

# WESTERN Recorder

May 8, 2012

Shine Like Stars \* Philippians 2:15

Volume 186, Issue 18

## With reorganization ahead, KBC announces staff departures

### More than 30 percent of convention's full-time workforce opts to leave

By Dannah Prather

Louisville—In preparation for a strategic reorganization, the Kentucky Baptist Convention has announced that 23 full-time and four part-time employees of the KBC Mission Board have accepted retirement or resignation incentive packages and will leave their jobs by June 30.

Additionally, contracts for nine part-time ministry consultants will expire without renewal Aug. 31.

The departures are necessary because of economic realities and a shift in priorities for the 175-year-old convention, said Paul Chitwood, executive director of the KBC.

"The global economic downturn, and Kentucky Baptists' desire to send more resources to the international mission field have prompted these decisions," said Chitwood, who began serving as executive director last July.

In addition to the sluggish economy, Chitwood cited dwindling support among the 2,400 Kentucky Baptist congregations for the Cooperative Program, a unified fund that Kentucky Baptists have used since 1925 to support missions and ministries in the commonwealth, North America and the world.

Between 2000 and 2011, the percentage of Kentucky Baptist churches' undesignated receipts set aside to support missions through CP has dropped from 9.2 percent to 6.75 percent.

Messengers to the 2011 KBC annual meeting reprioritized the way Cooperative Program dollars are distributed, sending a higher percentage to the International Mission Board, North American Mission Board and other national Southern Baptist Convention causes.

With fewer CP dollars to fund missions and ministries in Kentucky, KBC staff have made spending cuts and left positions unfilled, but the cutbacks were not enough, Chitwood said.

"It was time to re-evaluate our services to Kentucky Baptists and to adjust

our priorities to match current resources," he said.

This week, Chitwood presented to the KBC Mission Board his plan to restructure the staff.

Reorganization is not new for a ministry more than a century old, however, KBC leaders anticipate the plan Chitwood presents will outline the most comprehensive changes that the mission board has undertaken in decades.

"Our goal, in this rapidly changing 21st century, is to provide more targeted assistance to our churches in order for them to reach people in their communities with the gospel," Chitwood said.

"I'm very excited about where we are going and I believe our pastors and  
□ See KBC staff departures ... Page 3

## Prayers from above

By Robin Bass

Sadieville—Sadieville is an idyllic town; even more so when seen from atop Eagle Creek Baptist Church. Three stories above Main Street, tidy homes dot the horizon as green hills roll away to meet the sky.

But are the lives of the people living in those homes just as peaceful? They would be if more of them knew Christ, Greg Mullins said.

"I've talked to a lot of people since I became pastor," he said, "and there are some people out there that don't even know the name Jesus."

While pondering the spiritual health of his community, Mullins found new meaning in Acts 10. In the passage, Peter goes to the roof.

□ See Rooftop prayer ... Page 6



Greg Mullins (left), pastor of Eagle Creek Baptist Church in Sadieville, leads his wife, Kathy, and church member, Jason Austin, in praying for the lost in their community. Mullins organized a rooftop prayer vigil for the men of his church to model the example set by Peter in Acts 10. (Photo by Robin Bass)

## Kentucky-based ministry sends Bibles, other resources overseas

By Jan Hill

Eubank—Olin Williams read the letter from a teacher in Nigeria. "If you cannot send me a New Testament, please tear a few pages out of a New Testament and send these pages to me," the man wrote, desperate for even a portion of God's word.

The letter underscored a need for sending Bibles and Christian books to countries where they are not easily accessible.

Williams, a retired schoolteacher, directs Book-Link, a ministry that began in the back of a Ford truck two decades ago and now impacts the world from a two-story warehouse in rural Kentucky. The building was constructed on Williams' farm by more than 25 volunteer groups.

Book-Link emerged from a ministry called Books for the World, which began in 1988 as a project by the late Owen Cooper, a former Southern Baptist Convention president.

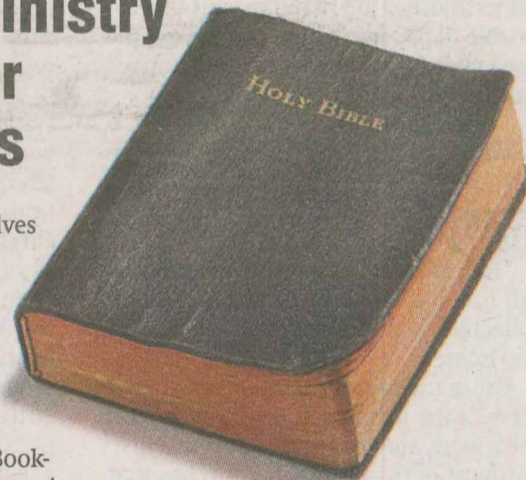
Long shelves of books, as well as tables, chairs, dollies, boxes and packing materials, fill the Book-Link warehouse in Eubank in Pulaski County.

One recipient of a box of books in Africa responded, "Take out the packing material and send more books instead," Williams recalled.

Volumes of used books and other Christian literature are repaired, processed, packed and wrapped in boxes weighing about 45 pounds each.

Through the efforts of many volunteers, the faith-based organization has shipped more than 2 million books, journals, tracts, Christian music CDs and cassettes to more than 5,000 recipients in more than 80 countries at no cost to those who open the boxes.

Volunteers typically bring books with them when they travel to Eubank to help



pack, and some even bring sleeping bags to stay overnight in the warehouse.

"It costs about \$4,500 to ship a 20-foot container filled with 747 boxes of books to Nigeria and India and approximately \$11,000 to ship a similar container of materials to Zimbabwe and Zambia," Williams said.

"Presently, Book-Link ships two 20-foot containers overseas yearly but has the capacity to ship three containers a year if more materials were available," he added.

A few years ago, Williams taught at the Baptist Seminary in Kaduna, Nigeria, and told the students about Book-Link. While he was there, a 60-pound box of  
□ See Book-Link ... Page 2



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Western Recorder 5-8-2012

# With director retiring, KBC looks to sustain eastern Kentucky ministry

By Dannah Prather

**Wheelwright**—Partners are being sought to help sustain the work of the Wheelwright Baptist Center in Floyd County following the retirement of its longtime director.

"The Wheelwright Center is located in one of the poorest regions of the commonwealth and ministers to about 200 families each year," Kentucky Baptist Convention Executive Director Paul Chitwood said. "We want to see this ministry continue."

The U.S. Census reports that 11,000 families in Floyd County live on less than \$10,000 annually.

Charles and Margie Wilson have served as North American Mission Board

missionaries for more than 32 years, devoting 26 of those years to the people of Wheelwright, according to Eric Allen, director of the KBC's mission service and ministries department.

"The Wilsons and a faithful core of volunteers model what it means to be missionaries," he said. "As a means to sharing Christ, they help families with food and clothing. They provide after-school and summer programs for children. They help transport people to the doctor and the pharmacy. There's also a deaf ministry there."

Last year about 15 short-term mission teams traveled to Wheelwright to serve. During the year, 37 locals made professions of faith in Christ. "This is a vibrant ministry," Allen said.

Wilson is among 27 KBC employees to accept retirement or resignation incentive packages in preparation for a major restructuring of the work of the KBC Mission Board staff. Compensation for several employees, including Wilson, was provided jointly by NAMB and the KBC.

Wilson also serves as pastor of First Baptist Church of Wheelwright, which holds services at the center.

"It was our hope that this week we would announce the transfer of the property and the ministry to a congregation in another state that has generously supported the Wheelwright Center," Chitwood said. "Unfortunately that arrangement has fallen through, and we are actively and aggressively seeking a new partnering church or association."

Allen said he is hopeful God soon will call a new missionary or couple to Wheelwright. He added that he is confident that with a missionary in place, the financial resources will follow to sustain the work.

"The Kentucky Baptist Convention will do what we can to match people power to resources to see this ministry sustained," Chitwood said. "We do not want to see this flock without a shepherd."

Chitwood encouraged Kentucky Baptists to contact Allen for information on the center and how to help. Allen can be reached by email at [Eric.Allen@KyBaptist.org](mailto:Eric.Allen@KyBaptist.org) or by phone at (502) 489-3530. In Kentucky, call toll free at (866) 489-3530. (KBC)

## Baptist associations look to promote cooperation among local churches

By John Evans

**Barre, Vt.**—When a Vermont pastor's father became deathly ill, the pastor called Green Mountain Baptist Association. Like many pastors in the state, he works another job to make ends meet. Unable to pay for the long trip home, he needed compassionate counsel from a trusted colleague in ministry.

"Within minutes of his phone call, I was able to send out a plea to all our pastors," recalled Terry Dorsett, the association's director of missions and church planting catalyst.

"In less than two hours I was able to call him back and tell him that we had collected all that he needed to make the trip home."

For many pastors, Baptist associations serve as the primary support system for their work and ministry. But that's just one facet of the groups of churches that join together for fellowship, ministry, service, evangelism and missions.

The Baptist association is the oldest cooperative unit in Baptist life, tracing its existence back more than 300 years.

Each year, the Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Directors of Missions promotes an Associational Missions Emphasis week. Slated this year for May 20-26, the theme is "Igniting Passion."

"I think that historically it's just sort of been proven that our Southern Baptist Convention needs associations, because there's a role that associations have that is very unique," said Johnny Rumbough, SBCADOM president and director of missions for Lexington Baptist Association in South Carolina.

Associations represent the local level of Southern Baptist work, serving churches through resources, consultations and ministry coordination. Dorsett, for example, leads Green Mountain Association to assist in fundraising for churches, while Rumbough meets frequently with church staff and has trained many pastor search committees.

As associations connect churches with opportunities to help other churches and engage in local ministry, a large church sometimes may be paired with a smaller, struggling church.

Jeff Crabtree, director of missions for

Warren Association of Baptists in in Bowling Green, for example, paired 10 of the more evangelistic churches in the association with 10 churches that had not baptized anyone the previous year. He asked the stronger churches to pray specifically that the other churches would experience evangelistic effectiveness in the coming year.

At its 2009 annual meeting, the association reported that eight churches with no baptisms in 2008 had baptized 29 new believers. And, the evangelistic impact has continued. "Our pastors celebrate one another's baptisms at every associational meeting," Crabtree said.

In 2010, a total of 23 churches in Warren Association reported an increase in baptisms and church leaders began to pray for 1,000 souls to be baptized in 2010-11.

"Our associational churches baptized 1,068 in 2011, and we are now praying for 1,150 baptisms in 2012," Crabtree said. "One of our churches that baptized none in 2010, White Stone Quarry Baptist Church, recently reported it has baptized four people so far this year."

Reflecting how associations often help church members find avenues of service in their communities, Rumbough said one small-group leader's inquiry from a church led to the association showing them ways to assist local police officers and their families.

"When a church surfaces and says, 'Hey, we'd like to do something,' we not only know but we already have a relationship with those community entities," Rumbough said.

