

# WESTERN Recorder

October 2, 2012

Shine Like Stars \* Philippians 2:15

Volume 186, Issue 38

## 'The work of God'

### Gospel-driven church yields 7,000 baptisms in 20 years

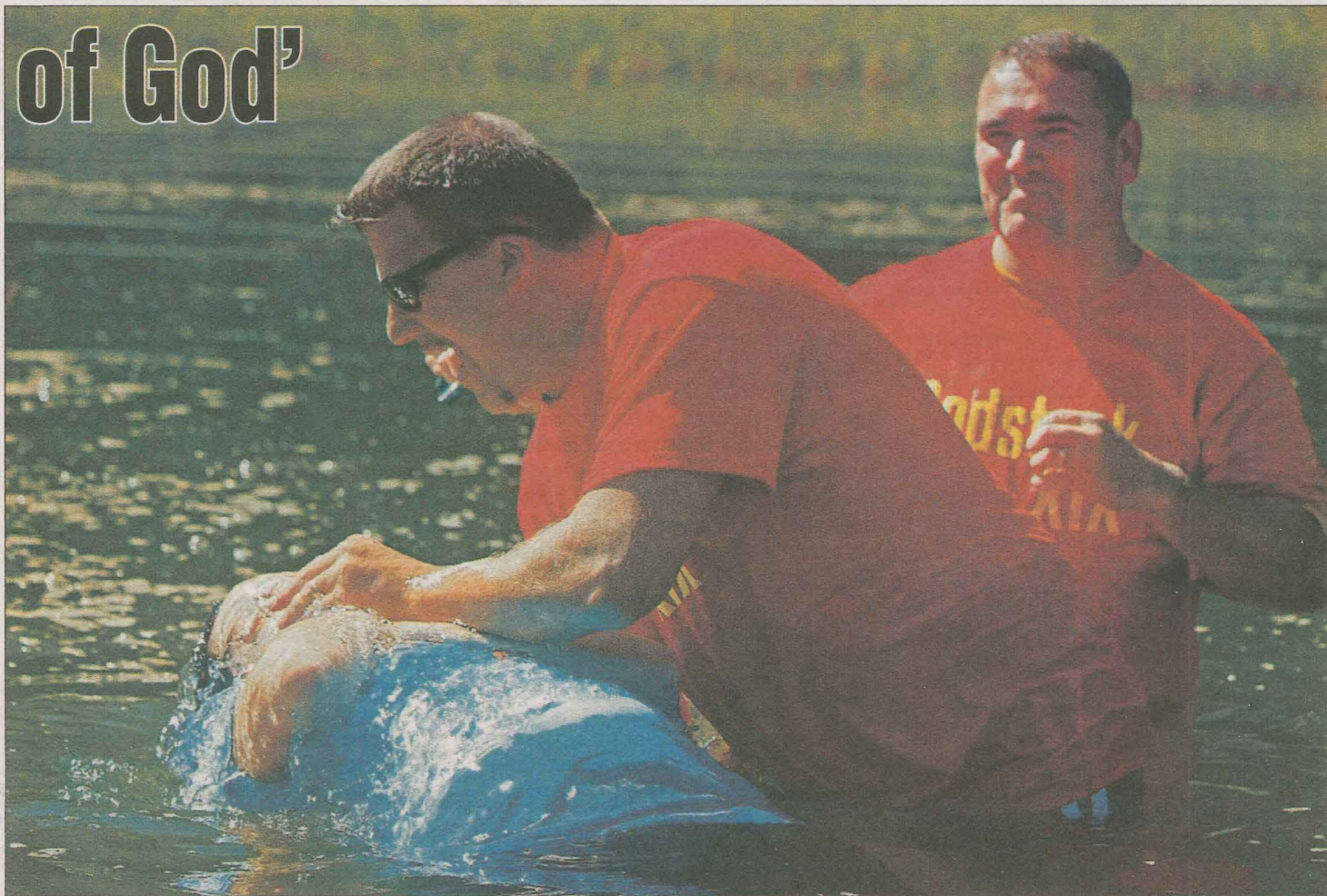
By Robin Cornetel Bass

**Bowling Green**—In a time when the Southern Baptist Convention is reporting declines across the board, Hillvue Heights Church is reaching south central Kentucky's lost in vast numbers. Annually reported baptisms have topped 500 since 2010—propelling the church past the 7,000 mark in August.

How could a church that was advised at one time to close its doors now be so effective at changing lives for Christ? The answer is simple, according to Pastor Steve Ayers: The cross and the resurrection.

"There is a deep passion at Hillvue to ensure that every human being hears the gospel," Ayers said. "We're not as concerned about the building and the carpet and whether we're going to have ladies night out or

□ See Hillvue Heights ... Page 7



Steve Ayers, pastor of Hillvue Heights Church in Bowling Green, baptizes a new believer during Godstock XIX at Barren River Lake. The annual event held at the end of summer gained 84 souls for Christ and brought the number of baptisms under Ayers' leadership to 7,000. In the background is Jamie Ward, co-lead pastor. (Photo by Burt Britt)

## Pastor: Hunger for God brings dying church back to life

By David Roach

**Eubank**—Less than a year ago, Polly Ann Baptist Church was in trouble.

It was pastorless, had declined to 19 people in worship and collected offerings of just \$500 per week.

But that was last year.

Church members and Pastor Terry Holt say nothing short of a supernatural revitalization has occurred within the Lincoln County congregation.

After calling Holt as pastor in January, worship attendance grew to around 70 with weekly offerings of between \$1,200 and \$1,400.

Best of all, Polly Ann has baptized more than 20 new believers this year. By contrast, one in five Kentucky Baptist

churches reported zero baptisms in 2011 according to the Annual Church Profile.

Holt said each of the new believers has demonstrated a growing faithfulness and commitment to the Lord and the Polly Ann Baptist Church.

The church's revival "has nothing to do with Terry Holt," the pastor said. "It has nothing to do with the people down here other than that we love God and we want to work for God. We want to be a part of God's kingdom work, and God responds to that."

When Holt began supply preaching at the church last November, he sensed something special about it. By his third visit, he said he had an intense desire to be there.

□ See Polly Ann Baptist ... Page 3



**STILL GROWING** Terry Holt, pastor of Polly Ann Baptist Church in Eubank, baptizes a new believer in a church member's swimming pool. After dwindling to an average weekly attendance of 19, the Pulaski County congregation now is running out of room at its current location. So far this year, they have baptized 20 people. (Photo courtesy of Polly Ann Baptist Church)

## LifeWay's background check program usage up 100 percent in year

**Nashville, Tenn.**—The number of churches signing up for LifeWay Christian Resources' background check program has increased by 100 percent over the last year.

Jennie Taylor, marketing coordinator in LifeWay's direct marketing department, said the



dramatic increase "shows how serious churches and organizations are about protecting their children, students, employees and congregations."

In 2008, LifeWay endorsed BackgroundChecks.com to offer background screenings for churches and religious organizations. Subscribing through LifeWay enables entities to conduct background screenings for their camp counselors, bus drivers, staff, volunteers and others at discounted prices.

According to records for the program, nearly 2,800 churches and organizations conducted more than 55,000 background checks in the past year. Of those,

□ See Background checks ... Page 2



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Western Recorder 10-2-2012

# KBC workgroup recommends ending Georgetown College partnership

By Todd Deaton

**Louisville**—The Kentucky Baptist Convention's administrative committee has unanimously approved a recommendation to withdraw from the convention's ministry relationship with Georgetown College.

KBC Mission Board members were apprised of the administrative committee's decision last week.

"The Kentucky Baptist Convention and Georgetown College have had a long and fruitful relationship for many, many years," committee chairman Floyd Paris, pastor of Unity Baptist Church in Ashland, told the Western Recorder. But the time has now come, he said, to allow both organizations the freedom to pursue the direction of the Lord's leadership.

"In recent years, Georgetown has sought to expand their ecumenical appeal by increasing the number and influence of non-Baptist board members," Paris added. "During this same period, the KBC has sought to focus more on helping Kentucky Baptists and Kentucky Baptist churches."

The partnership accord between the KBC and Georgetown College was struck in 2005, following a decision by Georgetown's trustees to end its covenant relationship with the KBC in order to establish a self-perpetuating board, rather than accepting trustees appointed by the state convention. At the time, Georgetown officials also cited the college's desire to meet Phi Beta Kappa academic standards and to expand its donor base as reasons.

Major provisions of the partnership agreement specified that Georgetown would elect its own trustees beginning in 2006, and, in turn, the KBC would phase out its \$1.3 million Cooperative Program allocation over a four-year period. The plan also called for 75 percent of the college's trustees to be Kentucky Baptists and for a jointly funded campus ministry position.

In presenting the motion to withdraw, Charles Barnes, chairman of a workgroup formed in 2010 to study Georgetown's relationship with the KBC, noted that withdrawing from the partnership agreement would allow a greater focus of KBC resources on institutions that were covenant partners. He read the following statement from the group's September minutes to the administrative committee at its Sept. 11 meeting:

"In these days of limited resources and a more focused ministry assignment, Kentucky Baptists are choosing to invest Christian education resources, energies and attention on our institutions that are in covenant agreement with the Kentucky Baptist Convention. Therefore the KBC will terminate its ministry partnership with Georgetown College pursuant to the memorandum of understanding between the parties dated Nov. 15, 2005. Upon expiration of the ministry agreement partnership, the KBC will no longer maintain a partnership agreement with Georgetown College, which elected to terminate its covenant agreement with the KBC in 2005. We appreciate the Baptist foundation of Georgetown College and offer our

prayers for their endeavors to serve Christ and His kingdom."

The partnership agreement reached its formal conclusion in 2009 with the phasing out of all CP support by the state convention, and subsequent negotiations between the two organizations have reached an impasse, Barnes observed.

In contention, according to the workgroup's minutes, were issues related to the Baptist Seminary of Kentucky, with ties to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, that is housed on the Georgetown campus; a recent, broader revision of the school's "Christian Identity" statement; and removal of a requirement that 75 percent of the trustees be Kentucky Baptists from university bylaws.

KBC President Adam Greenway affirmed the recommendation.

"While the KBC and Georgetown do enjoy many historical linkages, the passage of time has revealed changing priorities for both," Greenway said. "Georgetown is desirous of broadening its affiliations and identity as a Christian institution, while the KBC is more focused than ever on serving churches and evangelizing the lost.

"Like Paul and Barnabas in Acts 15, I believe the ending of this partnership agreement will allow both the KBC and Georgetown to fully pursue their respective chosen paths," he added.

