

# WESTERN Recorder

December 11, 2012

Shine Like Stars \* Philippians 2:15

Volume 186, Issue 48

## One man's trash, another man's treasure



By Yvonne Carrington & Marie Curtis

**Cairo, Egypt**—A wise man builds his house upon rock, and a foolish man builds his house upon sand. On the outskirts of Cairo, approximately 300 people have built their houses upon trash.

But amid the stench and squalor of shifting garbage, God is building a church on a firm foundation.

Desperate for shelter on the outskirts of Cairo, residents use whatever they can find—sheets of tin and discarded cardboard—to create makeshift residences within this garbage village.

For more than 20 years, families living here have collected trash from area homes and businesses to make some cash. It is estimated that the 17 million people of greater Cairo throw away 13,000 tons of garbage every day.

EGYPT



**A LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS** U.S. volunteers pray with Egyptian believers within the church walls, which Joseph and others built from discarded cinder blocks and mud. The church held its first worship service Dec. 30, 2011, in an unfinished structure with a partial roof. (IMB photo)

Men rise early in the mornings to gather refuse and transport it back to their community in weathered pickup trucks or overflowing carts pulled by horses or donkeys. Some businesses bring the garbage to them.

"Society looks down" on this community, said Joseph, who has lived in the slum for 14 years. "The smell is not good, the environment is not good." Regardless, he has a message for his fellow residents of one of Egypt's poorest areas: "You are not garbage."

Joseph's family moved to this garbage village from Asyut, Egypt, when he was 15. His father was a garbage collector and believed relocating closer to Cairo would offer more job opportunities.

□ See *Treasure amid trash* ... Page 7

## Survey: Pastors value Cooperative Program



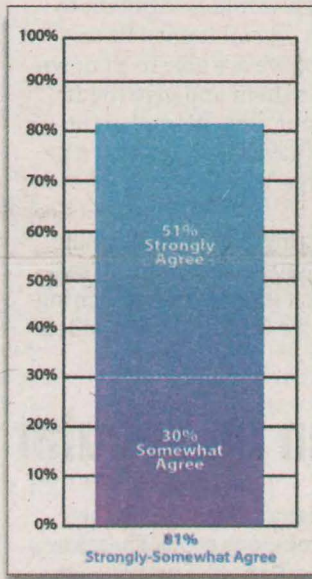
But not all agree with how funds are allocated among Southern Baptist Convention entities

By Carol Pipes

**Nashville, Tenn.**—Southern Baptist pastors have high opinions of the Cooperative Program, according to a study conducted by LifeWay Research.

The survey of more than 1,000 Southern Baptist pastors found 81 percent agree the Cooperative Program fuels an aggressive global enterprise of reaching the

More than 80 percent of Southern Baptist pastors agree the Cooperative Program fuels an aggressive enterprise of reaching Unengaged, Unreached People Groups (UUPGs) around the world, with more than half strongly agreeing.



unreached people groups around the world. Similarly, 80 percent say CP provides partnership opportunities for local, state and national missions.

The study also indicates that pastors' support for the Cooperative Program does have its limits. One in five pastors (19 percent) say the strategies of Southern Baptist Convention entities that receive CP funds are not moving in the appropriate direction and that those entities are not using their contributions effectively.

However, the majority (55 percent) agrees that those entities are moving in an appropriate direction, while 52 percent say the entities are, in fact, using their contributions effectively.

Additionally, nearly three-quarters of pastors say the Cooperative Program supports the ministries and missions valued by their churches.

"As pastors question every dollar they spend, it is not surprising that some are wanting evidence they are being good stewards with their mission dollars," said Scott McConnell, director of LifeWay Research. This study shows pastors believe the efforts supported by the Cooperative Program matter, he added. However, "some do not overlook the need for further ministry improvement in the efforts of the SBC entities supported by the Cooperative Program."

Southern Baptist pastors also indicated how closely they agree with the current allocation of national CP

□ See *Pastors & CP* ... Page 3

## 'We can all do something'

Doris Deskins (right) and several other members of a knitting circle at Melbourne Heights Baptist Church, Louisville, display the plastic bag sleeping mats that will be distributed among the homeless in the spring. "Here's where all those bags you brought in went to," Deskins said. Each mat requires approximately 700 plastic bags and many, many hours of handiwork.

See full story on page 6.