Beyond helping churches, Baptist associations are heavily involved in evangelism and ministry. That can include financial support and training for church planters, prison ministries or helping churches host block parties.

Rumbough said he hopes pastors who are unsure about joining their local associations will consider the ways their churches can join together to reach the world for Christ. "This is about being able to reach people that are beyond their one church's ability to be able to reach," he said, "because no one church can do what multiple churches can do together." (SBC Life/BP)

## Book-Link

Continued from page 1

materials that Book-Link had shipped two or three years earlier finally arrived. The students could not believe the timing.

Requests received by Book-Link range from one in Africa asking for 50,000 Bibles to another from a Baptist seminary in Zambia asking for materials to establish a small library of 15 to 20 books for new pastors who venture into remote areas.

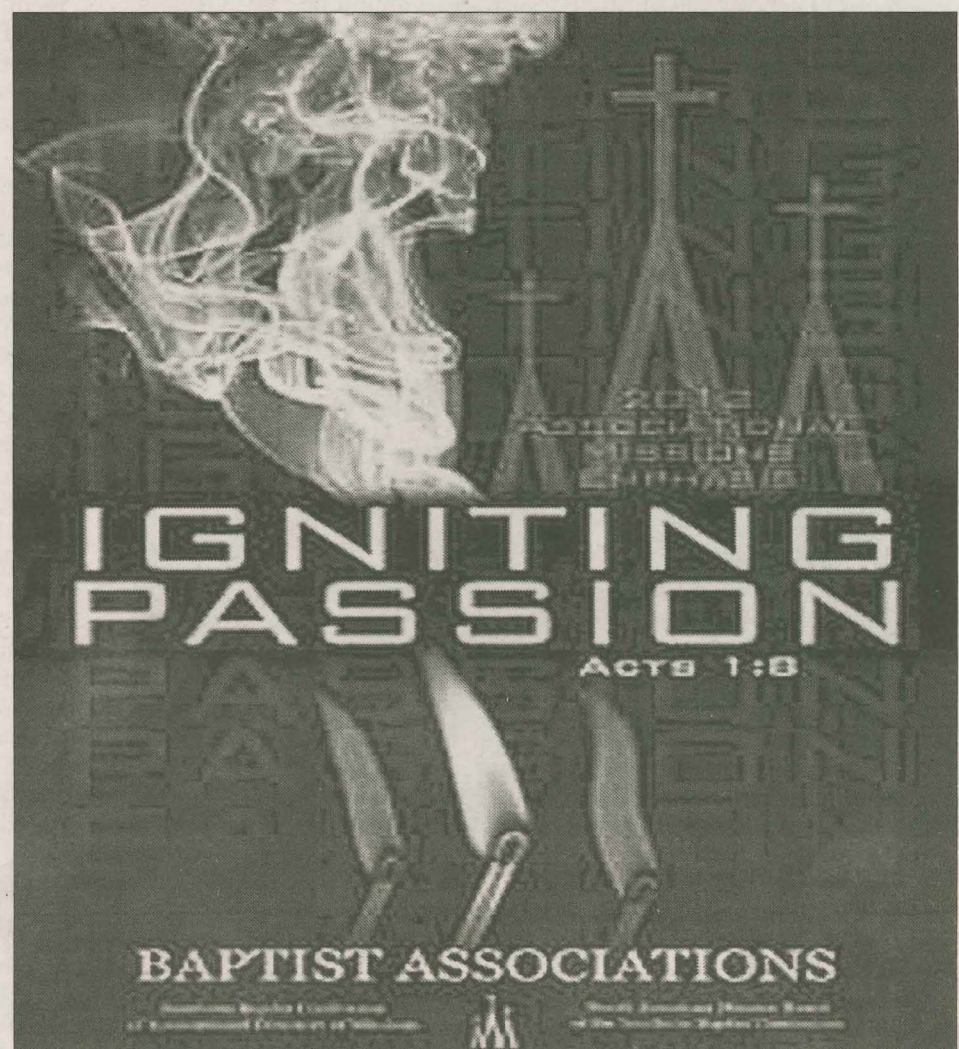
Some of the most popular resources are Bibles, theological books, atlases, concordances, hymnals, study-course books, Sunday School literature, dictionaries, CDs and cassette tapes.

Book-Link receives many thank you letters from pastors worldwide such as one who wrote: "God bless Book-Link.

Praise be to God for the blessings of books through Book-Link. The people of Pakwach Baptist Church of Uganda will benefit greatly from the books. We never expected to receive books like these. Now it has happened and it is wonderful. May God bless Book-Link again and again."

Now that eReaders and widespread Internet access are available in the United States, American pastors tend to set aside traditional books and other printed materials in favor of electronic versions. Williams noted that receiving such unused resources could be a dream come true for a Third World pastor struggling to teach his congregation how to know and follow Jesus.

Book-Link relies on donations and volunteer labor. To join in the work of the ministry, call (606) 379-1734 or send an email to [BookLinkWay1@Windstream.net](mailto:BookLinkWay1@Windstream.net). (BP)



# GPS 2012 spotlights evangelistic events

By Mickey Noah

**Rio Rancho, N.M.**—Matt Sellers said the use of attractional, evangelistic events under the God's Plan for Sharing initiative is like throwing gasoline on an already blazing fire for his 2-year-old church plant.

Following its introduction in 2010 by the North American Mission Board and most state conventions, the second phase of GPS is under way across the Southern Baptist Convention. In 2012, GPS is focused on event evangelism.

Sellers is pastor of Paragon Church in Rio Rancho, N.M., a northwest suburb of Albuquerque.

"The whole idea of a church plant is being outward-focused from the get-go," Sellers said. "All our people are already involved and engaged. We didn't need GPS for that. ... What GPS has done is to come alongside of what we were already doing."

During the introduction of the GPS initiative in 2010, Sellers said Paragon Church conducted door-to-door evangelism, left door hangers on front doors and advertised on billboards.

That laid the foundation for 2012, he said.

"We're doing different things this time around," Sellers said. "We rented out a concert hall seating 1,000 for our Sunday Easter service. We had 300, and 50 percent of them were visitors."

Paragon is planning other GPS events this summer such as backyard Bible clubs, block parties and Vacation Bible School.

"GPS has enhanced what we're doing already and keeps our evangelistic drive going," Sellers said.

In Missouri, under the leadership of Missouri Baptist Convention evangelism director Gary Taylor, GPS enjoyed incredible success in 2010 when Missouri Baptists deposited gospel door hangers and church invitations on some 900,000 front doors.

With the theme of "Here's Hope," Missouri Baptists have been challenged to create special events as part of phase two. Missouri Baptist churches are being encouraged to plan and execute four "Big Day" events in 2012 and 2013, Taylor said.

In Rogersville, Mo., last February,

Harmony Baptist Church partnered with a nondenominational church and Real Encounter Outreach to stage an extreme sports event at a high school gym. It attracted a full house of 1,800 to witness the aerial stunts of professional cyclists and hear the gospel, Jim Bates, minister of youth and children at Harmony Baptist, said.

Working with Brad Bennett of Real Encounter, based in Springfield, Mo., the two churches promoted a free evangelistic event featuring motorcyclists, BMX bike riders and skateboarders. More than 260 decisions for Christ were made that night.

During the show, Bennett gives his testimony and shares the gospel with the crowd. He does 20 to 25 such events per year.

"The hook is the entertainment," Bates said. "The Real Encounter guys are outstanding athletes on the motorcycles and BMX bikes. They do amazing things."

"The key to this or any evangelistic event is the follow-up," Bates said.

"Event evangelism absolutely works. The key is to follow up." (NAMB/BP)



**GPS DIRECTION** God's Plan for Sharing in 2012 is focusing on evangelistic events. Brad Bennett of Real Encounter Outreach performs stunts at a crusade sponsored in part by Harmony Baptist Church in Rogersville, Mo. Bennett gives his testimony at 20 to 25 such events each year. (Photo courtesy of Real Encounter Outreach)

## KBC staff departures

Continued from page 1

churches, when they learn the details of our plans, will be as well," he added.

The staff reduction announcement comes after retirement and severance packages were presented for employees' consideration in early March. Staff were given until late April to decide whether to accept or reject the offers.

Full retirement benefits, regardless of years of service, will be received by 17 staff members who are age 60 as of Dec. 31 or older. They also will receive additional cash incentives based on years of service.

Severance packages for employees younger than 60 include 90 days of wages and benefits.

"The KBC administrative committee wanted to be as generous as possible with these staff members who have given so much to Kentucky Baptists," Chitwood said.

There are 43 full-time staff remaining at the Kentucky Baptist Building in Louisville and eight full-time Baptist campus ministers serving on Kentucky's college campuses.

"This is the first step in a bold journey of change, but it is not without sadness," Chitwood said. "Some of these staff members have served with the KBC for decades, and Kentucky Baptists, myself included, owe them a debt of gratitude for the work they have done in service to Christ."

The following KBC staff members are retiring or resigning:

**Richard Adams**, leadership development department director and regional church strategist, joined the KBC in 1999 and is a member of Crestwood Baptist Church.

**Larry Baker**, missions growth team leader, joined the KBC in 2004 after serving as director of missions for Christian County Baptist Association for more than 12 years. He also is a former International Mission Board missionary to

Ecuador and Peru, and is a member of Highland Baptist Church in Shelbyville.

**Joe Ball**, director of the youth ministry department, joined the KBC in 2004. Previously he served as Baptist campus minister for Hopkinsville Community College and was minister of youth and education at Edgewood Baptist Church in Hopkinsville. He is a member of Cedar Creek Baptist Church in Louisville.

**Jonathan Barron** is the Baptist campus minister at Eastern Kentucky University.

**Ross Bauscher**, evangelism growth team leader, joined the KBC in 2001 having served as pastor of Macedonia Baptist Church in Owensboro and Farmdale Baptist Church in Frankfort. He is a member of Crestwood Baptist Church.

**Billy Compton**, executive associate for Cooperative Program and resources, took on that role in 2008 and previously served in the KBC's evangelism department. He recently was called as pastor of First Baptist Church of Mount Washington.

**Glen Cummins**, regional church strategist, joined the KBC in 2004 after more than 20 years as associate pastor and minister of education at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington.

**Mike James**, regional church strategist and discipleship/assimilation coordinator, joined the KBC in 2007 and currently serves as interim pastor of First Baptist Church of Junction City.

**Bill Noe**, Baptist campus minister at University of Louisville, joined the KBC in 2004. He is a member of Springdale Community Church in Louisville and has accepted a job with LifeWay Christian Resources as events coordinator for "Threads," a LifeWay division focused on young adults and college students.

**Cindy Pelphrey**, campus minister for Owensboro-area schools joined the staff in 1998 and is a member of Curdsville Baptist Church.