In response to the KBC's decision, Georgetown President Bill Crouch issued the following statement to the Western Recorder:

"Today, as for 225 years, our existing foundation is grounded in distinctively

Baptist principles. We use that foundation to serve the world in a Christ-like manner. Georgetown College will remain committed to serving Baptist students in the future and will seek other Baptist donors and supporters who will provide scholarship funds to replace the funds that will no longer be available through the Kentucky Baptist Convention to the Baptist students who choose a Georgetown College education."

Members of the KBC Mission Board will take up the matter when they meet next month prior to the KBC annual meeting. If approved, the recommendation will proceed to convention messengers for their consideration. And, upon their approval, a written notice of termination will follow, fulfilling a requirement of a one-year notification.

Under the terms of the current agreement, Georgetown no longer receives any Cooperative Program allocation. However, according to information supplied by the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, based on the previous fiscal year's figures, Georgetown stands to lose approximately \$53,500 of a \$75,500 distribution from endowment funds.

In addition, scholarships awarded to Georgetown students through the foundation for the preceding academic year totaled \$34,800, and the KBF already has approved \$22,800 in awards for the coming academic year.

Georgetown, however, will remain a partnering institution throughout the final year of the agreement, and any scholarship funds will be distributed accordingly during that period. (WR)

## Background checks

Continued from page 1

35 percent (18,753) returned a criminal hit, "which is any kind of incident ranging from minor traffic violations to felony convictions," Taylor pointed out. More than 33 percent of the 18,753 criminal hits, or 12 percent of the overall 55,000 checks, returned records with misdemeanor or felony offenses.

"Leaders from churches and organizations who use LifeWay's background checks program say protecting those God has placed under their care is paramount," Taylor said, noting that churches can conduct due diligence by using the website, as a step in their security and safety policy. With a database of more than 450 million criminal records, BackgroundChecks.com has an extensive collection of public-record sources.

### Even churches are exploited

"In a culture where churches have become the last frontier of sorts for child predators, it is essential that we are diligent to properly screen and train all paid staff and volunteers who serve with preschoolers, children and teens," noted Garrick Conner, discipleship pastor at Park Hill Baptist Church in North Little Rock, Ark.

"While it is true that churches should be places of grace and hope, far too often those positive traits are exploited by those who would seek to harm kids," Conner said. "God entrusts these young ones to us and we will be

accountable for how well we protected them—physically, emotionally and spiritually."

Bill Bartlett, business administrator for Oakview Baptist Church in Okeechobee, Fla., voiced a similar commitment to protecting the children in that congregation.

"We, as church staff, have an obligation to protect the children in our care and those adults who work with children," he said.

"By obtaining a criminal background check annually on every staff member and volunteer who works with children of any age, we feel we are making the correct efforts to do just that—protect our children," Bartlett explained.

At Emmanuel Baptist Fellowship in Frost Proof, Fla., in its first year using the website, the service "speaks highly in our community," pastor's assistant Christie Sitek said. "Families are grateful that we have concern for our children and youth.

"We do everything we can to have a safety net for our ministry," she added.

Taylor said LifeWay's program has made checking criminal backgrounds much more affordable for churches of any size.

Today's unstable economy has made church leaders reluctant to spend money on "extras," Conner noted.

"I would assert that our children and youth are invaluable, and their safety is well worth the small investment," he said.

To find out more, visit [www.LifeWay.com/BackgroundChecks](http://www.LifeWay.com/BackgroundChecks). (LW/BP)

## Hunt, Wynn to discuss revitalizing congregations with Kentucky Baptists

**Bowling Green**—Finding new ways to fuel enthusiasm in sharing the gospel next door and around the world is the focus of a Nov. 1 conference at Living Hope Baptist Church in Bowling Green featuring former Southern Baptist Convention President Johnny Hunt.

Joining Hunt for the church growth and revitalization conference is Larry Wynn, a former North American Mission Board vice president who recently was the named vice president of revitalization for the Georgia Baptist Convention.

"About 75 percent of Kentucky Baptist churches are plateaued or declining," said Alan Witham, a longtime church health consultant with the Kentucky Baptist Convention. "Churches, for the most part, are not impacting and effectively reaching their communities with the gospel."

As pastors of suburban Atlanta churches, Hunt and Wynn have firsthand experience in communicating needs with diverse congregations, and mobilizing them for action, Witham said. Hunt is pastor of First Baptist Church of Woodstock, Ga. Prior to his work at NAMB and the Georgia convention, Wynn was pastor for 33 years of Hebron Baptist Church in Dacula, Ga.

"The world needs healthy, thriving churches," Wynn said. "This conference will provide pastors and other church leaders the tools to infuse new life into

their churches. We must do something to increase the birth rate of new churches and decrease the death rate among existing churches."

Witham, who leads the KBC's team of regional pastoral ministry consultants, said it is easy for church leaders to become overwhelmed with the challenges of ministry.

"There are nearly 3 million people in Kentucky who are spiritually lost," Witham said. "We have so many good churches that maybe just need a little bit of encouragement and insight so they can take that next step in sharing the love of Christ with more of their neighbors. ... Church revitalization is all about identifying those next steps."

The one-day conference is \$30 per person, and each participant will receive a \$15 gift card to any LifeWay Christian Store. Lunch and materials are included in the registration fee.

Register online at [www.NAMB.net/Revitalization](http://www.NAMB.net/Revitalization). For additional information, e-mail [NAMB@Revitalization@NAMB.net](mailto:NAMB@Revitalization@NAMB.net) or call (770) 410-6305. (KBC)



Johnny Hunt



Larry Wynn

# Flooded graveyards among post-Isaac DR call-outs in La.

By Mickey Noah

Braithwaite, La.—Jerry Jones, mass-feeding coordinator for Texas Baptist Men, knows how to run a large-scale food operation during disaster responses. But he was taken aback by a request for volunteers to go to Louisiana's Plaquemines Parish to recover runaway caskets.

Along the Louisiana Gulf Coast—from Braithwaite to New Orleans—it's common local practice to bury loved ones in above-ground crypts because of the area's high water table.

But after above-ground tombs in a pair of cemeteries near Braithwaite and another nearby cemetery were inundated by Hurricane Isaac's flood surge, dozens of caskets—some new, some decades old—simply popped out of the ground. Some flooded-out mausoleums contained as many as four coffins.

"Our initial job was to collect and help load caskets on trucks to be taken to a central processing center where LSU forensic anthropologists and funeral home directors were waiting to ID the displaced remains," Jones said.

"Up front, we had a meeting to discuss what was expected," said Jones, 71, a retired supervisor with Eastman-Kodak in Longview, Texas, who's been involved in Southern Baptist Disaster Relief since 1996.

"We gave any guys who wanted to a chance to drop out, with no questions asked," he said. "But everyone agreed

that the Lord called us to do this ministry, and He would give us the strength and courage to do it. And He did."

Their first task when arriving on the scene—with rain still coming down on displaced, muddy caskets and human remains—was to erect privacy fences with tarps and install a lighted, air-conditioned tent for the LSU forensics team.

"Of course, very few of the remains in the caskets had identification on the bodies, so it was the LSU folks' job to identify them," Jones said.

## Handling grief

As Christians, Jones and his Texas Baptist Men's team showed maximum respect to the dead and to the living. After a day or so, family members of the displaced deceased began showing up to locate their loved ones' remains.

"There were a lot of tears and grief, and we tried to console them as best we could," Jones said. "We had some ex-military personnel who had skills at handling these kinds of situations."

Gibbie McMillan, the Louisiana convention's DR director, said the casket retrieval operation will take another month to six weeks, and now is being operated by Louisiana Baptist volunteers who took over from the Texas Baptists.

"There's no telling how many caskets are in the woods," McMillan said, adding that the state of Louisiana may have to do an aerial reconnaissance mission to find them all. (NAMB/BP)



**IDENTIFICATION PROCESS** Louisiana State University forensic anthropologists and volunteers from Texas Baptist Men (background) process displaced caskets and human remains in Braithwaite, La., the result of recent flooding caused by Hurricane Isaac in Plaquemines Parish. (Photo by Ronald Threadgill/NAMB)

## Polly Ann Baptist

Continued from page 1

God placed a reciprocal feeling in the congregation's heart. It called him as pastor in December and he began Jan. 1. Though not receiving full-time pay, he devoted full-time hours to the work and challenged Polly Ann to exercise more corporate faith.

For instance, Holt said he knew there were many families nearby who did not attend church regularly. A van ministry, he decided, would be a great way to introduce the congregation to the community while giving children the opportunity to learn about Christ through Sunday School.

He asked the congregation to pray for a vehicle specifically to pick up kids—even though no children attended the church at the time.

In response, some members suggested buying a vehicle.

Holt replied, "I don't think you understand. I think God wants to give us a van." Church members "were shocked," he said, because "the normal thing to do is go find a van and buy it."

Nonetheless, they prayed and three months later a sister church gave them a van for free. Soon, 20 children were attending each Sunday.

It was among the first of many answers to prayer.

Another sign of revival came when an unusual number of senior adults in the community were responding to the gospel.

The first was a wealthy man in his 70s who had been witnessed to many times but never responded. His wife, who attended Polly Ann Baptist, told Holt that her husband probably was not saved, and the pastor went to a local restaurant to find him.

"Within an hour the man was out on the front porch praying a sinner's prayer asking the Lord to forgive him of his sins," Holt said.

In the weeks to come, the man's brothers and nephews also committed their lives to Christ.

"There's just been tons of them that

are above 70 years old give their hearts to Christ—people that nobody could reach for years," Holt said.

In August, a team from Florida helped Polly Ann hold Vacation Bible School. Forty-five children attended—a huge jump from the previous year's attendance of eight. Three children professed faith in Christ.

During VBS, Polly Ann's members visited 300 homes in Eubank, extending invitations to church. A month later, the church still was experiencing a steady stream of visitors because of that outreach effort.

Holt said the congregation's revitalization may be attributed to its hunger for God and desire to see Him work.

Even when attendance dwindled, "the people who were left in the church were a people of faith, and they did have an eagerness to serve the Lord," he said, adding that they prayed specifically for revival.

## Church members praying

Norma Jean Combs was among those praying members. A member since 1969, she said she asked God for a year or more to rejuvenate the church, expecting Him to answer.

Combs said the events of recent months have made her more excited about the Lord and credits Holt as a major factor in the turnaround.

"He's actually brought (the church) out of nowhere into just doing great things for God," she said.

Holt said he is confident that the congregation will continue to see God at work. The pastor himself sees signs of great things to come.

With too many people for its present building, the church needs more space. So, Holt has been praying for a 30-foot by 60-foot multi-purpose building.