(Photo by Robin Cornet Bass)



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## Winchester church attracts carnivores, spreads gospel through 'wild game dinner'

By Keith Taylor

Winchester—Joe Robinson discovered the impact of an outreach ministry when he became a volunteer at the annual "Wild Game Dinner" at Winchester's Grace Baptist Church more than three years ago.

Robinson was back for a third time when more than 150 volunteers from the church helped feed more than 1,000 attendees during the eighth annual event at the church back in October. Despite a steady rain that hovered over the region, visitors flocked to the church to enjoy a menu that featured wild game selections from dove bites to burgoo and deer chili.

"It attracts a lot of men," Robinson said. "They get to do something they enjoy, and we get to tell them the gospel message and feed them a good meal."

Even though the rain continued for most of the evening, it didn't dampen the spirit of the attendees or church volunteers.

"It just keeps going," Grace Baptist Church Pastor Pat Finley said. "We have to do it outside (in an outdoor setting) but it is what it is. Once you get under the tent, it's OK."

Finley said the event draws visitors from the community and surrounding areas on a yearly basis.

"We enjoy doing it," he said. "I think everybody enjoys coming. We look forward to it every year, and our guys put a

lot of work into it. We really enjoy being able to give back to the community."

Finley said the dinner, which includes a gospel singing and guest speaker, has exceeded his own expectations.

"The past couple of years, we've had about 1,500 people that came from our community," he said. "With the rain, it might be a little less than that (this year) but either way, we're happy and we look forward to it."

The church views the event as "purely a ministry" that works two fold.

"It's blesses us as much as it blesses them," said church member Rob Miller, who has been part of the event for eight years.

Finley said the outreach gives his church an opportunity to minister on a different stage other than the traditional church setting. He said the events are "becoming really popular all over the United States."

"We have a lot of people who come to this event that it would be difficult to get to a church revival event," he said.

"They come and we are able to sit down and minister to them and give them the gospel. In our area, it's one of the events that we have taken on, and it's grown a lot larger than we ever dreamed of."

"The wild game events, sportsmen banquets or whatever you want to call them, have been successful in reaching a lot of people for Christ," Finley added.



**MMMM, GOOD** Dale Vaughn stirs a huge pot of venison chili during a recent wild game dinner at Grace Baptist Church in Winchester. (Photo by Keith Taylor/The Winchester Sun)

"We started about eight years ago with about 200 guys in an auditorium and we were pleasantly surprised and pleased with that, but for the next four years it just kept doubling." (The Winchester Sun)

Reprinted with permission from The Winchester Sun

## Complementarianism at issue in ministry director's demotion at Univ. of Louisville

By Bob Allen

Louisville—The director of University of Louisville's chapter of Cru, formerly known as Campus Crusade for Christ, has been demoted after refusing to allow female staff to teach Bible studies to mixed-gender audiences.

According to World Magazine, Daniel Harman's views on women in ministry apparently weren't a problem during his eight years as a Campus Crusade missionary in Eastern Europe, but that changed after he moved to the Louisville post in 2009.

Harman, a student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, contends that Cru's policy requiring that male and female campus staff share teaching duties violates Bible verses like 1 Timothy 2:12, "I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet."

Southern Seminary houses offices of the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, which promotes a "complementarian" position that says while males and females are created as equals, the Bible assigns leadership roles in the church and home to men.

### Boyce professor applauds stand

Denny Burk, associate professor of biblical studies at Boyce College, Southern Seminary's undergraduate arm, commended Harman "for standing upon the truth of God even at great personal cost" in a Dec. 1 blog post.

Cru spokesman Mark DeMoss told World Magazine that Harman's removal wasn't over theology but rather his refusal to abide by the ministry's policy. Burk labeled that explanation "nonsense."

"Cru's policy represents an egalitarian view of ministry roles, and that stance is irreducibly theological," Burk wrote. "Daniel was demoted because of theological conviction, not because of an arcane dispute about Cru's bureaucracy."

Burk said from time to time he will hear people argue that complementarianism applies only to the local church and not parachurch groups like Campus Crusade for Christ, an interdenominational ministry started in 1951 by Bill and Vonette Bright now on 1,140 college campuses nationwide.

"This has never been a compelling argument to me," Burk said. "It is true that parachurch groups are not the church. They cannot baptize or administer the Lord's Supper. There is a worthwhile discussion to be had about the existence and role of parachurch organizations in relation to local churches."