**Ron Sivells**, regional church strategist, joined the KBC in 2004 and is a member of Southside Baptist Church in Princeton. Currently he serves as interim

pastor of Nortonville Baptist Church.

**Robert Reeves**, director of communications, joined the KBC in 1998, having previously served with Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children (now Sunrise Children's Services) and Connie Maxwell Children's Home, a ministry of the South Carolina Baptist Convention. He is a member of Lakewood Baptist Church in Louisville.

**Steve Thompson**, assistant executive director, joined the KBC in 1999 after 28 years as a pastor and director of missions for Green Valley Baptist Association. He is a member of Westport Road Baptist Church in Louisville.

**Greg Whitetree**, director of the Freeda Harris Baptist Center in Elkhorn City, joined the KBC staff in 1983 and is pastor of Hellier Missionary Baptist Church. Whitetree and his wife, Alice, will continue to serve at the Freeda Harris Baptist Center as Mission Service Corps missionaries.

**Charles Wilson**, director of the Wheelwright Baptist Center, joined the staff in 1986 and is pastor of First Baptist Church of Wheelwright. He and his wife, Margie, have served as North American Mission Board missionaries for more than 32 years.

Other staff members retiring or resigning include:

**Pat Beverly**, executive office ministry assistant, joined the KBC in 1990 and is a member of West Broadway Baptist Church in Louisville.

**Jenny Byrd**, church development team ministry assistant, joined the KBC in 2001 and is a member of St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville.

**Cheryl Frerman**, Sunday School and discipleship/assimilation ministry assistant, joined the KBC in 2006 and is a member of Phos Community Church in Buckner.

**Robin Gordon**, business services team data entry clerk, joined the KBC in 2000. She is an MSC missionary and a member of Zion Grove Baptist Church in Ekron where her husband, Glen, serves as pastor.

**Wanda Karolyi**, executive office ministry assistant, joined the KBC in 1999 and is a member of Hunsinger Lane Baptist Church in Louisville.

**Carla Purvis**, evangelism growth team ministry assistant, joined the KBC in 1996 and is a member of DeHaven Baptist Church in La Grange where her husband, Tommy, serves as pastor.

**Alice Seymour**, preschool/children's department ministry assistant, joined the KBC in 1993 and is a member of St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville.

**JoAnn Young**, the KBC's main receptionist, joined the staff in 1987. She is a member of Buckner Baptist Church.

Ministry consultants whose contracts will not be renewed as of Aug. 31 include:

**Rebecca Carnell**, literacy missions consultant, joined the KBC in 1998 and is a member of Eubank Baptist Church. She also is an MSC missionary and a former Kentucky Baptist missionary of the year.

**Rod Ellis**, worship & music department consultant, joined the KBC in 2004 and currently serves as worship pastor for Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington.

**Randy Foster**, Baptist Men on Mission consultant, retired last year from the KBC as director of the Baptist Men department, having served since 1997. He is a member of Crestwood Baptist Church.

**Larry Martin**, missions growth team consultant, retired in 2004 as the team leader after nine years of service. He is a member of St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville.

**Roxanne Nanney**, worship and music department consultant, joined the KBC in 1999 and is minister of music and senior adults at First Baptist Church of Brandenburg.

**Tom Smoot**, creative ministries department consultant, joined the KBC in 1974. He retired in 2004 as director of the creative ministries department.

**Jason Stewart**, worship and music department consultant, joined the KBC in 2008 and is minister of music at Parkland Baptist Church in Louisville. (KBC)

## Calvinism: Concerned? Curious? Confused?

I was fielding questions on Calvinism long before I became a state missionary. The topic was frequently discussed in classrooms where I taught, churches

where I served as pastor, and even around the dinner table in my own home. Some may think it strange that so many conversations are generated by the teachings of a theologian now dead for a few centuries, but that is an inadequate understanding of the issue.

These discussions have little to do with a dead theologian, but

much to do with a living faith. They center on the most pressing issues for every human being in every age. These are discussions about the nature of God and His work in the world, about sin and salvation, heaven and hell. To say these discussions are irrelevant may suggest that God is irrelevant.

Thus, I am not surprised that the conversations and debates continue, nor that when Southern Baptists openly express their commitment to a high view of Scripture, the debates have intensified. Instead of debating the gray areas of our postmodern world, we debate the tensions found in the eternal Word.

God's absolute sovereignty and humanity's responsibility and freedom are among those points of tension. For hundreds of years, the Church's finest thinkers, most zealous evangelists and missionaries, and most gifted pastors have addressed this tension and sought to make clear statements about how to understand and reconcile these deep gospel truths. In Baptist circles today, this ongoing struggle is reduced to a simple but loaded question, "So, what do you believe about Calvinism?"

Yesterday I received yet another call from a pastor search committee chairman trying to understand how the issues of Calvinism are relevant to his assignment. The constant chatter, prevailing misunderstandings, and inaccurate caricatures convince me that we need to make intentional and ongoing efforts to educate people on the history, biblical issues, and practical implications of the debate.

You are invited to join me for "Calvinism: Concerned? Curious? Confused?" a KBC conference at Crestwood Baptist Church in Oldham County on Aug. 4.

My goal is for conference attendees to walk away with:

- A better understanding of our historical and current beliefs.
- A greater appreciation for those who hold differing positions on this issue.
- A commitment to work together, speaking and acting with charity.

We will present a balanced perspective and illustrate how four Bible-believing scholars can arrive at rational, but sometimes different positions on these finer points of theology and still work together as Southern Baptists. Presenters include David Dockery, Hershael York, Steve Lemke, and Frank Page.

Visit [www.KyBaptist.org/Calvinism](http://www.KyBaptist.org/Calvinism).

*Paul Chitwood is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.*

## Together We are the KBC



Paul Chitwood

Michelle and I just saw the most beautiful sunset we've ever seen. It was not one over a Myrtle Beach strand. Neither was it over Orlando, nor some other Florida seashore. It was not even one in the Bahamas, or one over Kauai or another Hawaiian isle. As gorgeous as any of those are, the one that we saw May 3 over the Gene Snyder Freeway in Louisville far exceeded them.

As far as sunsets go, the hues weren't exceptionally dramatic or vivid, but it was nonetheless extraordinary because of who was sharing it with me. Yes, we've seen many sunsets before, but this one was different—as precious as life itself.

In the wee hours of Tuesday morning I had heard one of the most terrifying two-word sentences imaginable spoken by an emergency room doctor: "It's life-threatening." But what was said next sent our hearts plummeting through the floor: "You need to call your family."

In every way this is one of the most emotionally draining and hardest editorials I have ever sat down to write; yet, at the same time, it is also one of the most joyous. We are so grateful to those who have been praying for Michelle this past week. Those prayers were heard and felt.

What had seemed like a routine, minor procedure on Monday afternoon for Michelle turned quickly into a nightmarish bout with Diabetic Ketoacidosis. Delirious. Lethargic, barely conscious. Excessively thirsty. Rapid heart rate. Labored gasping. Her system had become dangerously toxic. The symptoms are horrifying to see, and I can't even fathom what it must be like to the person experiencing them. She was in ICU for two days, receiving multiple IVs—eight, nine, perhaps as many as 10 at a time—around the clock. Nurses pricked her finger tips incessantly, monitoring key chemical levels in her blood.

For the first 24 hours, we watched the monitor above her

bed for any little sign of hope. Every nurse who came in the room was peppered with questions for any information about test results. During the next 24, we cheered her agonizingly slow but steady progress toward recovery. By Thursday, we felt the power of countless prayers being uttered by our friends, family, church members, KBC staff members, Western Recorder trustees, and many who we don't even know. And that evening, Michelle sat up in bed, talking coherently again, even smiling and laughing for brief flashes, and starting to eat a little again.

We sat there together, gazing out a hospital window at another serene sunset, hardly noticing the harried freeway traffic below. Sitting on a couch near her bedside with me were our two children,

Laura and Caleb. It was a teary-eyed moment. Thankfully, those tears were of joy and profound relief. On Saturday, we all watched the Kentucky Derby with her at the hospital. "I'll have another"—the name of the winner—has an even more special sound to us. Yes, we'll see another sunset together ... and another ... and another, please!

At the start of the week, I thought I would most likely be writing about the monumental transitions that are happening in the Kentucky Baptist Convention as the Mission Board gathers this week to consider a restructuring plan. But as significant as those changes are for Kentucky Baptist work and as life-altering as the decisions faced by many Mission Board staff members are, the life-threatening events of this past week faced by Michelle and the trauma experienced by my family have put many things in a whole new light.

Happy Mother's Day, Michelle! The prettiest flower is not a rose bud pinned to a lapel this Sunday. It's the one sitting beside me.

## After Thought

By Todd Deaton



## Church tours can become a unique outreach

By Diana Davis

Indianapolis—Summertime's coming, and you might be surprised how many people in your community would enjoy a walking tour of your church building.

Whether it's large or small, your church building is a beacon in your town.

Who would take a church tour? Schedule a special tour for parents as they drop their children off for Vacation Bible School or daycare. Invite people who live near the church to a neighborhood coffee and church tour. Plan a history-focused tour, and send an invitation to the historical society, senior adult center or school history classes. Invite city leaders for a tour and lunch. Consider a tour for guests after the worship service. A downtown church could offer building tours for festival-goers. Post an exterior sign to invite anyone in the community to an annual tour.

To plan a church tour as an outreach, carefully research interesting facts, historic information, architectural details and current statistics. When was the

building built? Is the steeple the highest point in town? Was this the first church in the county? One church showed me a pew in their balcony that supposedly is the longest pew in America. Study your denominational websites. The majority of

the tour, however, should focus on the story of a life-changing God and His impact on lives today, so the tour guide must be knowledgeable about your church's ministries.

Recruit enthusiastic, personable church members as tour guides, and provide a laminated card with key facts for reference. Prepare attractive handouts, such as a site map, church brochure and witnessing tract.

As the guide leads guests through the building, she could point out all the things that occur in that part of the building. She may pause in an attractive area, such as a prayer garden or foyer, to share interesting stats and stories. Tell tour group members how many volunteers it takes to staff the Bible classes and how many people attend Sunday worship. Share about how many mis-

### FRESH IDEAS

## WESTERN Recorder

Box 43969  
Louisville, KY 40253

DR. TODD DEATON  
Editor

DREW NICTER  
News Director

THOMAS C. TOWNSEND  
Marketing & Business Manager

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### Shine Like Stars \* Philippians 2:15

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

For general information or to give news tips, call (502) 489-3535; or email: [news@westernrecorder.org](mailto:news@westernrecorder.org).

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

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sionaries the church supports.

Mention exciting, positive news, such as the new singles Bible class or upcoming mission trips. Tell about ministries, such as your food pantry, businessmen's luncheons or sports leagues. They'll enjoy hearing about church planting projects, staff members, church camps and annual events.