God hasn't answered yet, but not long ago, a church in South Carolina donated a baptistery to Polly Ann Strangely, it won't fit in their present building.

"Why would God give us baptistery that won't fit in our building unless He's going to give us a building?" the pastor asked. (KBC)

Pastor Terry Holt:

*"It has nothing to do with the people down here other than that we love God and we want to work for God."*



[ BY CHURCHES - FOR CHURCHES,  
TO REACH THE WORLD FOR CHRIST ]

2012 ANNUAL MEETING - TUESDAY, NOV. 13

## WHAT'S NEW THIS YEAR?

- 1 Messenger cards will be available at the registration desk the day of the annual meeting. KBC will NOT mail them in advance.
- 2 The book of reports will be available online Oct. 15.
- 3 There will be two sessions only this year. The meeting will conclude by 6 p.m., EST, Nov. 13.

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## Communion: How close?

Last week I shared excerpts from my contribution to a recent article on communion in SBCLife. That article compared the three

### Together We are the KBC



Paul Chitwood

common positions Baptist churches have taken with regard to who is invited to partake of the Lord's Supper. The positions typically are referred to as "open," "close" and "closed." While I defend the "close communion" position, keep in mind that the Kentucky Baptist Convention is a tent big enough for the various theological positions on communion that fit within

our historic Baptist confessions of faith. Each local church, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit and upon the foundation of God's word, must determine whom they will invite to join them at the table.

Having stated my concerns last week about "open communion," the question that remains to be answered is how close should we make the circle around the Lord's table? Is close close enough or should communion be closed to all who are not members of the local church observing the ordinance?

With regard to New Testament exegesis, I contend that the argument for closed communion is an argument from silence. Nowhere in Scripture are churches told to refuse the Lord's Supper to believers visiting from sister churches. Admittedly, "policing" who participates in the Lord's Supper is easier to do when believers have the intimate knowledge of one another's lives that should characterize meaningful church membership.

Yet, the emphasis in 1 Corinthians 11 is upon believers examining themselves as they come to the table rather than fellow church members determining who is worthy to partake. Paul writes, "Let a person examine himself" (verse 28) and contends, "if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged" (verse 31). These verses in no way preclude church discipline, but do place the onus upon the individual.

Close communion churches outline the basic requirements for participating in the Lord's Supper (as I did in last week's article) and invite those meeting the requirements to participate, asking others to abstain. Adding to those requirements the issue of membership in that local church is not scripturally warranted and would seem to harm the fellowship that members of churches of like faith and practice should be able to enjoy around the Lord's table. I believe communion, then, can and should be enjoyed in the close fellowship of scripturally baptized believers who share a commitment to obeying God's word and trusting fully in God's Son.

No matter what position you take on communion, I pray you come to the table with the joyful knowledge that Christ's broken body and shed blood are a sufficient payment for your redemption. And I pray you enjoy your time there in sweet communion with your brothers and sisters in Christ.

Paul Chitwood is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

## Summit offers keys to making transformational impact

Is your church a "transformational church"?

"What's a transformational church?" you ask. According to leaders of a summit held at Campbellsville University last week, it is a congregation that joins God's mission of sharing the gospel and making disciples. More specifically, it is a congregation where people's lives are being transformed, in which they are becoming more like Christ in their daily walks. And, subsequently, it is one where church members are truly seeking to be on mission, engaging in activities that enable them to have a spiritual impact on their communities.

So, how do you lead your church to be a transformational church? That's what approximately 500 Kentucky Baptists and students hoped to learn from Thom Rainer, president of LifeWay Christian Resources.

As one might expect, the author of such books as "Simple Church" and "Simple Life" certainly has a gift of making complex congregational change simple enough for everyone to grasp and do. Yet, the transformational results can be profound—and Rainer has done the research to back it up.

Making a loose analogy between the rebuilding of the temple in Haggai's day and how we should go about rebuilding the house of God spiritually today, Rainer observed that many pastors, too, may have started with enthusiasm, but since have stopped building. They may have laid a strong foundation, but soon ran into criticism, a family struggle, or burned out, and they gave up hope and quit growing.

Drawing upon a LifeWay Research study of more than 4,000 churches, Rainer brought a much-needed message of hope and encouragement to struggling pastors and plateaued congregations: God is not done with you!

In the "Transformational Church" study, researchers attempted to change the typical church growth scorecard from counting "nickels and noses" to include what is happening in the lives of those who attend. Researchers dared to ask: "Is his or her life being changed?" They saw three key ways in which God is transforming churches and the hearts and souls of people today: 1) a missionary mentality of going into the community, instead of expecting people to come to the church; 2) relational intentionality in getting to know unchurched people through engaging in activities to share the gospel more effectively; and 3) a prayerful dependence

on God's guidance.

"Burst out of your holy huddles and go out into a world of lostness," Rainer urged. In almost every transformational church, researchers found someone, or a group, who said, "I'm going to love the community, ... embrace the community, ... and see the community as my mission field," he noted. Imagine what could happen in our communities if our churches spent the majority of their time, energy and resources on undertaking ways to enable other people to see the love of Christ at work through them.

### After Thought

By Todd Deaton



What was the single-most important finding? No shocker here: If there is one thing we can do to see transformation take place in people's lives, it is encouraging them to read the Bible daily, Rainer said.

Simple, yes. Yet, still profound. Those who actually read their Bibles daily, they found, are far more likely to share their faith, engage in longer times of prayer, give more to missions, and walk with Christ in humility.

And the second most important finding? Move as many people as possible into small groups. Also not a novel insight, but yet so profound. To illustrate what happens when one participates in a small group, Rainer divided those in Ransdell Chapel into two categories: "the sheep," or those who attended two or more times each month, and "the other sheep" (which certainly beats being called "goats"). Eighty-three percent of the sheep were likely to be active in church after five years, while only 16 percent of the other sheep were likely to be active. Participating in a small group, the research shows, made a 5-to-1 difference in assimilation into the life of the church, encouraged a deeper study of the Bible, fostered a sense of fellowship and solidified relationships, led to greater ministry taking place, and potentially increased evangelism and Great Commission engagement.

While these insights may sound basic in nature, the transformational impact on people's lives, churches and communities can be profound. Best of all, any church can do it. We do seem to have a "discipleship deficit" today, as several of the keynote speakers observed, and summits such as this are sorely needed and greatly appreciated by church leaders who want to see lives and communities changed by the gospel.

## Pastor appreciation day ideas for teens & children

By Diana Davis

He's their pastor, too. As your church demonstrates love on "Pastor Appreciation Day," parents and teachers can provide opportunities for children to honor him. Kids could make a banner, sign a T-shirt, sing a thank-you song, draw a card, or try one of these meaningful, fresh ideas:

**Rap the pastor.** Download a rap app, write some pastor appreciation words or poetry, and it creates an instant rap. Perform it for him.

**Photo gift.** Print a large photo of the children or teens posed on the playground holding "Love My Pastor" signs.

**Surprise office décor.** Use Post-it notes to write dozens of things you appreciate about the pastor. With permission, decorate his office walls with them.

### Fresh Ideas



Diana Davis

**Lawn art.** Teens make giant signs with words of appreciation for their pastor. Artfully stake the signs on the church or pastor's lawn, add colorful helium balloons and put a signed thank-you card at the door. Send a quality photo of the display to the local paper.

**Poetry book.** All teens or children write a "pastor appreciation" poem. It can be long, short, serious or funny. Collect the poems in a binder.

**Art wall.** Cover a wall in the church with signed works of "appreciation art"

by youth and kids. Preschoolers color a pastor appreciation page. Collect the notes in a binder.

**Herds of Nerds.** Each child brings one piece of the pastor's favorite candy, such as a box of Nerds or a jawbreaker. At an appropriate time during worship, kids can bring their gift for the pastor to a basket at the front.

**Video thanks.** Teens create a one-minute video clip to play during worship. Invite all children and youth to surround the pastor as an older teen leads a thanksgiving prayer.

Help your kids express sincere appreciation to their pastor this month.

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

## WESTERN Recorder

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

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# Looking for a church home? Consider joining a small congregation

By Joshua Hitchcock

In the era of the megachurch where bigger seems better, who would give a second thought to joining and committing to a small, traditional church that doesn't have an exciting praise team and whose church building may smell like grandma's perfume? It doesn't sound all that appealing and exciting, but I believe there are many benefits to joining a small church.

**You will know the people.** In a large church, you may have a small group with which you regularly meet, but you could easily attend for 20 years and not meet all the people. In a small church, you know what's going on in each other's lives. In a large church, you can slip in and out unnoticed and without accountability. In a small church, that's not the case. People will know when you are not with them, which offers a level of accountability. Also, by knowing everyone, they know you, and if something is going on, they can minister to you.

**The pastor knows you.** In a small church, the pastor knows who you are. He knows you by name and probably knows the names of your dogs and cats. In a large church, the pastor may not really have a relationship with you. If you are in the hospital, he may not be able to see you and send a deacon instead. That's not really a problem, but if you'd like the pastor to visit, that's more likely to happen in a small church.

## FIRST PERSON

**The small church needs you.** The small church often has a small budget, and could use more people tithing to support the work of its ministry. In a small church, your tithe makes a big impact on kingdom purposes. Also, you might be a decent musician, but not good enough to make the cut in being on the worship team in a big church on Sunday mornings, and your skills might give you an opportunity to lead worship in the small church. Small churches often have plenty of opportunities to serve, and not enough people. The same 10 people do everything. You could be useful in serving in the small church, whereas the big church may get along just fine if you aren't there. Your presence in a small church is much more significant.

**The small church has committed members.** People tend to look down on small churches because they don't admit new members every week or keep the baptisms coming. We have a lady in our church who has not missed a beat since the 1930s. I don't know anyone else who has that level of commitment anywhere. These committed people are valuable to the kingdom of God, and you can learn from them and serve alongside them.

**Jesus loves small churches (and big churches, too, of course).** Most of the time we like to go to the Book of Acts and see how the church grew by the thousands by the preaching of the apostles—and it is incredible. But isn't it interesting that Jesus didn't start a megachurch?

He started with 12 ordinary men; that's pretty small. A small congregation can do extraordinary things. It was these 12 guys who, filled with the Holy Spirit, multiplied into thousands.