"At the very least, I think everyone should agree that parachurch (organizations) should never adopt ministry practices which would undermine the teaching and discipline of actual churches," Burk continued. "For that reason, the complementarian/egalitarian issue cannot be skirted by groups like Cru." (ABP)

## Court upholds Indiana's ban on secular wedding officiants

Indianapolis—A federal court in Indiana has rejected atheists' requests to preside at wedding ceremonies, saying only clergy or public officials are licensed to solemnize marriages.

A lawsuit filed by the Indiana chapter of the Center for Inquiry argued that an Indiana law that requires marriages to be "solemnized"—made official by signing a marriage license—only by clergy, judges, mayors or local government clerks—violates the Constitution.

But Judge Sarah Evans Barker of the U.S. District Court for the Southern

District of Indiana ruled Nov. 30 that marriage has religious roots. Therefore, government regulation of marriage is an act of religious accommodation—not endorsement—and protected by the Constitution.

She also noted that Indiana's law does not limit who may marry the plaintiffs, only who may sign their license.

"We in no way intend to question or disparage plaintiff's opinions regarding the institution of marriage," Barker wrote. "But we must gently remind plaintiffs that the free exercise clause is

not a guarantee against inconvenience."

CFI, a 24,000-member secular humanist organization, had argued that barring "secular celebrants" from solemnizing marriages provides preferential treatment to religious celebrants.

Indiana Attorney General Greg Zoeller described the current law as a "very reasonable requirement."

"The court found that couples who wish to marry without involving clergy have many alternatives for doing so," he said. "My office will continue to defend the statute if necessary." (RNS)

## Arkansas Baptists call Tucker as new executive director

Little Rock, Ark.—J.D. "Sonny" Tucker was elected executive director of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention at the Dec. 4 meeting of the convention's executive board. He will officially begin Jan. 1.

Tucker, 53, replaces Emil Turner, who will retire next year after serving as executive director since 1996. Tucker has served as team leader of the convention's evangelism and church growth team since 1997.

"I think the Operating Committee and the board made a wonderful choice. Sonny is quintessential Arkansas," Turner said following Tucker's election. "He is an Arkansas pastor's pastor."



Sonny Tucker

He loves Arkansas churches. He'll lead well, and he'll set a great tone for the state convention."

Following his election, Tucker said he wants to continue "the great foundation that Dr. Turner has laid" in working with ABSC churches. He also said he wants to see Arkansas Baptists make "big strides" in evangelism, missions and church planting.

"Arkansans know Arkansas Baptist convention churches are kind, gracious and caring. I

want (them) to know that we stand for Jesus and the word of God and that we really, really love folks," Tucker said. "We want to stay focused on Arkansas,

with a strong sense of family and a strong sense of partnership with the churches."

All of Tucker's pastoral experience has been in Arkansas churches. Prior to joining the ABSC staff, he was pastor of Second Baptist Church of Monticello.

Tucker completed a doctor of philosophy degree at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary in Cordova, Tenn., in 1998. His field of study was missiology with a focus on evangelism and church growth. Tucker also received a master of divinity degree from Mid-America in 1992. He completed undergraduate degrees at Ouachita Baptist University in 1983.

Tucker and his wife, Nicki, have two grown children. (Arkansas Baptist News/BP)



## HEALTH CARE REQUIREMENTS Contraception & Birth Control

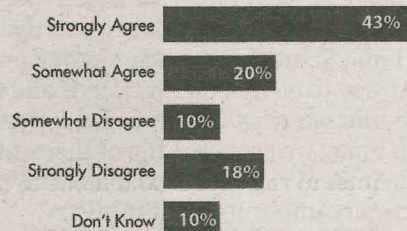
**Catholic and other religious schools, hospitals, and charities** should be required to provide their employees with healthcare coverage that includes contraception and birth control at no cost even if it violates their religious convictions.



**Nonprofit organizations** should be required to provide their employees with healthcare coverage that includes contraception and birth control at no cost even if it violates their religious convictions.



**Businesses** should be required to provide their employees with healthcare coverage that includes contraception and birth control at no cost even if it violates their owners' religious convictions.



LifeWay  
RESEARCH

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# LifeWay poll shows most Americans believe employers should cover contraceptives

By Daniel Burke

**Nashville, Tenn.**—Most Americans say that employers—even religious ones—should provide birth control coverage to their employees, according to a survey released Dec. 3.