The tour guide must know his audience. If the tour is for daycare parents, then emphasize children's programs, teacher training and safety plans. An older audience may like to be seated for a few minutes in the worship center, while the guide describes the worship service and architectural features. Ask a volunteer to shoot a basketball as you explain how the gym is used in ministry. Introduce staff members as you pass their office.

The church building is the place where God's people gather to worship. The tour guide could conclude the tour by reading Psalm 122:1, praying for the guests, and welcoming them to worship God at your church on Sunday. (BP)

*Diana Davis is an author, speaker and wife of Steve Davis, the North American Mission Board's vice president for the Midwest region.*

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## Discovering the glory of the mundane

By Betsy Owens

Deuteronomy 6:4-9—This Old Testament passage, known to those of the Jewish faith as the “Shema,” was spoken by Moses to the children of Israel as they were about to enter the Promised Land. It is a great passage for parents and contains some of my favorite verses of instruction for teaching and training my children. But don’t stop reading if you are not a mom, because those are not the verses I am focusing on right now, and what I have to say applies to you, too.

The last two sentences describe actions that are not familiar to most of us. If you were to visit the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem you would see Jewish men praying, and you might see some of them wearing phylacteries. Phylacteries are strips of leather that are wound around the arm and hand, and around the head. They are attached to small square leather boxes that contain portions of Scripture. One box would be visible on the forehead, the other would be on the upper arm. These are what the verses above are describing.

“So what does that have to do with me?” you may be thinking. There are days in the life of a mother, especially a mother of preschoolers, that seem filled with tasks that are repeated over and over again. You change diapers, wash dishes, fold laundry, change diapers, wipe runny noses, wash little hands, change diapers, pick up toys, fix meals, clean the bathroom, change diapers, and on and on. You may hear from others that you lead a boring life of an endless repetition of menial tasks. Some days you might even start to believe that.

When I have days like that, I try to remember God’s directive to the Israelites, to bind His Scriptures to their hands. I may not actually see straps wound around my fingers and hands, but I can imagine them there as I use my hands to care for those I love the most, those whom God has entrusted to me to nurture and raise for His glory. I think of Ecclesiastes 9:10a

which tells me, “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might;” and I begin to find glory and even joy in the mundane, as I serve God by serving my family, caring for their most basic needs with my hands.

The Jewish man who wears the straps on his hands sees them as he prays, just as I “see” the straps as I use my hands to serve God. But he does not see the box of Scriptures bound on his forehead. Instead, it is seen by all who look on his face, and is a testimony to his desire to obey God.

In the same way, others may not see a box of verses on my forehead, but what do they see?

What do my children see? Do they see an angry mom, an impatient mom, a sad and frustrated mom? Or do they see a face that reflects the peace and joy that only Jesus can give? Do they see God’s love for them on my face in the midst of a hectic day filled with all the seemingly trivial tasks, endlessly repeated, but so necessary to the care of a family? Now the truth is that while moms are often told that their days contain mindless tasks, the same can be said about almost any job in the world. They all have some element of necessary but mind-numbing requirements. Ask any nurse, teacher, pilot, engineer, bus driver or student.

So for those of you reading this who are not moms, here is your challenge: As you go about your work each day and you use your hands for paperwork, or checklists, or whatever it is that you wish you didn’t have to do, learn to find the joy of serving God even in the repetitious or mundane tasks. Strive to complete them with excellence, “with your might,” for God’s glory. And when those with whom you work look on your face, will they see an angry co-worker, an impatient co-worker, a sad and frustrated co-worker, or will they see a face that reflects the love and joy that only Jesus can give, a face filled with God’s peace, even in the midst of a hectic day? (BP)

*Elizabeth Owens is the mother of four. Her husband is Waylan Owens, dean of the school of church and family ministries at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.*

### FIRST PERSON

## Strengthen bodies, bonds by walking

By David Garrard

I think of retired Baylor professor Dick Couey as our very own Southern Baptist fitness guru. Couey’s books and lectures have motivated many to take better care of our bodies so we can live longer to serve longer. Couey’s influence has been immense. For years, he partnered with our Foreign Mission Board (now IMB). Couey spoke to new missionaries, educating them to the physical demands of mission work and challenging them to take care of their bodies.

I met Couey at Rec Lab and invited him to speak to our church. Recently, one of my friends reminded me of something that he said: “Walk with your kids.” Couey told how he ran and exercised with his daughter, and how that time spent together led to many meaningful conversations. Couey said that when you are out walking with your kids, you are free from distractions that often make it hard to communicate. He promised that if you would walk with your kids, they would open up and talk with you about important stuff.

My friend was reflecting back on what great advice that had been. She told me how the time spent walking and talking with her son, who is graduating from high school this year, had shaped and strengthened their relationship.

I remember making the decision to drive my son to school, instead of sending him on a bus. I figured that over the course of a school year, the 20 minutes we would spend together each morning would provide lots of opportunities for important conversations.

So, take advantage of the warmer weather that has arrived at last. Get outdoors with your child and take a walk. The exercise will strengthen your bodies and the time together will strengthen your relationship.

*Reprinted from WR May 17, 2011. David Garrard is minister to children at St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville.*



## Being Christian affects everything

By Don Spencer

How we handle money reflects our priorities. I believe that’s why the Scripture places so much emphasis on stewardship issues.

Financial planning has been defined as “the predetermined use of financial resources in order to accomplish certain goals and objectives.” As Christians, we can use the same definition with slight modification: “the prayerful, spirit-led, predetermined use of financial resources in order to accomplish certain goals and objectives as part of one’s Christian commitment.”

I briefly offer five perspectives regarding money that we should reflect as Christians. It is one thing to say we believe them; it is another to put them into practice so they reflect our relationship with God.

1. Our possessions are temporal. We all agree that you “can’t take it with you.” Do people see in us an attitude towards our possessions that reflects that belief? (2 Peter 3:10; Luke 12:15b)

2. Our possessions are not a source for pride, power, prestige or conceit. This is the world’s attitude toward money and possessions. We are to be different. (1 Timothy 6:17)

3. God owns it all. We are stewards. We should approach our possessions as managers of something that belongs to someone else, not as owners. (Matthew 25:14-30; Luke 12:16-21)

4. Concern for family financial support is scriptural. 1 Timothy 5:8 states, “If anyone does not provide for his family, ... he has denied the faith and is worse than unbeliever.” To do that in today’s world requires a healthy concern about money.

5. Our stewardship is an outward indicator of an inner spiritual condition. How one handles money tells volumes about their relationship with God.

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



## Having those ‘hard conversations’ with youth

If you’re in youth ministry, the time will come when you have to have a hard conversation. This conversation could be with students, workers, parents, church staff or any combination of the above. The easy thing to do is avoid the conversation and hope it goes away, but the majority of the time it won’t. How you handle tough conversations could have major impact on your ministry. Four areas that these conversations commonly center on are:

**Parents.** “One of the most difficult situations that I have had is when a parent told me, others, and my spouse that her son did not like what we were doing in youth group,” said Steve Coleman, minister of students and families at Richmond First Baptist. According to the student there was “too much Bible study, too much Jesus stuff and all he (the student) wanted to do was play. She said she didn’t want to make him come and participate in the events. This was when he was a freshman in high school. Fast forward to freshman (year) in college and she came to me weeping that her son was disrespectful to her, to women, was failing in college, (he was) on drugs and she didn’t know what to do with him. I prayed with her for understanding, of guidance and wisdom for the situation. Inside I wanted to tell her to roll the clock

about five years and have him plugged into what we were doing in our youth ministry. We were doing things to help them mature, to grow in own their faith, not just play games and have fun all the time. But what can you do?”

**Destructive student behavior.** Issues like cutting, eating disorders, drinking, drug abuse and truancy. These issues may require you not only have tough conversations with the student and their families, but also professional counselors that can help the student and their families through this issue. Cutting, according to Tree Akers, youth minister

at Northside in Elizabethtown “is more common among teens than we as youth ministers would like to acknowledge. But a loving, listening heart goes a long way in working with those students through those situations.”

**Pregnancy of core student.** “One thing that I would say about the core student pregnancy,” Akers said, is that “you acknowledging that they made a mistake. But, you move on and love them through that situation anyway.” He continued, “There was a student in a church I served that got pregnant (granted she was in college). There were folks that thought that we (as church leadership) needed to discipline her or something for her actions. They

### Youth Ministry Corner



Joe Ball

never went to her to talk about it of course. In listening to her testimony since then (and the pregnancy happened about three years ago), she stated that the one thing she so appreciated during that was having a church family that loved her during that time. She acknowledged that it was a bad choice on her part, but it is what it is now. She is actively involved at a church in the town she now lives, and got married shortly there after.”

**Pornography.** At this year’s state evangelism conference, Josh McDowell addressed another hard conversation youth leaders must have. This conversation is on pornography. According to McDowell’s research, 67 percent of all 12-25 year olds visit porn sites regularly and 90 percent of all 8-16 year olds have viewed pornography. But it is not just our students that are viewing porn. His research showed that 64 percent of evangelical pastors visited porn sites last year and he estimated that with youth pastors it was closer to 80 percent. Porn is an epidemic in our society and one that we as churches have been silent about for too long.

These four issues, and others like them, aren’t going to go away if we ignore them. So, we need to prepare ourselves for them, because they are coming our way.

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

## Arctic Christians soon will get first complete Inuit Bible

By Ron Csillag

Toronto—The Bible is by far the most translated book in history. Portions of the Old and New Testaments have been translated into more than 2,500 languages. According to United Bible Societies, the complete Bible has been rendered into 469 tongues as of 2010.

Add Inuktitut to that list.

Later this spring, an entire Bible in Inuktitut, the language of Inuit people and the most widely spoken aboriginal tongue in Canada's Arctic, will be dedicated at an igloo-shaped church in Nunavut, an autonomous region carved out of the Northwest Territories in 1999.

Begun in 1978, the massive task marks the first time in Canada that a translation of the whole Bible was accomplished entirely by native speakers of the language rather than by white missionaries.

It was kick-started by the late Eugene Nida, considered the father of modern biblical translation, whose major contribution to the field was the concept of "functional equivalence." Instead of using literal translations, the idea was to convey meaning by incorporating native culture and idiom into the Bible's story.

Nida's message to non-aboriginal translators about the advantage of native speakers was simple: "You may have learned the language well," recalled Jonah Allooloo, who worked on the Inuktitut project from the start, "but you'll never learn to think the way these people do."

Canada's last census found some 33,000 speakers of Inuktitut, part of the Eskimo-Aleut family of languages. It is spoken in Nunavut, the Northwest Territories and northern Quebec, and almost exclusively north of the tree line.

It was an oral language for thousands of years until an Anglican missionary, Edmund Peck, introduced the syllabic script—in which characters represent syllables—in the late 19th century. Most speakers are Christian.