**The pastor could use your help.** In a small church, the pastor doesn't have the luxury of multiple staff members. Maybe you are a retired minister, a college student called to ministry, a seminary student training for ministry, or simply a Christian who desires to serve. You might not be able to get a paid staff position nor desire one, but the pastor could use you as "lay leaders" to oversee various aspects of ministry. Maybe the church can't pay an outreach or missions pastor, but you are passionate about missions and can help lead the church to be more involved in missions. Perhaps the church can't pay a secretary, but you have time to give to send out letters to members and volunteer your time. Maybe the church can't pay someone with a master's degree in music to lead worship, but you are gifted and passionate and can lead the church to the next level of worship. The pastor could use your help and gifts in leading the church.

If you are searching for a church where you can use your gifts and serve, consider joining a small church and help them make an impact for the kingdom of God.

*Joshua Hitchcock is pastor of Mount Moriah Baptist Church in Boston, Ky. Editor's note: Roughly three-fourths of Kentucky Baptist churches have less than 300 members, and 1,300 of those have fewer than 100 members.*

## Confused by investment jargon?

Many people are confused by some of the basic financial terms used in investing. Here is an explanation of several of them:

**Stock**—Stock represents ownership in a company. If you buy a share of ABC Company, you now own a small part of that company and have become a stockholder of it. If ABC does well, you might earn dividends, which are payments a company makes to stockholders based on its profits. If the company's earnings grow, your stock will grow in value. You then can sell your stock for more than you paid for it. That is a capital gain. But if the company loses money, you will too. There are no guarantees.

**Bond**—When you invest in a bond, you are lending money to a company, a city, a school district, a church, the government, etc. Bonds are formal IOUs that represent a contractual obligation to repay the amount borrowed (called the principal or face value) by a certain time (the maturity date). In addition, you will be paid interest payments. High-quality bonds are considered a safe investment, but, like stocks, there are no guarantees.

**Money market fund**—The money market is not one market, but several individual markets that hold the country's cash reserves in various forms. Banks, businesses and government agencies use the money market for short-term borrowing. When you invest in a money market fund, you'll be paid interest on your money. In addition, your principal is relatively safe.

**Mutual fund**—A mutual fund is an investment company that uses a pool of money from many investors to purchase dozens, even hundreds, of different stocks, bonds and money market instruments. When you buy a share of a mutual fund, you buy a slice of the fund's total investment. Like individual stocks and bonds, mutual funds do not guarantee you'll make money. However, the risk of losing money is reduced for two reasons. First, mutual funds invest in many different companies, so chances are, at least some of them will do well over time. That's called diversification. Second, each mutual fund is managed by experienced professionals. There are more than 10,000 mutual funds. Some focus on stocks, others on bonds, money market or combinations thereof. The variety makes it possible to find a fund that matches your investment objectives and tolerance for risk.

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



## Teaching your children to love God's word

By Elizabeth Owens

One of our goals for our children is that they grow up with a love for God's word, the Bible.

Since I want my children to grow up to be men and women of God who are complete and thoroughly equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17), they need to learn to receive their guidance for living and serving from the Bible.

David expresses in Psalm 19 his love for and need of God's word, and he only had the Torah, the first five books of the Bible. How blessed we are to live in a time and place when we can easily obtain all 66 books of the Bible in our own language. We can do no less than share it with our children, teaching them by our examples and our words to learn it, love it and depend on it for direction. From the womb until the time they are young adults, there are things parents can do to help their children know and love Scripture.

### In the womb

Did you know that children can hear and begin to learn before they are born? "Secret Life of the Unborn Child" by Thomas Verny shows that unborn babies respond to and are soothed by the music of Vivaldi and Mozart, but when Beethoven, Brahms or rock music are played, they become restless. By about the sixth month of pregnancy, a baby also begins to recognize his parents' voices and speech patterns. What better thing could he begin to learn than the cadences of Scripture read by his parents?

### As an infant

Scripture reading should continue after the child is born. While he will not understand the words, he can learn to associate the

reading of God's word with being held in a quiet and comforting way. What do we read to an infant? All of the Bible is "profitable," but you might focus on Psalms and Proverbs, which have a rhythm and a pattern to them. It is never too early to begin to read to your children about heroes of the faith.

### As a toddler

As your child grows and becomes mobile, you will discover it is hard to keep him in one place for a long reading. That is all right. Reading does not have to be long; it just has to be regular. Let your child know you are reading from a very special book. Then pick a two- or three-verse passage to read to him in a happy, dramatic way, and identify three or four words or direct quotes that you can repeat with him to emphasize what you have read.

### As a preschooler

Preschoolers love stories, and by the time they are around 2 years old, you should be reading them the stories in the Bible. Will they understand every word? No, but you are there to explain the hard words and ideas on their level. Read to them slowly, clearly and with a voice that rises and falls with the crises in the stories. Be dramatic; it will hold their attention and help them remember the details.

After you have read him a story, repeat it with him to help him learn it. You might let him act it out. Stuffed animals and some chairs pulled together

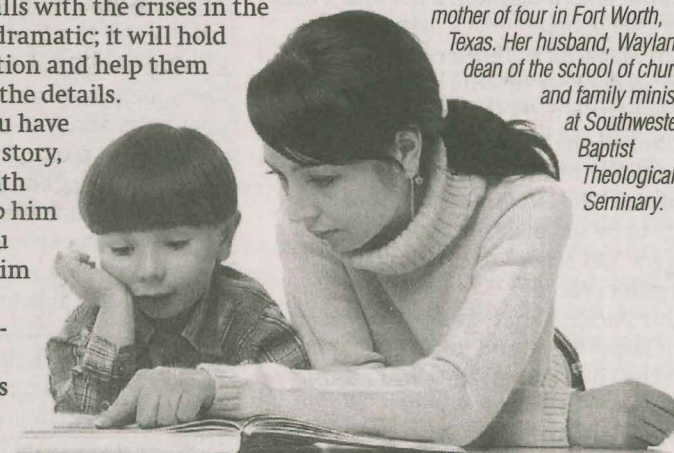
make a great Noah's ark. A boat in a bathtub or a backyard wading pool can recreate the story of Jesus calming the sea. You could draw a picture. You could eat some foods mentioned in the story. Make the story real for your child, and talk to him about how God protects, provides or leads and about how the people in the story pray, trust or obey.

### As an elementary schooler

By the time your child is reading at about a second- or third-grade level he should begin to read the Bible for himself. If he wants to try to read his Bible sooner than that, by all means, let him; be available to help, and be thankful. Help your child develop a reading plan and encourage him in it. Talk about what he is reading. Help him with the hard words and thoughts. Challenge him to read it completely.

Your child will value what you value when he is young. For that to stick as he grows up, he needs to see that your love for God's word is real and that it helps you in your relationships and choices. Let him see how God's word guides you as you make decisions, receive comfort and face challenges. Show him the word can do the same for him. (BP)

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



# Mud houses complicate Baptist flood recovery in west Africa

By Tess Rivers

**Niamey, Niger**—Floodwater destroys, dissolves, stains, reeks, stagnates and displaces. For those with homes built of mud and livelihoods based on farming, the devastation—and the time it takes to rebuild—multiplies exponentially.

This post-flooding assessment by Baptist Global Response partners in Niger followed the distribution of some 300 hygiene and living kits to families in two communities—Sarando and Yonkoto—after the Niger River reached its highest levels in 90 years, stemming from heavy annual rains in August.

According to reports, rising floodwaters in the west African country have killed 81 people and destroyed 37,000 homes, affecting nearly half the country's already impoverished communities.

In the village of Sarando, water destroyed nearly 95 percent of houses, granaries and other mud-block structures, BGR partner Gabe Manor said.

"It was like walking through a village of wax houses," he said. "Houses and other mud structures had melted and flowed away. You could not have sculpted a more pathetic cityscape."

"It's like building a house out of Play-Doh and then squishing it," BGR partner Shadrach Black agreed. "We saw tin roofs lying on top of mounds of mud that used to be family homes."

The Baptist Global Response team worked with representatives from the U.N. and other aid organizations to "fill the gaps" in smaller or harder-to-reach communities. This level of cooperation assured that organizations were not duplicating efforts and ultimately allowed aid to reach more hurting people, said Mark Hatfield, who directs BGR's work in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The kits contained mosquito nets, mats, blankets, buckets, soap, a kettle, sugar and tea. The BGR team purchased the items in local markets, allowing relief to get to affected families more quickly than importing them from other countries.

But the goal wasn't just to provide relief quickly. The distribution was not a "come-and-get-and-go-away event," Manor said.

"Our goal was that this distribution would be relational," he noted. "We wanted to boost the work of Christians in the area and profile the work of the local church."

While villagers in both communities were grateful, both Manor and Black admitted their own struggles with the inadequacy of their efforts in the face of such great need.

"What does a blanket, a pot and a mat really give people?" Black asked.

Tini Magarie, a Southern Baptist leader in another heavily affected village, put the efforts in perspective. Magarie thanked the team for providing what he described in the local language as "readiness." He explained that receiving things to be set aside for later use helps villagers "get ready" to rebuild once floodwaters recede.

"Our buckets, mats and blankets represent hope—hope and 'readiness' that when the time comes, they will rebuild their lives," Black said. (BGR/BP)

*\*Name changed for security reasons*



**HELP FROM SOUTHERN BAPTISTS** Relief supplies were distributed in two west African communities after the Niger River in August reached its highest levels in 90 years, killing 81 people and destroying 37,000 homes. Nearly half the country's already impoverished communities were affected. "Our goal was that this distribution would be relational," one Baptist Global Response partner in the area said. "We wanted to boost the work of Christians in the area and profile the work of the local church." (BGR photo)

## Terrified Pakistani Christians receive Baptist food aid

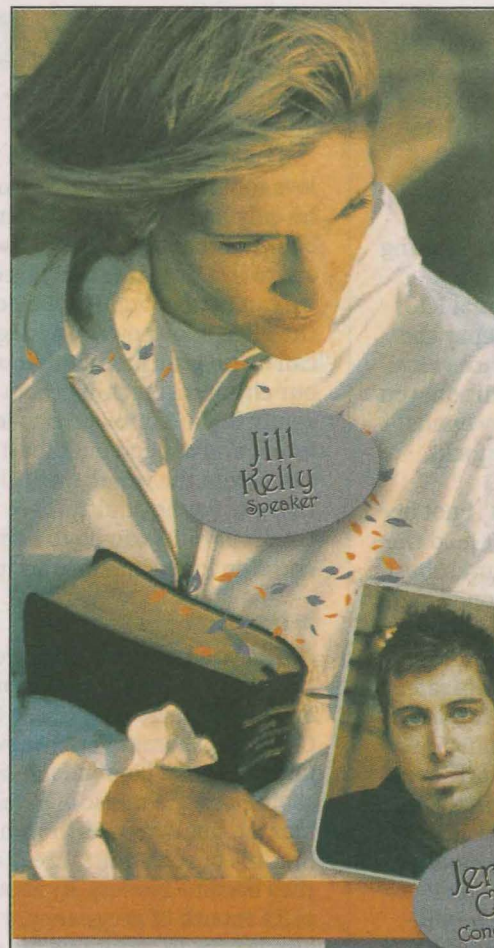
**Islamabad, Pakistan**—Pakistani Christians, driven from their homes when a mentally handicapped girl was accused of blasphemy, were assisted in their distress with resources provided by the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund.