The poll by LifeWay Research also showed that almost two-thirds of Americans (63 percent) believe businesses should be required to provide the coverage for free, even if contraception conflicts with the owner's religious ethics.

As part of the Affordable Care Act, the 2010 health care reform law, President Obama issued regulations that require most employers, including some religious ones like Catholic

colleges and hospitals, to provide birth control coverage. The administration has said it may expand the policy to accommodate additional religious organizations.

In the meantime, however, dozens of Catholic dioceses, as well as Christian colleges and business owners who oppose contraception on moral or religious grounds, have filed lawsuits to block the mandate from taking effect.

On Nov. 28, a federal appeals court in St. Louis sided with a Catholic business owner by issuing a temporary injunction temporarily halting the mandate. Federal judges in Michigan and Denver also have issued temporary injunctions blocking the man-

date, according to news reports.

Most Americans, however, believe that businesses (63 percent), nonprofit organizations (56 percent) and even Catholic and other religious schools, hospitals and charities (53 percent) should provide free birth control coverage to employees.

Women are more likely than men to "strongly agree" that such coverage should be provided, LifeWay found.

"The American public appears unaware or unconcerned that some religious organizations and family businesses indicate fear of losing the freedom to practice their faith under the new health care regulations," said Ed Stetzer, president of LifeWay Research. (RNS)

## Talk of 'fiscal cliff' jeopardizes adoption tax credit

**Washington**—With Congress embroiled in debate over the so-called "fiscal cliff," many in the adoption community are concerned the adoption tax credit set to expire at year's end could be forgotten.

The tax credit that provided last year a maximum of \$13,360 to each adoptive family has helped countless low- and middle-income families afford the costly endeavor.

In September, Sen. Mary Landrieu (D-La.) introduced the Making Adoption Affordable Act, which would permanently establish the tax credit and

make it "refundable," allowing adoptive families to receive a refund "in excess of their tax liability," according to a release from the senator's office.

Bill Blacquiere, president of adoption agency Bethany Christian Services, said he is optimistic the adoption tax credit will be extended by year's end but also acknowledged, "with all the debate going on regarding the fiscal cliff, (the bill) has sort of been stalled in that process."

Under Internal Revenue Service rules, an adoptive family can claim adoption expenses up to the

maximum amount allowed. This means if an adoptive family owes \$13,000 in federal taxes, for instance, and their adoption costs \$13,000, they would owe no taxes that year, likely resulting in a large IRS refund. Landrieu's bill would provide up to \$13,170 for covered adoption expenses, adjusted for inflation.

Blacquiere said he fears that without the tax credit, there will be fewer adoptions.

"People would just simply say, 'I can't afford this cost,' and they would back out of it," Blacquiere said. (BP)

## Pastors & CP

Continued from page 1

funds. The median responses for the entities—International Mission Board, North American Mission Board, six SBC seminaries, Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission and SBC operating budget—all were within 0.3 percent of the current allocations.

About one in five pastors entered amounts exactly matching current percentage allocations. A majority listed higher percentages for NAMB and at least half listed lower percentages for the IMB, the seminaries and the operating budget.

"Pastors' opinions on CP allocations are remarkably similar," McConnell said. "Even when comparing mean percentages—which can be swayed by those wanting large changes—the responses have not changed significantly from a survey of pastors completed in early 2008."

Nearly 70 percent agreed with the statement, "The SBC allocation budget places a high priority on penetrating lostness both locally and worldwide."

Pastors also were asked to indicate the priority their churches place on 12 missions and ministry efforts funded by the Cooperative Program. A majority indicates "sending and supporting overseas missionaries to reach unreached people groups around the world" is the highest priority. Almost 70 percent of pastors rate it essential or as a high priority, and it is the only ministry effort

that less than 10 percent of pastors rate as a low priority or not at all.

Following is the percentage of SBC pastors who rated each CP-funded mission and ministry as essential or high priority:

- Sending and supporting overseas missionaries: 68 percent.
- Engaging in local ministry projects for evangelism: 65 percent.
- Developing and implementing an evangelism strategy for penetrating lostness in North America: 59 percent.
- Improving the vitality and health of existing churches: 59 percent.
- Educating and training future pastors, missionaries, church planters and other denominational leaders: 57 percent.
- Reaching ethnically and culturally diverse people: 51 percent.
- Promoting an ongoing program of missions education for all ages: 48 percent.
- Engaging in direct international missions: 45 percent.
- Conducting an ongoing program of leadership development: 45 percent.
- Intentional church planting in cities and towns across North America: 44 percent.
- Intentional church planting in large urban centers: 43 percent.
- Providing a Christian perspective and response about social, ethical and public policy issues: 37 percent.