The full translation follows the completion in 1991 of an Inuktitut New Testament, now in its fifth edition. The Old Testament took so long because Allooloo and the project's translation coordinator, Benjamin Arreak, worked on it for only one or two months of the year.

Inuit Christians longed for a complete Bible, Arreak said. During the translation, "people were saying, 'If there are rough drafts, can I have a printout?'"



**NEW TRANSLATION** Inuktitut Bible translators Jonas Allooloo (left) and Benjamin Arreak (right) flank Hart Wiens, director of scripture translation for the Canadian Bible Society, who holds a copy of the New Testament in Inuktitut. (Photo by Ron Csillag/RNS)

"Our people need the whole word of God to be inspired and strengthened and as a guide for their lives."

But adapting the Old Testament, with its litany of desert vegetation and animals, to an Arctic readership presented challenges.

For one, there are no words in Inuktitut for "goat," "sheep" or "camel." Those had to be written phonetically.

And what do to about the 30-plus types of trees mentioned in the Bible when there are no trees of any kind for hundreds of miles in the Arctic?

"We used a general term for tree," explained Allooloo, "and then explained it in the footnotes." The translation brims with footnotes and explications.

The same word was used for "shepherd" as for someone who tends a dog team. "It's like 'baby sitter,'" Arreak said. Similarly, "pomegranate" is described as a sweet fruit with many seeds.

He and Allooloo agree that the Old Testament was easier to translate than the New because both Jewish and aboriginal traditions stress the oral tradition of storytelling and history. (RNS)

## Rooftop prayer

Continued from page 1

top to pray and falls into a trance. God sends Peter a vision that he later will interpret to mean that the gospel is for Jew and Gentile alike.

"I thought that was pretty neat. Our church has a flat roof, so at that moment I got my ladder ... and climbed up there," Mullins recalled. "It was just the most awesome thing to be on top of the roof and looking out and seeing all the houses. I see how Peter must have felt when he was up there praying. He was one on one with God."

Mullins wanted to share his rooftop experience, so he encouraged the men of Eagle Creek to join him there to lift up their community in prayer. His original plan was to spend the night outside on the flat church roof beginning April 30, but that was derailed by weather. Two days later, the weather had cleared and the pastor was joined by two hearty souls armed with tents and Bibles.

Jason Austin, who climbed the roof May 3 for a second time, arrived for the 6 p.m. prayer time. The men would pray again at midnight, 6 o'clock the next morning and at noon.

"We're just praying that other people will come to God," he said. "Maybe they will see us up here and wonder what's going on. Maybe they will want to come up here with us."

When Sadieville resident Cindy Neal discovered what the men were doing for the community, her eyes filled with tears. "It's so great that people would take the time to do that."

Neal later would be the recipient of their prayers when she went into the church to express her gratitude. The small group of believers gathered in a circle and lifted the woman up in prayer

after learning of some of her struggles. They also gave her a list of phone numbers if she ever needed to talk to someone and invited her to come back to Eagle Creek the following Sunday.

Some members unable to participate in the rooftop prayer vigil found other ways to lend their support.

Church member Brian Reese arrived after the evening prayer, but stuck around until it was time for him to go work at the Toyota plant in Georgetown.

"I'll go to the roof at the plant and pray for the men while they are here," he said. "I pray for the men and their families, the other members of the church, and the community of Sadieville, that they will all get to know Christ." (WR)



### COMMUNITY CONCERN

Greg Mullins (left), pastor of Eagle Creek Baptist Church in Sadieville, leads his wife, Kathy, and church member, Jason Austin, to pray for the town's residents during a rooftop prayer vigil. Mullins and Austin camped out on the roof of the church joining in prayers every six hours. (Photo by Robin Bass)

## CALVINISM: CONCERNED? CURIOUS? CONFUSED?

An objective look at today's most discussed theological issue

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# Soldiers' Bible exhibit: A walk through American history

By Chris Herlinger

**New York**—The simplicity of the exhibit—copies of the Bible resting in glass cases—can be deceptive.

But the Museum of Biblical Art's exhibition, "Finding Comfort in Difficult Times: A Selection of Soldiers' Bibles," is American religious history come alive.

The exhibit showcases three dozen copies of Scriptures published for members of the U.S. Armed Forces from the Civil War onward, from leather-bound, 19th-century copies to contemporary Bibles clothed in camouflage.

But more than the Bibles themselves—on long-term loan from the American Bible Society—the exhibit tells the stories of the men and women who read them, their struggles with hardship, and the place of religion in their lives.

Given the personal histories they contain, "every Scripture in the Rare Bible Collection at MOBIA has its own unique story," said the New York museum's executive director, Ena Heller.

Efforts to supply Bibles to American troops began in the waning years of the American Revolution. Decades later, in 1817, the one-year-old American Bible Society began supplying Bibles to the crew of the frigate USS John Adams.

Eventually, the society became the most prominent, though not the sole, distributor of Bibles to members of the U.S. military. While most of the Bibles have been intended for Protestants, Catholic versions, as well as Jewish Scriptures, also have been provided.

An early challenge was distributing Bibles during the Civil War. The New York-based American Bible Society opted to supply Bibles to both sides of the conflict, but distributing them to Confederate troops proved daunting. Some were intercepted as contraband by Union forces.

During World War I, Gen. John J. Pershing and

President Woodrow Wilson penned messages that accompanied a 1917 copy of the New Testament. In his preface, Wilson, a Presbyterian elder, declared that "the Bible is the word of life" and urged soldiers to read the Scriptures and "find this out for yourselves."

"When you have read the Bible you will know that it is the word of God, because you will have found the key to your own heart, your own happiness and your own duty," Wilson wrote.

Some of the Civil War-era Bibles were found in the pockets or knapsacks of fallen soldiers, who often believed that a Bible carried in a vest pocket could stop bullets, the exhibit notes.

"The penetration power of Civil War muskets, limited as it was, lends a modicum of credibility to this idea," wrote museum curator Liana Lupas in a book that accompanies the exhibition. "World War II bullets, however, could not be stopped so easily."

Perhaps the most revealing comments come from the inscriptions and marks contained in the exhibited Bibles. Some hint of private mysteries and epiphanies: "Given to a soldier and thrown away by him; picked after by another soldier and the means of his conversion," reads one inscription.

A Bible from World War I tells another tale. Chamberlain Bounds, a Marine from Abilene, Texas, carried a copy of the New Testament as he fought in the fields of Flanders.

He met a young woman and inscribed a card to her—the card remained in the Bible that Bounds' family donated to the American Bible Society.

"Dear Jane," Bounds wrote. "No friend will miss you more than I will and none grieve more at thy departure. In parting I give you this little soiled Testament which has been my greatest strength and comfort. Friends may fail you here, loved ones may depart and we seem sorely pressed, but in this book we find a friend who cannot fail and gives Life Eternal."

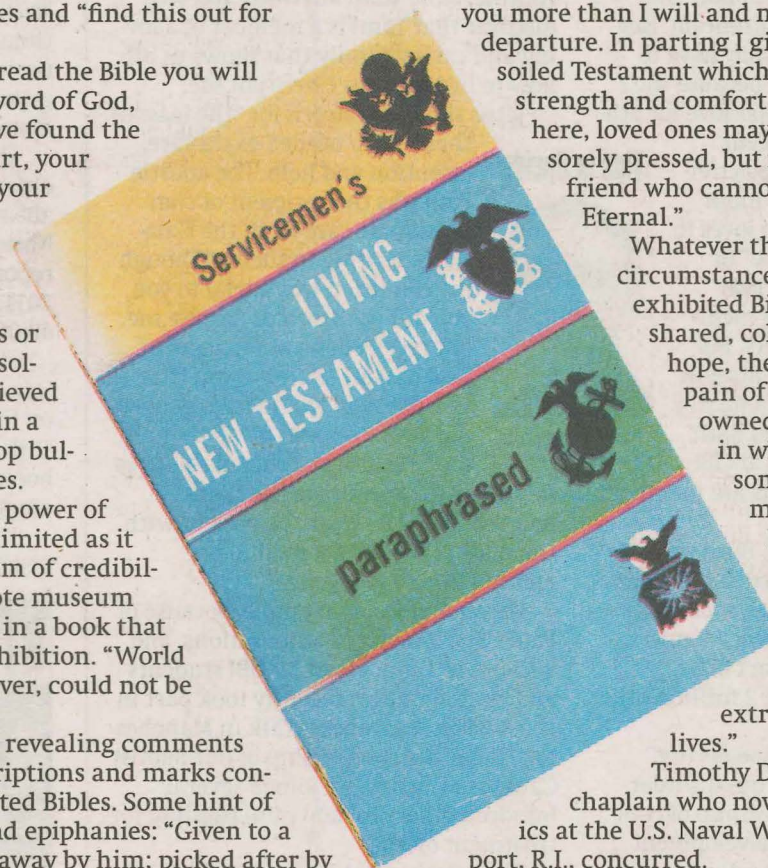
Whatever the individual stories, circumstances and mysteries, the exhibited Bibles also point to a shared, collective history: "The hope, the fear, the regrets, the pain of the soldiers who owned them and used them in what would have been some of the most difficult moments of their lives," Heller said.

"It's about the personal involvement and the role that the Bibles played in ordinary, yet also extraordinary, people's lives."

Timothy Demy, a former naval chaplain who now teaches military ethics at the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, R.I., concurred.

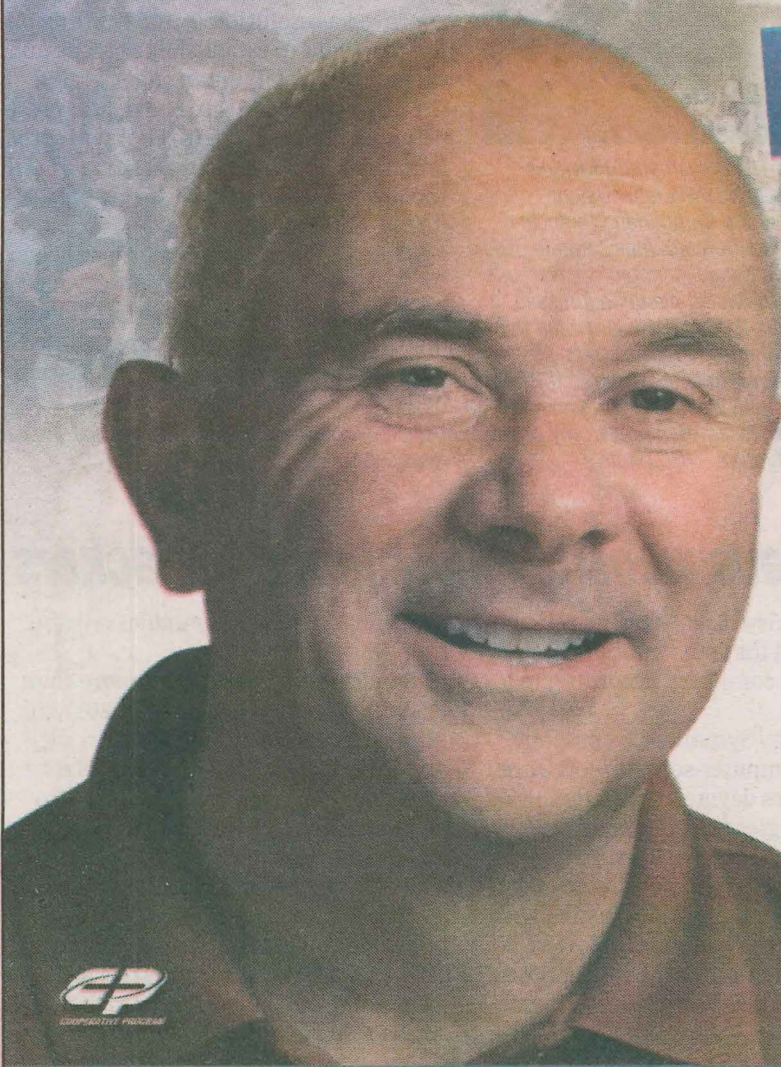
"Throughout the centuries the Bible has been a source of guidance and comfort for those who experience the tragedy, trauma and horror of war," he said. "Its importance can't be overestimated."