Rimsha Masih has since been released on bail and Khalid Chisti, the Muslim cleric who accused her, was arrested when witnesses alleged he framed the girl by placing pages from the Muslim holy book in the trash bag she had been carrying.

When the girl originally was accused on Aug. 16, an angry crowd gathered outside the police station where she was being held, according to news reports. The cleric who accused the girl reportedly called for the massacre of Christians in the neighborhood. Terrified, many Christians fled their homes.

As many as 600 families evacuated from the neighborhood, most of them taking refuge with Christians elsewhere in Islamabad.

Baptist Global Response partners became aware of the displaced believers and made plans to provide them with meals. Drawing from the World Hunger Fund, they were able to prepare a meal a day for approximately 300 people over 10 days. As the meals were served, Christian leaders were able to pray with the traumatized families and share Scriptures that helped them understand how to live out Jesus' command to love their enemies. (BGR/BP)



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**TAKING STOCK** Steve Ayers, pastor of Hillvue Heights Church, baptizes a few of the 84 new believers who took part in Godstock XIX this summer (pictured above and at right). (Photos by Burt Britt)

## Hillvue Heights surpasses 7,000 baptisms over two decades

*Continued from page 1*

puppet shows. We're concerned about people hearing the gospel."

According to the SBC records, Hillvue Heights has consistently ranked among the top 100 churches in recent baptism statistics. Between 2000 and 2005, the Bowling Green church ranged from 39th in adult baptisms in 2003 to as high as 18th in 2005. Hillvue also is ranked among the SBC leaders in youth and children baptisms. Each time, it has been listed alongside churches in much larger metropolitan areas.

During the past associational year, 554 baptisms were recorded between Sept. 1, 2011 and Aug. 31, 2012—with 84 taking place during an outdoor event called Godstock at Barren River Lake. Hillvue Heights may be headed toward breaking another record with more than 100 immersions in the month of September alone.

"I'm humbled and so grateful that the Holy Spirit has drawn that many people," Ayers said. "But I'm not surprised by the lostness."

### Focused on the lost

It is because of the lostness that Ayers said he remains singularly focused on telling and re-telling the salvation message.

"Our people have the confidence that if they bring a lost friend to church, they are going to hear the gospel no matter what service they come to, no matter who is preaching," said Jamie Ward, Hillvue Heights' co-lead pastor.

Despite the thousands of souls saved during his 21 years at the church and the nearly 4,000 who attend services each week, Ayers said about 90 percent of the population in the region around Hillvue Heights still are considered unchurched. Therefore, he noted, it is imperative that all believers share what Christ is doing in their lives.

"Steve Ayers is probably one of the more dynamic preachers you'll ever meet," Ward said, "but he would never take credit for these 7,000 baptisms. For one, it's the work of God, and two, God had to use a whole lot more people than Steve."

Even before they leave the baptismal, new believers are urged—much like the Great Commission instructs them—to tell their story to a lost family member, friend or coworker.

"You really see the fruit in our church because there's a high expectation to share the gospel," Ward said. "A 40-year-old man that doesn't go to church doesn't typically get led to Christ by a pastor. It's going to take another 40-year-old man who is sharing his faith and living it out."

Of the 554 baptisms performed at Hillvue during the past 12 months, 320 (nearly 60 percent) were adults 18 years or older. The largest group of new believers are between 30-59. The smallest group is children under age 9.

Burt Britt, a Hillvue Heights member since 1992, arrived shortly after Ayers

became pastor and has witnessed the church foster a culture of evangelistic responsibility.

"There have been people whose lives have seen a complete transformation because of how Hillvue stresses the gospel," Britt said. "It makes you have this compelling urge to go out and do exactly that, especially in the times we are living in."

### Members baptizing

Ward said another aspect that increased the evangelism temperature was when the church began allowing the members to baptize the people whom they led to Christ. "It's very common to see a father or mother baptize their children," he noted. "It's very powerful."

Ward said there have been far-reaching effects after a layperson led someone to Christ. To illustrate his point, Ward talked about when a female parole officer baptized one of her male parolees.

"The next three Sundays, he was in the baptismal baptizing his family members," Ward said—first his mom and sister, then his wife and finally, one of his children. A year or so later, Ward said a friend of the family came to the saving knowledge of Christ and also was baptized at Hillvue.



The church makes a point of reaching out to the broken, Ward said. He estimated that about 20 percent of the people touched by the ministry are in some stage of recovery. Some are suffering from addictions or shattered marriages; others are tortured by pain of past abuse. Regardless, Ward said, "we believe the gospel is going to heal them. The word doesn't return void."

Two decades ago, Hillvue Heights was \$500,000 in debt, had about 30 regular attendees and was on the verge of dissolving. Today, weekly attendance totals are near 4,000 with a mid-week service and three Sunday morning services. Hillvue's multi-ethnic congregation and visitors can choose from more than 60 weekly Bible studies, many of which are not age specific so that young and old congregants can fellowship and learn from each other.

"Hillvue was that typical church that hadn't baptized anyone for years," Ayers said, "but this church laid down everything it had been. It surrendered it all, the music style, the facilities, the constitution and bylaws. They surrendered all that and said, 'OK, God, we're done trying to be what we want to be. Now bring us to what You want us to be.'" (WR)

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## An 'extraordinary opportunity,' part 1

### Oneida student recalls blessing of participating in scholar program

As we have noted before in this column, OBI has some of the best and brightest high school students in the state of Kentucky, if not the nation and world. What follows is the first of a two-part, first-person report by Anna Davidson, an OBI senior, on her participation in one of Kentucky's special summer programs for outstanding students.

"For five weeks this summer, I was blessed with the extraordinary opportunity to attend Kentucky's Governor's Scholars Program at Centre College. This program, according to its website, 'strives to enhance Kentucky's next generation of civic and economic leaders and to create models of educational excellence for teachers and students.'

"I was a bit nervous and hesitant about attending because I'd never been away from home for more than a couple of nights and had other priorities for this summer. Eventually, after much prayer, realizing that I could work toward my summer goals while at GSP, and understanding that attending this program was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that would not only prepare me academically for my future but also improve my interpersonal skills, I decided to attend.

"Things started off rather unpleasantly for me when I incurred a stress fracture in my foot a week before GSP. I was put in an air cast and instructed by my physician to use crutches as much as possible for six weeks. Adapting to the crutches was not an easy task, and the first day of the program was very stressful because of the seemingly vast amounts of space to cover on Centre's campus, in addition to moving into a

new living environment, saying good bye to family and being amongst unfamiliar, albeit friendly, faces.

"Thankfully, God saw me through all of this and blessed me with the wonderful Centre GSP staff who, from the very start, were very friendly and willing to

drive me anywhere I needed to go on a golf cart or help me in any other way they could. Also, before long, the faces on campus began to be more familiar. I developed some good friendships with girls in my residence hall, and everywhere I went, my fellow scholars were more than willing to carry stuff or open the door for me, which helped me more than probably any of

them will ever realize.

"In addition to meeting a lot of wonderful and thoughtful scholars on campus, I also had some first-class professors who really challenged all their students, including me, to be informed citizens of not only the United States, but also of the world, and to reason out the tough issues and decide where we stood based on our knowledge and personal convictions, not based on anyone else's.

"In my focus area, international relations, my professor Salome Nnoromole had selected the topic of global food production for us to study. We learned where our food comes from, how it's made and the effects of this food on the humans that consume it. We also discussed why some parts of the world produce a lot of food and consume a lot more than they need while in other areas, there is a capability to produce enough for those people to be satisfied, but it just doesn't happen."

*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

## A new source of support

### Once adversaries, student, sheriff now see Christ's effect on her life

I recently encountered student Rebekah Harris, from Erwin, Tenn., right after she had received a "mailbox blessing" like many of our students routinely get. Rebekah's excitement was not necessarily about the size of the gift, but about who sent it to her. The gift was from the sheriff of Rebekah's hometown. Someone who once was her adversary now was sending her support as she prepared for ministry.

"I started out with Kent Harris back in 2002 when he got elected sheriff," Rebekah said. "I was lost and was a very bad drug addict and alcoholic. He eventually ended up arresting me several times for a range of different charges. I ended up with a really bad reputation in my home county. ... Needless to say, I wasn't highly favored with them, and I sure didn't care anything for the law at that time.

"But then I got miraculously saved on March 19, 2004," she said. "I surrendered to the ministry in July 2007, and by January 2008, while still on probation, Kent

Harris started letting me go in and do Bible studies with the female inmates at the jail.

"Since God changed my life, Kent has sent several messages to me on Facebook encouraging me. I even had the privilege of sharing my testimony at his church," Rebekah continued. "But when I opened up my mailbox and it had a check in there for \$25 from him, it meant more to me than if someone had sent me a \$1,000 check.

"I used to hate Ken, along with everyone and everything that had to do with the law," Rebekah said. "But now I have several friends in law enforcement. ... My prayer is that they

will truly see the change in my life and tell those they arrest week in and week out that it doesn't have to be like that. A lot of people just give up hope on the addicts and alcoholics. I just want people to know that no matter what your background is, there is always hope in Jesus Christ."

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

#### Clear Creek Chronicle



Donnie Fox



**CALL TO PRAYER** Students at Kingfisher High School, northwest of Oklahoma City, gathered Sept. 26 for the 22nd annual See You at the Pole global day of student prayer. Students shared photos, including this one, on Facebook and Twitter.

## Prayerful teenagers call upon God to move at their schools

By Erin Roach

**San Diego**—About a million teenagers at schools across the nation and the world gathered last week for the 22nd annual See You at the Pole global day of student prayer.

This year students used Twitter and Facebook to communicate their involvement, with student Claire Fridey tweeting, "One of my favorite days of the school year is #seeyouatthepole! Prayer is powerful!" and a user named Israel tweeting, "#seeyouatthepole was a nice way to kick off the day."

See You at the Pole, which began in 1990 among a small group of teenagers in Burleson, Texas, is "simply a prayer rally where students meet at the school flagpole before school to lift up their friends, families, teachers, school and nation to God," according to the event's website. The rallies are initiated, organized and led entirely by students.