"International missions is clearly a rallying point for the Cooperative Program, yet pastors also place a high priority on evangelism efforts in North Amer-

ica," McConnell said.

LifeWay Research also asked pastors about the decisions their churches made regarding contributions to the Cooperative Program in the most recent budget process. The vast majority of churches (81 percent) decided to keep their CP giving the same as last year. Nearly twice as many churches raised their contributions (11 percent) as decreased them (6 percent). Three percent of pastors said their church does not contribute to the Cooperative Program.

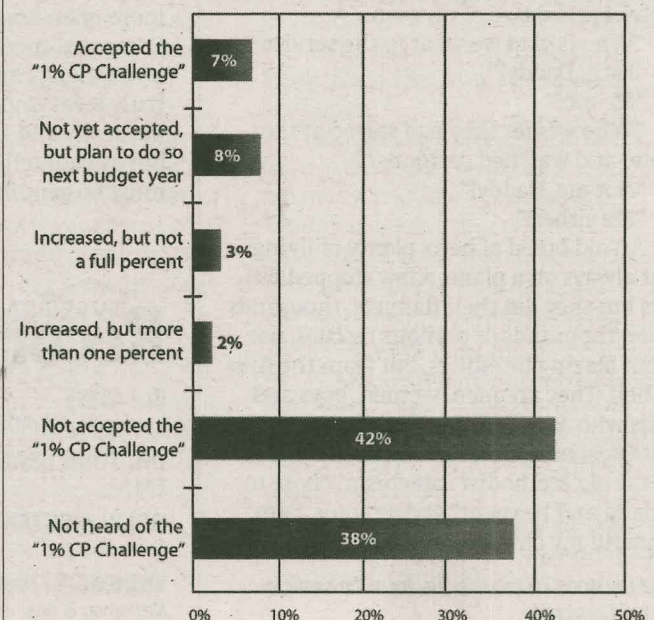
Of the 177 churches making a change in their giving to the Cooperative Program, 41 percent increased it by less than 2 percentage points; 22 percent increased it by more than 2 percentage points. Ten percent of churches decreased their contributions by less than 2 percentage points while 26 percent decreased their contribution by more than 2 percentage points.

Pastors also were asked about the "1% CP Challenge," an effort by the SBC Executive Committee to encourage all Southern Baptist churches to raise

their Cooperative Program contributions by 1 percentage point of their church's undesignated contributions. Nearly 40 percent of pastors had not heard of the initiative. Another 42 percent said they have not accepted the challenge.

Only 7 percent of pastors said their church had accepted the 1% CP Challenge with another 8 percent planning to do so in the next budget year. (SBC Life/BP)

### 15% of Southern Baptist pastors have accepted, or plan to accept next year, the "1% CP Challenge."



## Meeting our heroes

During the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering season, I will share a story from my family's journey five years ago learning about international missionaries.

### Together We are the KBC



Paul Chitwood

"Don't make us go, Daddy!" We had barely unpacked our suitcases in the hotel room and the battle of wills had begun. After a week of doing whatever they wanted whenever they wanted, my 11-year-old son and 10-year-old daughter were less than enthusiastic about the way this second week of summer travels was

beginning. They spent the first week swimming and fishing on the beach. They would spend the second week in Richmond, Va., where I was overseeing my first International Mission Board meeting as chairman. First on the schedule was a service honoring retiring missionaries.

"We have to go. Daddy has to be there, and I want you to be there. Tonight we meet our heroes." For my son, his mother's statement probably brought to mind the latest Spider-man movie. When he realized we weren't going anywhere near a theater, the faint trace of joy on his face quickly faded. Further protests met with, "We're going. No more complaining!"

They were slouched in their chairs for the first half of the service, even when their own father was speaking. My oratory skills seem least appreciated by those who hear me speak most often. When the IMB president failed to get a reaction from these two preacher's kids, I began to question my effectiveness as the spiritual leader of my home. As 55 retiring Southern Baptist missionaries took the stage, they hardly seemed to notice. I inwardly acknowledged I had failed as a father.

Then, one by one, the stories were told. Not the whole story—just tidbits and highlights of the victories and sacrifices of those who made their careers on the mission fields of the world, some for more than 40 years.