The museum's Bible exhibition continues through May 20. (RNS)



## MORE for CHRIST


He must increase... I must decrease.  
John 3:30



**Tommy Morreau** has been a Kentucky Baptist for a long time — a family man, an owner of a successful restaurant, a leader in his church. But Christ called him and his wife, Cindy, to more. Today he's serving on the international mission field in Zambia.

**"It's not about giving up. It's about gaining. And God just wants us to be obedient to what he commands us. And when you really do that, it changes your world."**

How is God calling you to do more for Christ? It may not be a call to the international mission field. It may be to just go across the street.



Watch a video about Tommy at [www.moreforchrist.com](http://www.moreforchrist.com)

## Walking for 'the least of these'

### Students, staff take part in autism walk for dear OBI family member

You would like Tami. She's a tall young lady with beautiful hair that would attract anyone's attention. Her smile sparkles, but you may have to catch it from a distance because she's very shy. She expresses her love for others in obvious and innocent ways. One of her favorite activities is walking with her mom and friends, but she also loves to watch "Wheel of Fortune" or share a favorite story or two.

Tami is an important member of the OBI community, but she is not a student. She attends the local public school in nearby Manchester, even though both her parents have taught at OBI for years and her siblings are members of our student body.

Everyone who knows Tami wishes she was one of our students, but that wouldn't be best for Tami, socially or educationally. She needs academic assistance that OBI doesn't offer, because Tami, like some 2 million other Americans, has autism.

According to AutismSpeaks.org, autism or autism spectrum disorder are "general terms for a group of complex disorders of brain development ... characterized, in varying degrees, by difficulties in social interaction, verbal and nonverbal communication and repetitive behaviors. ... ASD can be associated with intellectual disability, difficulties in motor coordination and attention and physical health issues such as sleep and gastrointestinal disturbances."

When you spend time with Tami, you see some of the more obvious of these qualities. If you talk with her

parents, you will learn more about some of the less-obvious aspects and the steps they have taken to help Tami overcome them with special diet, exercise and routine. More than anything you will discover that Tami is a member of a loving and caring family that shows us all how to live a joyous Christian life.

Jesus showed concern for "the least of

these" who needed extra care, attention and help. The apostle Paul was the recipient of compassionate care from the Galatians, writing to them, "Though my condition was a trial to you, you did not scorn or despise me, but received me as an angel of God. ... For I testify to you that, if possible, you would have gouged out your eyes and given them to me." He also instructed the Thes-

salonians to "encourage the faint-hearted, help the weak, be patient with them all, ... seek to do good to one another and to everyone."

Because of Jesus' example, because of Paul's Spirit-inspired admonitions, and because of Tami, about 50 OBI students and staff members recently took part in the Autism Awareness Walk in Manchester. Under the sponsorship of our Baptist Campus Ministry, we joined several hundred others to help raise funding for treatment of ASD.

The weather was beautiful, the fellowship was good and our school's presence was noted by the community. Tami's family felt supported and expressed their thanks for our active concern. But most importantly, we did what we could (Mark 14:8), and I think Jesus was pleased.

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

## Graduation week

### Seniors enjoy week of festivities as they prepare for graduation day

As I write this article, we have just begun graduation week festivities for our seniors and their families. This is a wonderful week that we look forward to every year, when our faculty and staff get to spend some time with our graduates and their families as they prepare to transition to a new phase of their ministry callings.

Every day of the week has scheduled activities for the seniors that lead up to graduation night. Of course, each of these days include the most important part of our fellowship time together, and that is eating many meals together throughout the week. There is a standard joke around campus that one thing is for sure: You will not go hungry at Clear Creek, because we feed our new students as they come in and then we feed them as they go out as graduates.

Graduation week brings a roller coaster of emotions to our faculty and staff. We are excited for our graduates as they transition to a new phase of ministry. But we also are a little sad as we will miss the students we have grown to love like family over the years.

It is so exciting to watch how God uses them in ministry throughout the years following their time at Clear Creek.

Most of our graduates already are serving in ministry through a local church where God has called them to serve as pastor or on a church staff. Some will continue on with graduate training as they prepare for a calling to the mission field to serve as missionaries. We have a few that still are seeking the Lord's leadership as to where He would have them go. Please pray for these students as they seek God's discernment for their next step.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank you, Kentucky Baptists. Your support of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College through your Cooperative Program giving enables us to fulfill our mission. Thank you for investing in the lives of these graduates and helping to equip them for the ministry to which God has called them. Your support will continue to make a kingdom impact as these graduates serve the Lord all over the world.

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

## Organizers: National Day of Prayer has largest-ever turnout

Washington—Americans observed the National Day of Prayer by gathering at thousands of locations across the country in what was expected to be the largest such observance in its six-decade history.

The number of events for the May 3 observance was more than 35 percent ahead of last year at the same time, the National Day of Prayer Task Force reported days prior to the observance. In 2011, prayer events were held at about 40,000 locations.

The lead observance of the National Day of Prayer again was held at an event on Capitol Hill in Washington, with NDP Task Force chairman Shirley Dobson and honorary chairman David Jeremiah among the speakers.

This year's theme, established by the task force, was "One Nation Under God,"

which is based on Psalm 33:12: "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord."

The event featured more than three hours of worship and prayer for the nation's leaders and the military. But when it came time to pray for the executive branch, Bishop Harry Jackson, a Maryland megachurch pastor, critiqued the Obama administration for not defending the Defense of Marriage Act and urged prayer for "clarity of mission."

The White House did not send a representative to speak at the gathering, but as has been his practice, President Obama issued a proclamation to mark the prayer day.

"On this National Day of Prayer, we give thanks for our democracy that respects the beliefs and protects the religious freedom of all people to pray, worship, or abstain according to the dictates of their conscience," Obama said in his proclamation of the day, which was enacted into law in 1952.

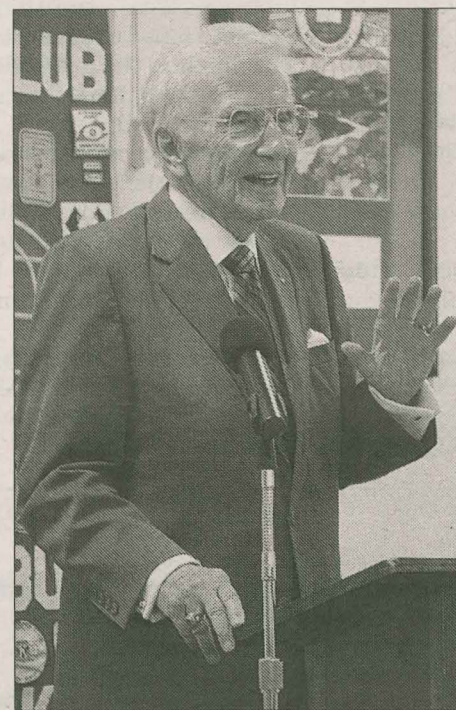
Shin Inouye, a White House spokesman, said the president celebrates "prayer and faith through events like his recent Easter Prayer Breakfast" and "prays daily and deeply appreciates the important role that prayer plays in the lives of millions of Americans."

Jeremiah, senior pastor of Shadow Mountain Community Church in El Cajon, Calif., and founder of Turning Point Radio and Television Ministries, offered the keynote address at the national observance in Washington. He also wrote the national prayer for the event.

The National Day of Prayer has been observed each year since Congress approved a resolution in 1952 calling on the president to establish it as an annual event. President Truman inaugurated the observance the same year, and presidents since have recognized it with proclamations. In 1988, Congress amended the law to set the first Thursday of May for the observance.

The NDP Task Force is a privately funded group that says the observance is for people of all faiths to participate in but the events it organizes are fulfilled "in accordance with its Judeo-Christian beliefs."

Compiled from reporting by Baptist Press and Religion News Service



**DAY OF PRAYER** The Williamsburg Kiwanis Club held its 11th annual National Day of Prayer breakfast at the Cumberland Inn near the University of the Cumberland campus. IGA Chairman Thomas Haggai, a noted speaker and one-time Southern Baptist pastor, addressed the group of about 40 May 3. He lamented the United States' struggles in recent years, attributing them largely to "not talking to the Lord above." "There is only one thing that can save this nation," he stressed. "It's prayer; my prayer, your prayer, everyone's." (UC photo)

## Religious websites most prone to hackers

Mountain View, Calif.—Online religion may be good for your soul but dangerous for your computer, according to a new report.

A report by Symantec, a company that sells computer-security software, rates websites devoted to religion or other ideologies the ones most targeted by malicious hackers.

Infected religious websites averaged 115 threats, most commonly fake anti-virus software, Symantec reported. That was three times the rate of hosting and personal-hosted websites and four-and-a-half times that of pornographic sites.