"SYATP helps launch teenagers and college students—in unity—to minister to their peers," said Daryl Nuss, executive director of the National Network of Youth Ministries, which coordinates promotion of the event.

"See You at the Pole empowers students in prayer at the beginning of the school year to take leadership at their schools," he added. "What better way is there to begin a semester than to pray for their friends, community and nation?"

## Judge allows cheerleaders' Bible banners

**Kountze, Texas**—Cheerleaders in Texas can continue to use banners with Bible verses after a court granted them a temporary restraining order against their school district.

A judge in Hardin County, Texas, issued the order on Sept. 20 after parents filed suit on behalf of the cheerleaders. It orders the Kountze Independent School District to "cease and desist" from preventing high school cheerleaders from displaying the large paper banners,

Norman Flowers, student evangelism and mobilization specialist for the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, said See You at the Pole is going strong in that state.

"We're seeing a continued movement of God among our students as they're gathering at their flagpoles," Flowers said. "From a handful of students in some of our small towns to hundreds of students at other schools, we're seeing an amazing movement of students gathering to pray that God would move on their campus.

"Last year we had over 10,000 students at these rallies with over 1,000 decisions for Christ," he recalled.

About three years ago, the convention knew of 25 such SYATP evening rallies, he noted, so the presence is growing.

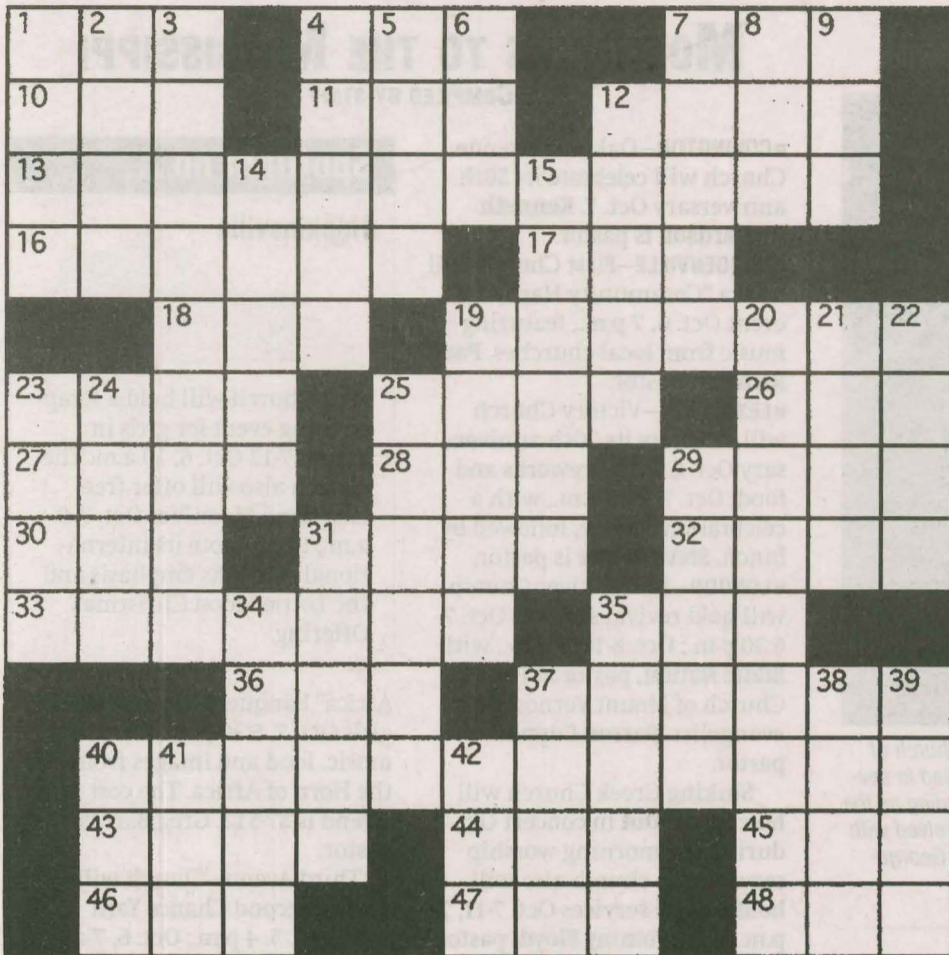
Doug Clark of the National Network of Youth Ministers said it is difficult to count the number of See You at the Pole participants because the event is so widespread, but he had heard from participants in Australia, Canada, Germany, South Korea, Guatemala and Puerto Rico—in addition to countless reports across the United States.

Clark estimated that 1 million or more students took part in See You at the Pole this year. This year's theme was "Awaken" based on Ephesians 3:14-21, where the Apostle Paul urges believers to "grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ." (BP)

through which football players run at the start of games. A hearing on the case has been set for Oct. 4.

A lawyer from the Wisconsin-based Freedom from Religion Foundation sent a letter to the district saying the cheerleaders' tradition was "inappropriate and unconstitutional."

Superintendent Kevin Weldon had stopped the use of the banners after consulting with a legal adviser at the Texas Association of School Boards. (RNS)



**Bible Crosswords**

By Janet Adkins

**Across**

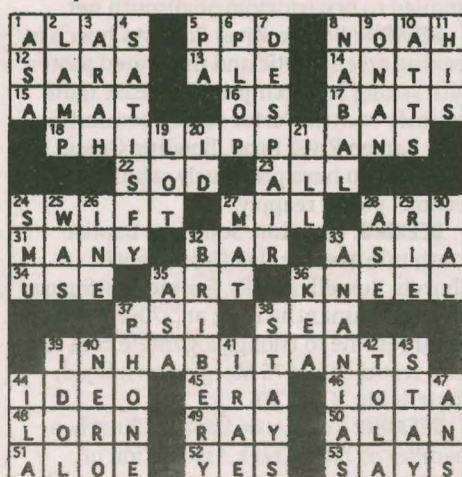
- 1 Don't just sit there
- 4 "I do \_\_\_ my bow in the cloud" (Genesis 9:13)
- 7 Mightier than a machete?
- 10 Vast desert region (abbr.)
- 11 Of a certain Indochinese kingdom
- 12 Enthusiasm
- 13 "For whom he did foreknow, he also did \_\_\_" (Romans 8:29)
- 16 "Wound for wound, \_\_\_ for \_\_\_" (clue repeated) (Exodus 21:25)
- 17 Drunkard
- 18 Shows or does (suffix)
- 19 Epitome of wisdom
- 23 \_\_\_ au lait
- 25 Chums
- 26 Corrida cheer
- 27 "They lavish gold ... hire a goldsmith; and he maketh it \_\_\_" (2 words, Isaiah 46:6)
- 28 "They of Persia and of \_\_\_ ... were in thine army" (Ezekiel 27:10)
- 29 \_\_\_ code
- 30 "Lest I \_\_\_ mine own inheritance" (Ruth 4:6)
- 31 Ancient meeting place, in a city
- 32 Organ component
- 33 Omen
- 35 The Great \_\_\_
- 36 Half of 104, to Hadrian
- 37 "Ye were \_\_\_ with that holy Spirit of promise" (Ephesians 1:13)
- 40 "Ye are complete in him, which is the head of all \_\_\_ and power" (Colossians 2:10)
- 43 Helps
- 44 College entrance requirement (abbr.)
- 45 Three, in Turin
- 46 Not (Scot.)
- 47 Atlas, for one (abbr., pl.)
- 48 Well-spoken affirmative

**Down**

- 1 Cleopatra's instrument of death, and others
- 2 "They laid the ark of the Lord upon the \_\_\_" (1 Samuel 6:11)
- 3 "\_\_\_ shall a man leave his father and his mother" (Genesis 2:24)
- 4 Drifted off
- 5 "Rise up, ye women that are at \_\_\_" (Isaiah 32:9)
- 6 Young one
- 7 Greek philosopher
- 8 Put on the feedbag
- 9 Compass dir.
- 12 Certain chemical compounds

- 14 Went out on the town
- 15 Tristran and \_\_\_\_, of the medieval legend
- 19 Prepare certain dishes
- 20 "For we ... do groan ... that \_\_\_ might be swallowed up of life" (2 Corinthians 5:4)
- 21 Oil (comb. form)
- 22 \_\_\_ tide
- 23 Become one with nature?
- 24 "For this \_\_\_ is mount Sinai in Arabia" (Galatians 4:25)
- 25 Of a sandy beach
- 29 "Set me as \_\_\_ upon thine heart" (2 words, Song of Solomon 8:6)
- 31 "When her masters saw that the hope of their \_\_\_ was gone" (Acts 16:19)
- 34 Playground perennial
- 35 "Ye love the uppermost \_\_\_ in the synagogues" (Luke 11:43)
- 37 "He \_\_\_ on the ground, and made clay" (John 9:6)
- 38 To be (Fr.)
- 39 Colors
- 40 \_\_\_ fried
- 41 Long, narrow inlet
- 42 Doctrine or theory

**Last puzzle's solution**



**Passing on digital assets**

**In digital age, user IDs, passwords almost as important as living will**

What will happen to your social media, email and other online accounts that might have financial or sentimental value after you are gone? Unlike my parents' and grandparents' situations, my children and grandchildren will not find my photo albums in an old chest in the basement or attic. Instead they will find my chest of photo albums on my computer—that is, if I have given them instructions about how to find them before I am gone.

**Ky. Baptist Foundation**



Barry Allen

Digital assets include digital files which are stored on your computer, cell phone, a separate disc or on the internet. They include online accounts that require one to enter a user name and password to access them. Digital files can be critical for identifying your assets, debts, heirs and friends. They likely will have either monetary or sentimental value.

As you save more and more documents, photographs and other matters in a digital format, the importance of planning for passing on these digital assets to your heirs becomes increasingly more important.

Therefore, we encourage you to contact your estate planning attorney to discuss including provisions regarding

your digital assets in your power of attorney, will and revocable living trust. Create a reference guide that includes a list of every site on which you have an online presence, along with your user names and passwords. Update it regularly as

you add new sites and make changes in your passwords.

For additional information on this subject, visit the website, [www.thedigitalbeyond.com](http://www.thedigitalbeyond.com). Other online resources related to the storage of digital assets and information about online accounts are:

**Legacy Locker:** [www.legacylocker.com](http://www.legacylocker.com)

**Entrusted:** [www.entrusted.com](http://www.entrusted.com)

**Asset Lock:** [www.assetlock.net](http://www.assetlock.net)

**My Wonderful Life:** [www.mywonderfullife.com](http://www.mywonderfullife.com)

**SecureSafe:** [www.securesafe.com](http://www.securesafe.com)

Dealing with digital assets after someone dies has become a huge challenge for both families and the legal system in every state. As Christians, dealing with digital assets is part of that estate stewardship responsibility about which the apostle Paul advised and warned in 1 Timothy 5:8. Therefore, let us not "deny the faith," and be "worse than an unbeliever."