Suddenly the two lifeless bodies beside me resurrected. Eyes once glazed now danced with wonder. Whispered questions began to fire, one after another:

"Where is her husband now? Why did they kill him?"

"Why didn't they bring their little boy back to America to bury him?"

"Why is she in a wheelchair?"

The questions continued back at the hotel. I asked two of my own.

"Who is glad we went to the service?"

"I am, Daddy!"

"Me too!"

"Who wishes they had stayed at the hotel and watched cartoons?"

"Not me, Daddy!"

"Me either!"

An old breed of hero: plenty of flying but always on a plane; a few stopped bullets but they did their damage; thousands upon thousands of perilous rescues, not from blazing buildings, but from the fires of hell. They are men, women, boys and girls who accepted the costs associated with reaching the lost and, in the words of the old Methodist catechism, chose to "spend and be spent" saving souls. I am grateful my children have heroes.

Paul Chitwood is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

## The first text and the greatest message ever sent

"Merry Christmas"—The seasonal greeting was the first text message ever sent. Last Monday, Dec. 3, passed with little fanfare, but the date was one of historic note in the advance of communication technology and one of cultural significance, especially in the lives of young adults and teenagers. It also may have some important implications for ministry today.

The greeting was exchanged 20 years ago between a British software engineer, Neil Papworth, and a business client, Richard Jarvis, who reportedly was attending a Christmas party. When Jarvis received the first message on a bulky Orbitel cell phone, one of the most pervasive forms of communication in American society today, the Short Message Service (SMS) text message, was born, according to an article by Heather Kelly on CNN.com.

Though the inventors primarily saw its business application, texting quickly swept the globe, crossing generations and geography because of its simplicity, conciseness, convenience and compatibility with other mobile devices, Kelly explained. In the United States, more than 6 billion text messages are sent every day, and 75 percent of teenagers send about 60 messages daily, according to the CNN story. In fact, texting has become the preferred means of communication among most teenagers and young adults.

Texting also is transforming our culture linguistically. Just as the telegraph introduced a language formed by strings of dots and dashes, texting introduced a new vocabulary by combining letters and symbols. Most of us are familiar with BTW, which means "by the way"; BRB, which tells someone that you will "be right back"; THX, a short form of "thanks"; and TMI, which expresses someone has shared "too much information" and you wish they hadn't. If you are pleased, you wear a VBG, a "very big grin," and LOL lets others know you found something to be funny and are "laughing out loud." You might be called a NUB if you are new to a game or activity; and NP can mean either "no problem" or warn a teen that "nosy parents" are nearby. At any rate, we all could stand a little more TLC, "tender loving care," and to hear ILY, "I Love You," much more often.

Then, there are those crazy looking emoticons, which express how someone feels. Obviously, :) and :( mean I'm "happy" or "sad." What about :( or :D or :ll after a sentence? These mean we are "crying," "laughing" or "angry."

But you don't want to bother someone who replies with l-) or :x because they are "sleeping" or "annoyed." Otherwise, you might get x\_O O\_x or "punched in the face" when what you meant was <3 or "love."

While doing research for this column, I even discovered a fascinating new field of study: cyborg anthropology. No, it doesn't have anything to do with an invasion of the Borgs from Star Trek or the Terminator. In another CNN article, Amber Case, director of the Esri R&D Center, defines it as "the study of the interaction between humans and technology and how technology affects culture." I think we can agree, it certainly has affected our culture, but according to her, that makes us all "cyborgs." Now there's a scary thought!

While we may not exactly feel like "super-humans," we have in our pockets and purses the ability to stand almost anywhere in the world and be heard or read by others nearly everywhere else, she observed. And it is certainly true: "In only a few years these devices have become stitched into the fabric of our everyday lives."

As I left my office recently, I received texts from my son, letting me know he had been picked up at school; from my wife, giving me a list of items to pick up at the store on my way home; and from my daughter, who was excited that she had done well on a nursing exam at college. How did I ever manage before texting?

While we may lament the loss of heart-to-heart, face-to-face communication skills, texting doesn't necessarily have to be viewed in that light. Short text messages provide a quick and convenient way to connect with friends and family. It's an easy way to find out what is happening in someone's life, let a person know we are thinking of them, and communicate that their ideas and opinions matter to us. And, therein is its primary implication for ministry.

