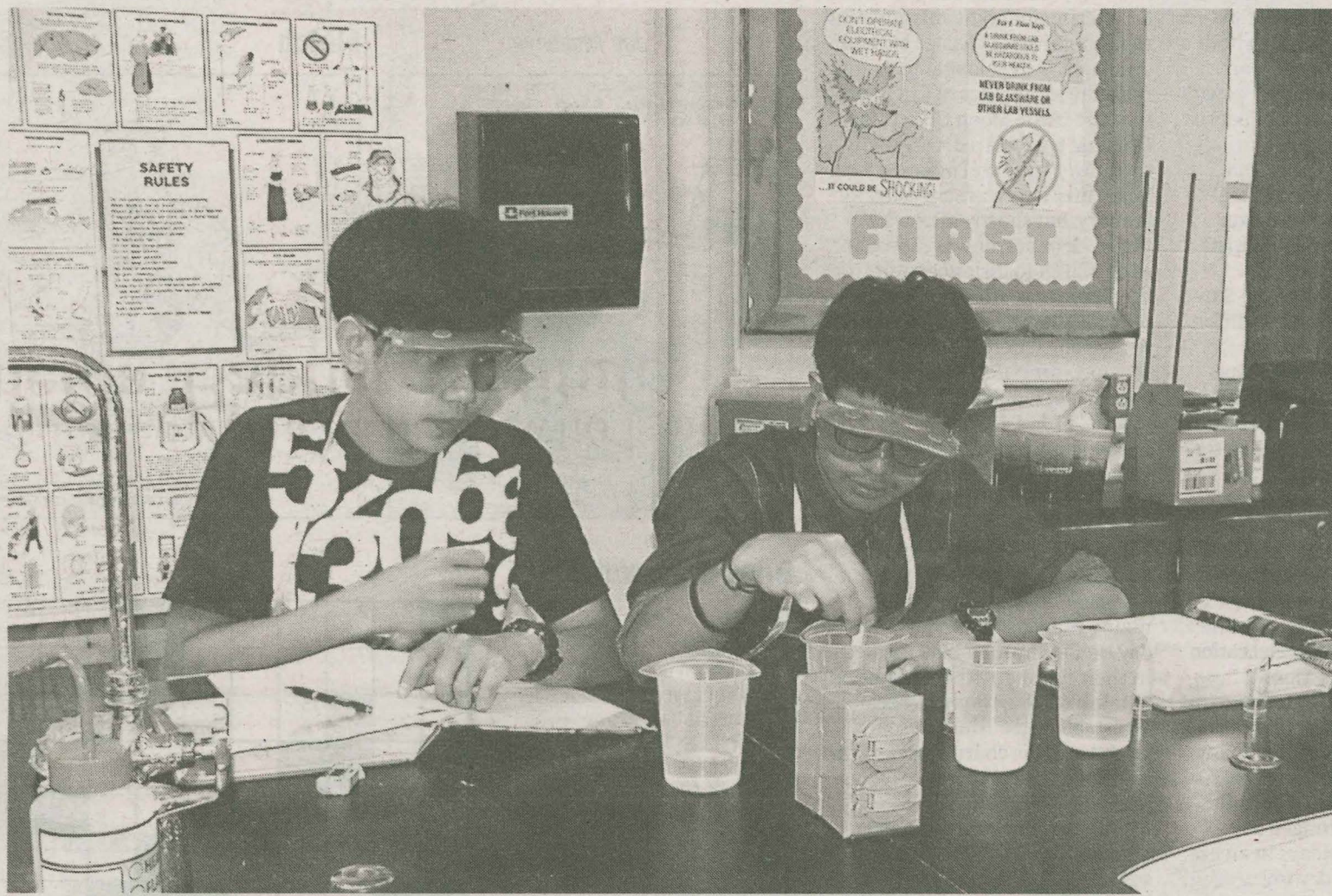
Down

- 1 Greek form of Sodom
- 2 Buckeye state (abbr.)
- 3 O.T. book
- 4 "He (Samson) ... dwelt in the top of the rock ___" (Judges 15:8)
- 5 Son of Jahdai (1 Chronicles 2:47)
- 6 What the Israelites missed in the wilderness
- 7 Ardor
- 8 Son of Bela (1 Chronicles 7:7)
- 9 City near Bethel
- 10 "Pass ye away, thou inhabitant of ___" (Micah 1:11)
- 11 Early descendant of Adam (1 Chronicles 1:2)
- 13 What a good dog does
- 16 Pronoun for a seafaring vessel

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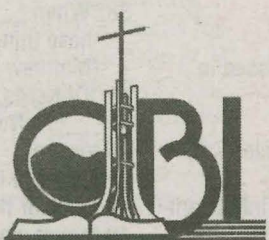
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