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

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## October

- 4-6 Ministers in Transition Conference, Louisville.  
27 Women's Ministry State Leadership Conference, Kentucky Baptist Building, Louisville.

## November

- 1 Church Revitalization Conference, Living Hope Baptist Church, Bowling Green.  
2-4 Engage International Student Conference, Cave City Convention Center.  
9-11 All-State Junior High Choir, Kentucky Baptist Building, Louisville.  
10 GA Jam, St. Matthews Baptist Church, Louisville.  
11 Kentucky Baptist Men's Chorale and Wind Orchestra Concert, First Baptist Church, Paris.  
12 KBC Mission Board, Immanuel Baptist Church, Lexington.  
12 Kentucky Baptist Music Conference, TBD.  
12 Kentucky Baptist Pastors' Conference, Immanuel Baptist Church, Lexington.  
13 KBC Annual Meeting, Immanuel Baptist Church, Lexington.  
13 Kentucky Baptist Men's Chorale and Wind Orchestra Concert, Immanuel Baptist Church, Lexington.

## Pianist retiring



Betty Jean Chatham, who has served as an accompanist at First Baptist Church of Shelbyville for 55 years, has announced her retirement. Chatham has served in several different roles in the church's music ministry through the years, including as the pianist since 2000. In addition to her church duties, she also has been involved with performances in the Shelbyville community, as well as at her alma mater, Georgetown College. (Photo courtesy of First Baptist, Shelbyville)

## Sunday School streak reaches 67 years

Hodgenville—When Ed Fultz showed up for Sunday School at Nolynn Baptist Church on Aug. 26, it wasn't just another class—it marked his 67th year of attendance without missing a Sunday.

Fultz, a longtime member of the Hodgenville church, has not missed a single Sunday School class since 1945, according to Nolynn Baptist Pastor George Smith.

The impressive streak began when Fultz was 3 years old, Smith said. Fultz's mother began taking him and his sister with her to Nolynn Baptist each Sunday. The matriarch herself was a

faithful Sunday School attendee before she passed away, having not missed a class in 34 years.



Ed Fultz

"What an example set by this mother," Smith said. "This is also a testimony of being blessed by good health and of determination and dedication, for on those times when there were no services at Nolynn, Ed went to a neighboring church.

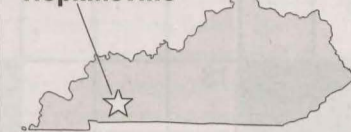
"Corporate Bible study is so valuable," the pastor added. "Yet many, if not most, people are missing this great opportunity to take their children and to go themselves as Mrs. Fultz did." (WR)

## MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

### Spotlight on ...

#### Hopkinsville



First Church will hold a scrapbooking event for girls in grades 7-12 Oct. 6, 10 a.m. The church also will offer free lattes and MoonPies Oct. 7, 9 a.m., to promote its international missions emphasis and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

Africa" banquet for women and girls Oct. 7, 5:30 p.m., featuring music, food and images from the Horn of Africa. The cost to attend is \$7-\$12. Greg Barr is pastor.

Third Avenue Church will host a "Second Chance Yard Sale" Oct. 5, 4 p.m.; Oct. 6, 7 a.m., to benefit Jefferson Street Baptist Center. Greg Gilbert is pastor.

■ RICHMOND—Butch Tanner recently resigned as pastor of Red House Church. The church has called George Yates, director of SonC.A.R.E. Ministries in Springfield, as transitional pastor.

■ SOMERSET—First Church will host Greater Vision in concert Oct. 7, 6 p.m. For more information, call (606) 678-5106. French Harmon is pastor.

■ WILLIAMSBURG—First Church will hold a Red Cross disaster shelter training session Oct. 7, 5 p.m. Ande Myers is pastor.

■ WINCHESTER—Ephesus Church will hold a high-attendance Sunday School "Harvest Day" Oct. 7. Todd Rader is pastor.

■ COVINGTON—Oakland Avenue Church will celebrate its 50th anniversary Oct. 7. Kenneth Richardson is pastor.

■ HODGENVILLE—First Church will hold a "Community Harmony" event Oct. 6, 7 p.m., featuring music from local churches. Paul Richey is pastor.

■ LEXINGTON—Victory Church will celebrate its 20th anniversary Oct. 6 with fireworks and food; Oct. 7, 9:30 a.m., with a celebration service, followed by lunch. Steve Moore is pastor.

■ LONDON—Laurel River Church will hold revival services Oct. 7, 6:30 p.m.; Oct. 8-10, 7 p.m., with Eddie Nation, pastor at First Church of Mount Vernon, as evangelist. Darren Cupp is pastor.

Sinking Creek Church will host Soul'd Out in concert Oct. 7 during the morning worship service. The church also will hold revival services Oct. 7-11, 7 p.m., with Tommy Floyd, pastor of Oak Grove Church in Monticello, as evangelist. Mike Seals is pastor.

■ LOUISVILLE—Green Acres Church will hold its "almost annual" fall picnic and cookout Oct. 6, 4 p.m. Phil Ellis is pastor.

Hurstbourne Church will host international missionary Ron Copeland as guest speaker Oct. 7. Copeland serves in Kenya. Mike O'Neal is pastor.

Okolona Church will hold a "Diamond Jubilee" celebration service and dinner on the grounds Oct. 7, 10:45 a.m., to honor Pastor John Carter's 60 years and Minister of Music Mike Ferrell's 47 years of service to the church.

St. Matthews Church will hold an "Out of the Horn of

## CLASSIFIED ADS

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**FOR SALE:** Burgundy heather padded pews; 18 are 10 feet long, three are 8 feet long; good condition; \$2,000. Call (606) 205-5255.

**SEEKING:** Safe Harbor Baptist Church in Georgetown, Ky., is seeking a part-time minister of music; traditional worship, open to blend. Call (502) 570-5851 or email [safeharborpastor@gmail.com](mailto:safeharborpastor@gmail.com).

**SEEKING:** Allansville Baptist is searching for a part-time minister of youth (10-12 hrs./week). This includes evangelism, Bible study, creative ministry and discipleship. Please mail resumé to: Allansville Baptist Church, Attn: Youth search committee, P.O. Box 242, Winchester, KY 40392, or send an email to [allanbptst@aol.com](mailto:allanbptst@aol.com).

**SEEKING:** Pike County, Ky., church seeking youth/children's program minister. Please send resumé or inquiries to [timcpa77@gmail.com](mailto:timcpa77@gmail.com).

**SEEKING:** Full-time Southern Baptist pastor for Dallasburg Baptist Church in Wheatley, Ky. If interested, please send resumé to Dallasburg Baptist Church, Attn:

Kristy Jury, 4760 Kentucky 227, Wheatley, KY 40359; resúmes may be emailed to [kjury@outlook.com](mailto:kjury@outlook.com). Deadline for resúmes is Nov. 4.

**SEEKING:** First Baptist Church Taylorsville, Ky., seeking a part-time minister of music. Send resumé to [paul@daugherty-bodyshop.com](mailto:paul@daugherty-bodyshop.com), call (502) 905-4897, or to FBC, Attn: search committee, 115 W. Main, Taylorsville, KY 40071.

**SEEKING:** Stanford Baptist Church, Stanford, Ky., is seeking a full-time pastor. Contact information is available on our website, [www.stanfordbaptist.com](http://www.stanfordbaptist.com).

**SEEKING:** First Baptist Church of Somerset, Ky., is accepting applicants for minister to families. Qualified candidates should possess a degree from a Baptist college or seminary. Apply by sending a resumé and cover letter to French Harmon, First Baptist Church of Somerset, 128 N. Main Street, Somerset, KY 42501, or electronically to [fharmon@fbcsomerset.org](mailto:fharmon@fbcsomerset.org).

**SEEKING:** Southern Heights Baptist Church, a member of Elkhorn Baptist Association, is seeking a full-time pastor. Send resumé to Southern Heights Baptist Church, Attn: Pastor selection committee, 3408 Clays Mill Road, Lexington, KY 40503.

**SEEKING:** Buck Creek Baptist Church of McLean County is seeking to hire a full-time youth director. We have an outstanding youth program for grades 6-12. The average attendance of our youth program at this time is 60-75 on Wednesday nights. Maybe God is calling you to be part of this wonderful opportunity. A full job description is available upon request. Resúmes may be mailed to the attention of the youth director search committee at 3788 US Hwy. 431 N, Calhoun, KY 42327, or emailed to [bcpastortom@bellsouth.net](mailto:bcpastortom@bellsouth.net).

**SEEKING:** Barren River Baptist Church is seeking an energetic and motivated pastor with strong leadership skills. Please mail resúmes to Attn: Pastor search committee, 5630 Barren River Road, Bowling Green, KY 42101. If you have previously submitted a resumé, please reapply.

**SEEKING:** Part-time Southern Baptist youth minister for Oak Grove Baptist Church, Russellville, Ky. For more information, call Samantha Long at (270) 847-0762, email resumé to [tslong@logantele.com](mailto:tslong@logantele.com) or mail resumé to 4675 Morgantown Road, Russellville, KY 42276.

**SEEKING:** Red House Baptist Church, a member of Tates Creek Association of

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Southern Baptists, is searching for a full-time, experienced senior pastor. Apply by sending a resumé and cover letter to Red House Baptist Church, Attn: pastor search team, 2301 Red House Road, Richmond, KY 40475.

**SEEKING:** Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, 5285 Hwy. 44 East, Shepherdsville, KY 40165, is accepting resúmes for a part-time youth minister (15 per week minimum); email resumé to [dean@pgbc.net](mailto:dean@pgbc.net), (502) 543-73360.