The safest places for web surfing are sites about sports (average 13 threats

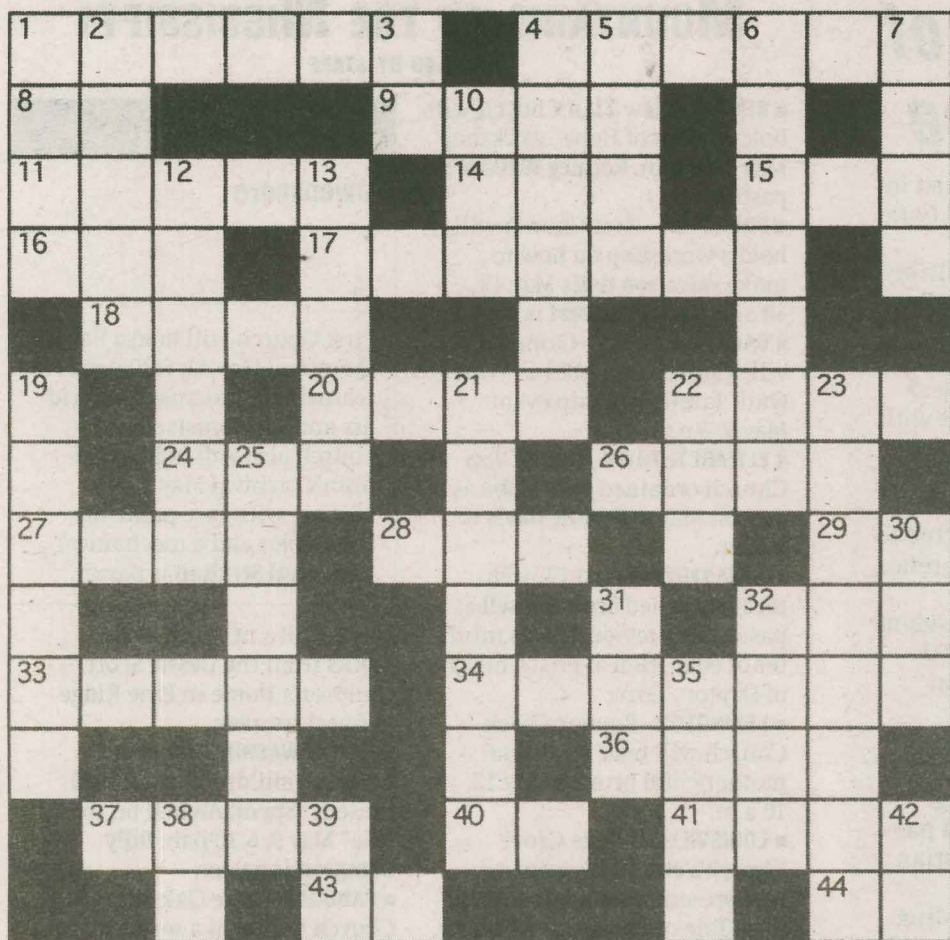
per infected site), automobiles (11) and shopping (9).

Symantec said it blocked more than 5.5 billion malware attacks in 2011, an 81 percent increase over 2010. An average of 82 targeted attacks takes place each day, and users are more likely to be infected by malware placed on a legitimate website than one created by a hacker, the report states.

Mobile phones are becoming increasingly susceptible to malware attacks, with smart phone sales projected to reach 645 million in 2012. The report said 232 million identities were stolen in 2011. The most frequent cause of data breaches was not online but the theft or loss of a computer. (ABP)

## Bible Crosswords

By Michael Landi



### Across

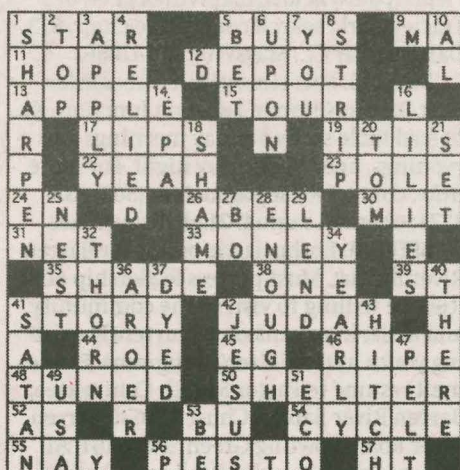
- 1 "There is nothing from without a man, that entering ... can \_\_\_ him" (Mark 7:15)
- 4 "At home in the body, we are \_\_\_ from the Lord" (2 Corinthians 5:6)
- 8 Article
- 9 "\_\_\_ your enemies" (Matthew 5:44)
- 11 "Thy rod and thy \_\_\_ they comfort me" (Psalm 23:4)
- 14 "The captain of his host was Abner, the son of \_\_\_" (1 Samuel 14:50)
- 15 "The Lord hath made bare his holy \_\_\_" (Isaiah 52:10)
- 16 "As a \_\_\_ doth gather her brood" (Luke 13:34)
- 17 Celebrated city of Asia Minor, visited by Paul more than once
- 18 \_\_\_ of Sharon (Song of Solomon 2)
- 20 "The \_\_\_ is not to the swift" (Ecclesiastes 9:11)
- 22 "At the name of Jesus every \_\_\_ should bow" (Philippians 2:10)
- 24 Denial (arch. )
- 26 Part of a castle
- 27 "Who can utter the mighty \_\_\_ of the Lord?" (Psalm 106:2)
- 28 King of Israel who was killed by Zimri (var. , 1 Kings 16)
- 29 Linking verb
- 32 "If any of you lack wisdom, let him \_\_\_ of God" (James 1:5)
- 33 "If thou wilt \_\_\_ into life, keep the commandments" (Matthew 19:17)
- 34 From 1 Corinthians 13: faith, hope, and \_\_\_
- 36 Idol worshiped by Jezebel, among many others
- 37 Hard \_\_\_
- 40 Not B.C.
- 41 "Which he \_\_\_ on us abundantly through Jesus Christ" (Titus 3:6)
- 43 Judah's firstborn (Genesis 38:7)
- 44 Therefore

### Down

- 1 "Lest at any time thou \_\_\_ thy foot against a stone" (Matthew 4:6)
- 2 "When thou prayest, \_\_\_ into thy closet" (Matthew 6:6)
- 3 \_\_\_ Al, airline known for its security measures

- 4 "\_\_\_ not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath" (Romans 12:19)
- 5 Son of Zophah (1 Chronicles 7:36)
- 6 "But let a man \_\_\_ himself" (1 Corinthians 11:28)
- 7 "The tongue can no man \_\_\_" (James 3:8)
- 10 City of Benjamin built or restored by Shamed (1 Chronicles 8:12)
- 12 "Arise, ye princes, and \_\_\_ the shield" (Isaiah 21:5)
- 13 How to describe Nebuchadnezzar's furnace
- 19 "The \_\_\_ for height, and the earth for depth" (Proverbs 25:3)
- 21 "Tarsus, a city in \_\_\_" (Acts 21:39)
- 22 Map info
- 23 "As also in all his \_\_\_, speaking in them of these things" (2 Peter 3:16)
- 25 Past somnolent
- 30 "For the \_\_\_ is red and lowring" (Matthew 16:3)
- 31 Gypsy \_\_\_ (sight in big city)
- 32 Father of Saul's concubine (2 Samuel 3)
- 35 "Be not \_\_\_ with thy mouth" (Ecclesiastes 5:2)
- 38 Neh. is part of this
- 39 Biblical pronoun
- 42 "Of all that Jesus began both to \_\_\_ and teach" (Acts 1:1)

### Last puzzle's solution



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## Exciting future

### Crossings seeks God's will in how to move camp ministry forward

Have you ever felt like life just could not be busier? Well that is exactly how I have felt in recent months. Historically this time of year for us, as we prepare for camp, always brings to bear pressing deadlines and the urgency of last-minute details that only can be done at the last minute.

The coming summer will, by God's grace, again be another record year in attendance, more importantly a record year of people with opportunities to respond to the gospel. However, this year is different from all others.

During the last four months, we have had numerous opportunities to consider expanding the ministry of Crossings. These opportunities literally came from the proverbial "left field." I never would have imagined we would have such significant events unfold as those that have in the last 120 days.

During this time, emotions range from great excitement to humble introspection. As we have considered the paths before us, circumstances such as these reveal our feeble humanity and drives us to realize we always are power-

less to carry ourselves.

We also have thought back to the many examples in our short history in which God has carried us through times we certainly could not carry ourselves. One of my favorite passages in the Bible is Isaiah 46 which vividly points out the attributes of the one true God who carries His people.

How the future exactly will unfold remains a mystery, but I am sure it will be disclosed in a manner that will keep us dependent upon Him. As we proceed through life, the Bible confirms that our purpose is to be conformed to the image of Christ by certainly walking by faith and not sight.

In the midst of all the uncertainties of life, we as Christ followers can be sure that God will carry us, and He will use the circumstances for our ultimate good so we can rest as He carries us.

### Ky. Baptist Assemblies



David Melber

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

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**KBC**  
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**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**
**May**

- 9** Iron Sharpening Iron, Louisville Slugger Field.
- 9-11** Directors of Missions Leadership Event, Rough River Dam State Resort Park, Falls of Rough.
- 14** PLACE Workshop, Anchor Baptist Church, Lexington.
- 15** Iron Sharpening Iron, Grove Marina on Laurel Lake, London.
- 15** PLACE Workshop, Warren Baptist Association office, Bowling Green.
- 17** Iron Sharpening Iron, Jonathan Creek Camp and Conference Center, Hardin.
- 19** The Call Leadership Conference, Parkway Baptist Church, Bardstown.
- 19** WMU State Associational Leadership Training, Elizabethtown Baptist Church.
- 21** Encounter: Women of Worth Lifestyle Evangelism Conference, First Baptist Church, Shelbyville.
- 21-22** Youth Ministers' Spring Retreat, Thomas & King Leadership and Conference Center, Georgetown.
- 22** Encounter: Women of Worth Lifestyle Evangelism Conference, Briensburg Baptist Church, Benton.

## Church planting focus of C'ville Univ. conference

**Louisville**—Campbellsville University will host its "Contagious Churches and Leaders" conference June 11-14 at the school's Louisville Education Center.

This year's theme is "Igniting Church Planting." Ed Stetzer, vice president of research and ministry development for LifeWay Christian Resources, will be the keynote speaker.

Stetzer, who regularly trains pastors and church planters, will guide those attending the conference "through the shifting landscape of church planting in today's culture," noted Jim Woolums, Campbellsville University's director of regional centers and an assistant professor of Christian studies.

"It has been said that the greatest evangelism tool ever devised is the planting of new churches," Woolums said. "Our goal is to equip and encourage church planters whose aim is to win communities to Christ."

Woolums said the event will help church leaders "think outwardly as local churches so we can mobilize for strategy and action."

Stetzer is a noted author and teacher and has served as a pastor and church planter. He also is a contributing editor to Christianity Today

magazine and a columnist for Outreach magazine and Catalyst Monthly.

Stetzer serves as a visiting professor at both Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Ill., and at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He also serves with the church services team at the International Mission Board.

Other speakers expected to address this year's conference are:

■ **Aaron Coe**, vice president of the North American Mission Board's mobilization group.

■ **Jeff Eaton**, founding pastor of Hope Community Church in Lawrenceburg.

■ **Dave Ferguson**, lead pastor of Community Christian Church in Chicago.

■ **Matt Johnson**, founding pastor of The Journey Church in Murray.

■ **James Welch**, senior pastor of Harbor Community Church in New Orleans.

Woolums said he is pleased with the lineup of speakers for this year's conference, the fourth consecutive year Campbellsville University has hosted it.

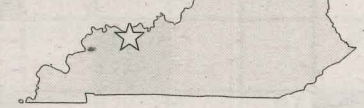
On June 11-12, the sessions will run from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.; on June 13-14, the sessions will run from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. (CU)

## MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

### Spotlight on ...

#### Owensboro



First Church will hold a Bar-B-Q Festival May 11, 6:30 p.m., featuring motocross stunt riders and illusionists. The church also will hold a children's carnival May 12, 10 a.m., with face painting, inflatables and a mechanical bull. **Paul Strahan** is pastor.

May 12, 10 a.m., with **Susie Banks** from the Dessie Scott Children's Home in Pine Ridge as guest speaker.

■ **MOUNT WASHINGTON**—First Church's children's choir will present "Spend Awhile on the Nile" May 9, 6:30 p.m. **Billy Compton** is pastor.

■ **PADUCAH**—Lone Oak First Church will hold a servants' banquet May 15, 6:30 p.m. **Dan Summerlin** is pastor.

■ **PRINCETON**—Southside Church recently called **Mark Williams** as pastor. He previously was pastor of Hawesville Church.

■ **WACO**—Bethlehem Church will hold a Mother's Day brunch May 11. **Mark McGuire** is pastor.

■ **BENTON**—New Zion Church will hold a "Bags of Hope" workshop May 11, 9 a.m. **Rodney Wallace** is pastor.

■ **BRONSTON**—First Church will hold a workshop on how to make salvation dolls May 12, 10 a.m. **Carter Stewart** is pastor.

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Campbellsville Church will hold a "Wipe Out!" family worship event May 9, 6 p.m.

■ **ELIZABETHTOWN**—Round Top Church ordained **Jake Mabe** as a deacon May 6. **Donnie Davis** is pastor.

■ **JAMESTOWN**—First Church recently called **Scott Russell** as pastor. He previously was minister of education at First Church of Dayton, Tenn.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Boone's Creek Church will hold its annual mother/child brunch May 12, 10 a.m.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Maple Grove Church's children's ministry will present its spring musical, "The Tale of Three Trees," May 9, 6:30 p.m. **Ray Hayes** is pastor.

St. Matthews Church will hold a Chrismon party May 12, 10 a.m., to make new ornaments and repair old ones. **Greg Barr** is pastor.

■ **MOUNT STERLING**—Reid Village Church will hold its annual mother/daughter banquet



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**SEEKING:** Part-time associate pastor for Ferguson Baptist Church in Somerset, Ky. For details and job description, contact (606) 679-1690. Send resumé to PO Box 247 Ferguson, KY 42533; or email [fergusonky-bapt@yahoo.com](mailto:fergusonky-bapt@yahoo.com).

**SEEKING:** Part-time worship leader for Long Ridge Baptist Church in Owenton, Ky. We are looking for a kind, loving, Baptist man. Long Ridge is a small, traditional church with Sunday morning attendance average of about 90. For information, call (502) 484-2622. Resumés should be sent to [longridgebaptist@gmail.com](mailto:longridgebaptist@gmail.com).

**SEEKING:** Part-time youth minister in small town for the summer. Could turn into full-time after awhile. Experience with youth a plus. Housing provided, if needed. Please submit a resumé to [scott@jfirstbaptist.com](mailto:scott@jfirstbaptist.com).

**SEEKING:** Pastor for small congregation with a sweet spirit. Knob Lick Baptist Church is part of Tates Creek Baptist Association. We are praying and seeking God's will for a pastor. If interested, please contact search committee chairman Roger Rose, (859) 661-0579.

**SEEKING:** Full-time associate pastor to students at Hebron Baptist Church, Hebron, Ky. Responsible for youth and college/young singles of the church. Minimum requirements are master's degree or pursuit of master's from a Southern Baptist seminary. Email resumé to [HBCYouthSearchTeam@googlegroups.com](mailto:HBCYouthSearchTeam@googlegroups.com).

**SEEKING:** Full-time Southern Baptist pastor for Pioneer Baptist Church in Harrodsburg, Ky. General Sunday attendance: 80-plus; parsonage on property. Send resumé to Pastor Search Committee, Pioneer Baptist Church 260 Sparrow Lane, Harrodsburg, KY 40330; or email to [pioneerbaptistchurchsc@gmail.com](mailto:pioneerbaptistchurchsc@gmail.com). by May 31, 2012.

**SEEKING:** Bivocational pastor for Germantown Baptist Church, a small SBC church in Northeastern Kentucky. Average worship attendance is 20 with plenty of opportunities for growth. Parsonage provided. Looking for motivated people-person who can help us grow and reach our community for Christ. Send resumé to Paul Fields ([paulwfields@maysvilleky.net](mailto:paulwfields@maysvilleky.net)) or Tracie Roark, search committee chair, 813 Oak Fairway Ct., Maysville, KY 41056.

**SEEKING:** Part-time youth director for First Baptist Church, Lebanon Junction, Ky., to lead Bible study Sunday mornings and evenings, and Wednesday night. For more info., contact Rosie Samuels at (502) 833-4721; or email [samu4721@bellsouth.net](mailto:samu4721@bellsouth.net).

**SEEKING:** Enthusiastic pastor for Barren River Baptist. Must possess leadership qualities, be willing to visit in the community, and assist in expansion of currently existing youth and children's programs. Please mail resumé to Pastor Search Committee, Barren River Baptist Church, 5630 Barren River Road, Bowling Green, KY 42101. All resumés must be submitted on or before May 21, 2012.

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**SEEKING:** Senior pastor for Salem Baptist Church (150+ attendance) in rural Western Kentucky. Prefer 7+ years pastoral experience and seminary degree. Send resumé with references, along with video of recent sermon to: Glenn Gordon, Pastor Search, 1145 Pinckneyville Road, Salem, KY 42078; or email: [ggordon@csiweb.com](mailto:ggordon@csiweb.com). Fax: (270) 575-4614.

**SEEKING:** Full-time Southern Baptist pastor for Grace Baptist Church, located 7 miles south of Pikeville at Shelbiana, 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.

# Kidnapping heightens teen's attention to hurting people

By Jennifer Waldrep

**Guatemala City**—Bethani Thomas opened the gate so her mom could pull their car into the guesthouse driveway. Suddenly, she realized that a gun was pointed at her head.

Her mom, International Mission Board missionary Karen Thomas, screamed from the driver's seat as she scuffled with another assailant trying to steal the car. Bethani, then 13, bolted toward the vehicle to try to help.

"Mom, it's gonna be OK. God is with us," Bethani said as she scrambled into the vehicle with the gunman in pursuit.

As Karen tried to fight off the carjacker, he shoved her out the door. With Bethani inside, the thugs peeled away as Karen crumpled onto the concrete.

"They've got my daughter!" Karen screamed.

As the car sped away into the Guatemala City night, two Bible lessons popped into Bethani's head.

"Paul and Job. They had nothing and, yet, they were praising God," Bethani recalled. "Those (stories) were real comforts. I started praying and singing."

Bethani listened closely to the carjackers' conversation. They were cousins. The driver was nervous. The other cousin had been roped into the crime while visiting from New York. He wanted to keep things from escalating.

Struggling to stay calm, Bethani insisted the New Yorker stop cussing, even lecturing him about his involvement in the carjacking.

Meanwhile, Karen and her husband Jeff remembered the phone in Karen's purse in the car. Jeff called the number; the driver answered.

Jeff asked to speak with Bethani. The carjacker refused but briefly held the phone toward her face.

"Dad, I love you!" Bethani called out.



**FAMILY TIME** Bethani Thomas, 18, (fourth from left) enjoys a visit from her family at Mississippi College in Clinton where she is a freshman. The Thomases include (from left) Bethani's brother, Caleb, 16; dad, Jeff; brother, Daniel, 12; Bethani; mom, Karen; and brother, Andrew, 20. Karen and Jeff Thomas are International Mission Board missionaries in Guatemala. (Photos by Robby Followell/IMB)

The realization gripped Jeff: "These might be the last words I hear from her."

Jeff eventually convinced the driver to release Bethani. Within the hour, the cousins dropped her off, unharmed, on the side of a busy thoroughfare. She crossed several lanes of traffic and walked toward a fast food restaurant.

But her nightmare wasn't over.

"They just took my car! I was kidnapped!" she told a guard at the restaurant entrance.

The guard didn't believe her and refused to let her use the phone to call her parents.

Diners inside the restaurant looked askance at her.

"Does anyone even care?" she thought. "Does anyone see what's going on—this huge thing that's happened in my life?"

Bethani noticed a man nearby talking on the phone. He ended his call with "God bless you."

The man saw her and asked if she was all right. Bethani told him what happened.

"What can I do?" he asked.

The man, a pastor, helped Bethani call her dad. "Dad, this is a good man," Bethani began by saying.

Later when she was reunited with her family, "the first thing I saw was my dad trying to run to me," which was especially poignant since her father has muscular dystrophy and has difficulty walking—let alone running.

Bethani was touched, too, when she arrived back at the guesthouse where her family was staying while visiting Guatemala City. Almost all the IMB missionaries in the city had gathered there.

That night "the mission family became my family," Bethani said.

Bethani didn't suffer nightmares or become fearful following the ordeal. Instead, she began to worry about the safety of strangers. The trauma of being held hostage in public with no one "seeing" her sparked a hyper-vigilance for people she passed on the street.

At intersections, Bethani looked inside other cars, trying to discern passengers' safety. "Is she in trouble? ... Can

I help her?" she wondered.

Over time, that vigilance blossomed into a gift. Today, Bethani has a remarkable capacity to "see" other people and then intervene in their lives, according to her family and friends.

For example, after Bethani read a story about sex trafficking, she studied the problem while doing a school paper. She discovered a brothel in the Guatemalan town where her family lives and ministers to a Mayan people group, the Pokomchi, in the nearby highlands.

Wanting to reach out to the prostitutes, Bethani convinced a friend and her friend's mother to help. They took care packages to the girls and were able to talk with them when their supervisors were away. They even invited the girls to lunch.

Bethani carefully observed the prostitutes and discovered, "They were almost like peers. They were just girls. We're the same; we just lead different lives."

Bethani doesn't call the outreach a ministry. "We've got prostitute friends," she says simply.

It's been six years since the kidnapping, and Bethani remains keenly aware of what God has taught her through that trial. A freshman at Mississippi College in Clinton, Miss., she continues to use the Bible lessons her parents instilled in her since early childhood.

Rather than settling into a clique, she looks for lonely people to befriend, especially international students on campus.

"I'm a very observant person. It's something from God," Bethani says. She constantly asks herself, "Is there someone around here who needs help in some way?" (IMB/BP)



**NEW PERSPECTIVE** Missionary kid Bethani Thomas said she sees the world differently after her experience of being kidnapped in Guatemala. "I'm a very observant person," Bethani said. She habitually asks herself, "Is there someone around here who needs help in some way?"



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