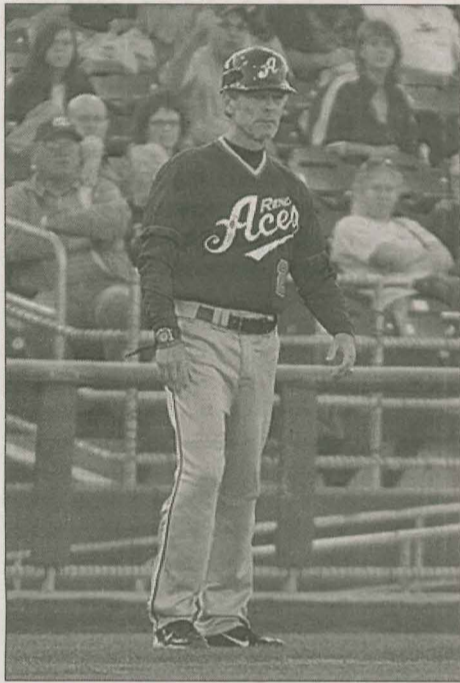
**SEEKING:** First Missionary Baptist Church of Wurtland, Ky., is seeking a bivocational pastor. Send resumé marked Attn: search committee to First Missionary Baptist Church, Wurtland, Ky., 600 Center Ave., Wurtland, KY 41144.

# 'Character and integrity'

## Former major leaguer turned minor league manager sees God's power

By Lee Warren

**Omaha, Neb.**—Minor league manager Brett Butler stood before his players in the visiting clubhouse after the Reno Aces won the Pacific Coast League Championship Series against the Omaha Storm Chasers. He spoke about the importance of character and integrity—a theme familiar to his team.



**IN PROPER PERSPECTIVE** Former big leaguer and cancer survivor Brett Butler, although garnering this year's Triple-A title, underscores to players, "I'm more concerned about your character and integrity" than baseball. (Photo by Minda Haas/BP)

Every year he starts the season with a team meeting, saying, "You're a baseball player for a short period of time, but you're a man, a father and a husband for the rest of your life, and I'm more concerned about your character and integrity" than a baseball career.

As he brought that theme full circle while holding the championship trophy in mid-September, Butler wanted his guys to savor the moment but also to remember that wins and championships are fleeting.

### What is most important?

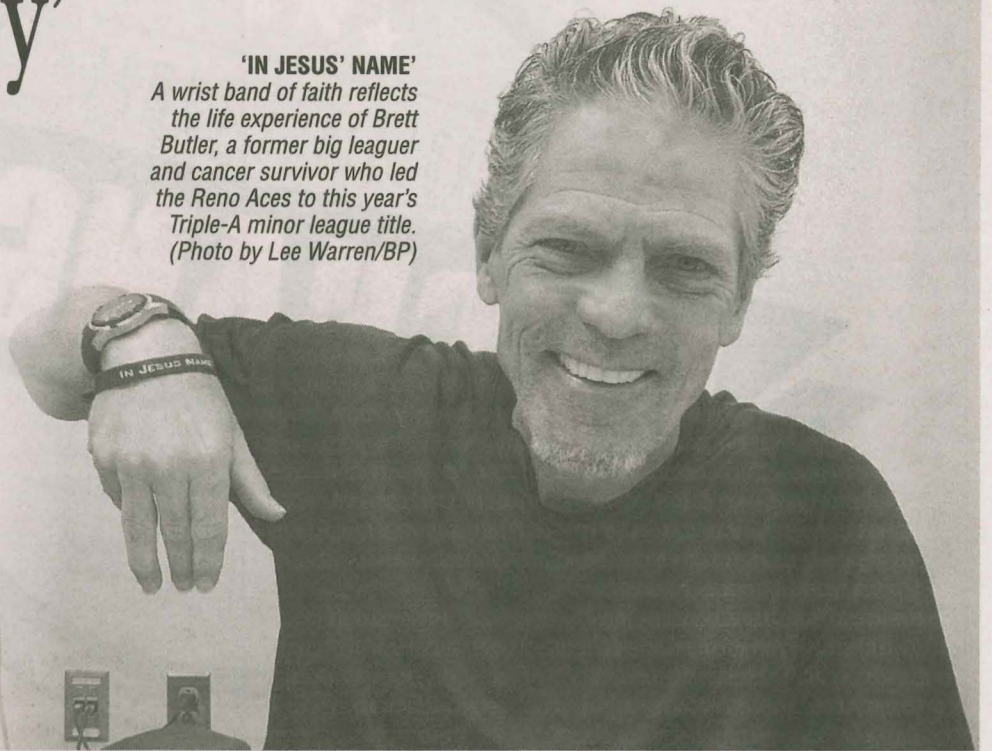
Butler, 55, knows something about the tests and difficulties his guys will face in life.

Butler played 17 years in the big leagues for the Braves, Indians, Giants, Dodgers and Mets from 1981-97. The scrappy outfielder played in the 1991 All-Star game and, for his career, hit .290 while picking up 2,375 hits and stealing 558 bases (25th all-time). Toward the end of his career, he was diagnosed with throat cancer, and it made him think about what is important.

"As I was laying in the hospital thinking I was dying, I wasn't concerned about how rich or famous I was or how much money I made," Butler said. "Instead, I thought about my relationship with God, my relationship with my family and what kind of positive impact I was going to leave on this world."

Butler became a Christian as a sophomore in high school after attending a Fellowship of Christian Athletes event. He said he placed too high a priority on

**'IN JESUS' NAME'**  
A wrist band of faith reflects the life experience of Brett Butler, a former big leaguer and cancer survivor who led the Reno Aces to this year's Triple-A minor league title. (Photo by Lee Warren/BP)



baseball early on, but hardship taught him to open his hands to God and accept His will—no matter what it might be.

Butler survived his bout with cancer, but then was diagnosed with prostate cancer in the mid-2000s. He survived that, only to suffer a minor stroke in 2007. He resumed his managerial career in the minor leagues, but came through his health concerns with a message.

"Adversity and trials are either going to take you away from God or toward Him," Butler said. "And I can tell you that my faith has only gotten stronger through the adversity I've gone through."

Butler started managing in the minor leagues in 2004. He has managed the Gulf Coast League Mets, Lancaster JetHawks, Mobile BayBears and, since 2009, the Aces (the Triple-A affiliate of the Arizona Diamondbacks).

After Reno won the PCL Championship Series, the Aces defeated the

Pawtucket Red Sox 10-3 Sept. 18 to win the Triple-A national championship.

A few days earlier, before his team won the Pacific Coast League title, Butler put everything into perspective—the numbers he put up in the big leagues, his health problems and, now, being on the verge of winning a league championship.

"As I look back (at my playing career), it was like another life," Butler said. "But more than anything, I think about the awesomeness of God—that He could take a kid who was 5 feet tall and weighed 89 pounds and couldn't start on his high school baseball team and put him in the big leagues for 17 years. And then go through a bout of cancer and still allow him to come back.

"That's just the power of the living God. He has a plan for my life and His plan included me being involved in baseball. So, the glory (and) the praise goes to Him." (BP)

## Q & A Professor analyzes sports media's coverage of Tebow's gridiron faith

By Adelle Banks

**Bowling Green, Ohio**—Can Tim Tebow do no wrong?

Michael Butterworth of Bowling Green State University has turned his attention to sports media coverage of Tebow, an evangelical Christian and New York Jets quarterback. The author of a forthcoming article in the journal of the National Communication Association, Butterworth talks about how Tebow coverage seldom treads beyond a "nice guy" image to delve into his faith.

(Some answers have been edited for length and clarity.)

**It's an understatement to say a lot has been written about Tim Tebow and his merging of sports and religion. What else is there for you to add?**

**A:** Although Tebow isn't the first athlete to be featured for being publicly religious, the volume has been unprecedented, and there's a quality to the coverage that has granted him a different status than anybody who has come before.

**What did you think of his debut with the Jets on Sept. 9, which included some boos during one of his plays?**

**A:** I think the boos are indicative that there is very little middle ground to be found on Tim Tebow. There are those

who obviously love him and who will follow him at every turn. Then, especially for those who see it in football terms, the degree of attention he's received appears not to match his talent and ability on the field, and there are those who kind of resent that.

**You argue that sports writers are, in a sense, giving him a pass, talking about how "nice" and "sincere" he is and not examining his faith in any depth.**

**A:** There's little doubt that he comes across at least as being every bit as nice as he's portrayed to be. But there's a clear evangelical mission that goes along with that. So, we should be asking, "OK, well, what is it that Tim Tebow wants us to believe? Why is he so invested in these messages?" I don't think there's very much scrutiny of that in sports media coverage.

**What would help get beyond what you call the "Tebow-as-messiah narrative"?**

**A:** I think sports media really do need to think about the world in more humble terms. Not everything is the game of the century, and not everything is life or death.

If you use something like the Jerry Sandusky case at Penn State as an example, it diminishes our ability to make sense of what is a genuine tragedy because our language has already positioned us to think of Penn State losing on the football field as the end of the world.

**Why do you think the comedic portrayals like the "Saturday Night Live" skit with Jesus and Tebow in the locker room and Jimmy Fallon's "Tebowie" parody are helpful?**

**A:** I know that folks like Pat Robertson, for example, thought that this was another example of another mockery of Christians. But I didn't find either of those to be particularly cruel. They were so ridiculous but they were so spot on

that they necessarily functioned to give us a little bit of perspective about it.

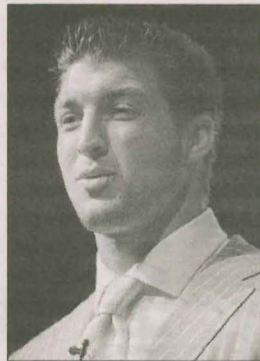
**Have you had any discussions with sports writers about your views?**

**A:** I haven't and I have tried. I don't think it is an intentional conspiracy by sports writers to say, "Let's put our heads together and celebrate this white guy who's a religious guy and we'll write about him in these particular ways." I think that's the reason why a critical study of this is important.

There has been a concern that we don't have anybody to believe in anymore. Our athletes, our great baseball players and quarterbacks, used to be our heroes. That's so few and far between now. Tebow fills a kind of void, and I think sports writers are eager to jump on that.

**Do you think interest in him will die down, or will he continue to draw interest and debate?**

**A:** Eventually it will taper off as his career, and he, moves out of the spotlight or changes roles. In the short term, I don't see any indication that it will die down, especially having now been traded to New York. (RNS)



Tim Tebow

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June 9-14	John Nix
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June 30-July 5	Dave Paxton
July 7-12	Dave Paxton
July 21-26	Tom Richter
July 26-31	Roger Palmer

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for students entering 7th through graduates

\*RATES STARTING AT \$129 PER PERSON

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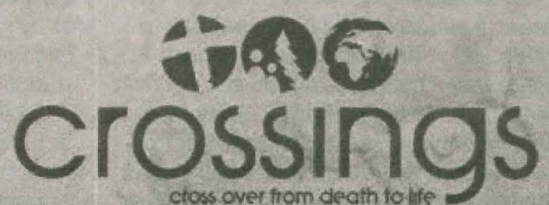
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