Texting provides a great tool for church leaders, Sunday School teachers, youth ministers, student leaders and church members to discover opportunities to reach out and communicate God's love in a meaningful and culturally relevant way. After all, it has to be more than happenstance that the first words sent by text were to wish someone a "Merry Christmas." And now, we have another tool to help this generation see and hear the greatest message ever sent: Emmanuel—"God with us." That's the message that will truly transform their lives.

## After Thought

By Todd Deaton



## Love essential

In a recent Western Recorder article, a LifeWay Research study about serving others noted that Christians with high scores for "serving God and others" are far more likely to share Christ with others. This new data suggests that if Southern Baptists are really serious about the Great Commission, there needs to be more of an emphasis on the two Great Commandments—namely, love God and love others. I am convinced that if one truly loves God and others, then one will naturally and intentionally share Christ, but as Paul tells us in Romans 12:9, "Love must be genuine."

To be sure, it is possible to preach the gospel without love. As Paul acknowledged, it is even possible for the gospel to be preached out of envy, rivalry and selfish ambition (Philippians 1:15-17). Still, he notes in that passage that love is the preferred way. In fact, he states in Galatians 5:6 that the only thing that matters is "faith expressing itself through love."

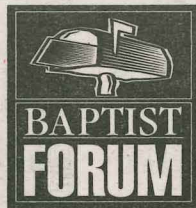
There is a catch with this thing called love. We cannot just view others as simply objects for evangelism. We have to run the risk of becoming, yea even desiring to be, intimately involved with them in ways that might seem like a great sacrifice at first.

As Paul challenges us in Philippians

2:3-5, "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus." To paraphrase a C.S. Lewis character, this kind of evangelism is not safe, but it's good.

Mike Dixon  
Middletown

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## WESTERN Recorder

Box 43969  
Louisville, KY 40253

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Editor

DREW NICHTER  
News Director

THOMAS C. TOWNSEND  
Marketing & Business Manager

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

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## This year, give gifts more precious than gold

By Chuck Bentley

As you consider the gifts you will share with friends and loved ones through Christmas, I recommend that you consider giving gifts that ultimately will be more precious than gold. Maybe we can call this the "Biblical Gift Guide for the Holiday Season."

**Give from what you do have.** Remember when the beggar outside the temple gate in Jerusalem asked Peter and John for money? Although he was crippled from birth, the beggar was focused on money as the solution to his problem. This story is a picture of the superiority of the treasures we have in knowing Christ.

Peter understood this perfectly well. His reply to the beggar should ring in our ears: "Then Peter said, 'Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk'" (Acts 3:6). And the crippled man walked. Imagine that electrifying moment. God did not send Peter and John on a mission to give away money. He sent them on a mission to give away Jesus.

This year you may not be in a position to give gifts people are expecting from you; but this can be your opportunity, like Peter and John, to give from what "you do have." We have the glorious treasure of the gospel that gives sight to the blind and heals every broken heart. So be compassionate, yet bold—and give Jesus.

**Give apples of gold in settings of silver.** A few years ago, a personal friend became CEO of one of the largest companies in the world. The story broke in *The Wall Street Journal*, *Forbes* and *Fortune*. His success in business was very impressive by all measures.

In a conversation with my father, I mentioned in passing how delighted I was for my friend's spectacular rise to the highest ranks in the business world. Dad's response will never leave me: "Well, son, that is impressive, but what you are doing is more important. I would rather you do what you are doing than be CEO of the world's largest company."

I was speechless. I never expected that would be my father's response. Somehow, I had mistakenly thought

being the CEO of a multi-billion dollar global company would have made my dad more proud of me than being CEO of Crown Financial Ministries. I was wrong. Those words blessed my soul so much that I had to fight back tears as he looked at me with pride and joy. I knew he not only said it, he meant it.

Solomon said, "A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver" (Proverbs 25:11).

Think of the holiday season as your opportunity to give appropriate words of affirmation to those you love.

**Give real security.** If you knew you held in your hand the one thing that could liberate a loved one from fear and insecurity, you would put it in a big box, decorate it with a bow and watch with joy as he or she opened this invaluable treasure.

Freedom from fear and insecurity is in short supply right now. But, regardless of how much gold you have or how high its price goes, it never will be able to deliver what is promised to those who fear God.

Listen to the promises from Psalm 112: "Praise the Lord. Blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who finds great delight in his commands. His children will be mighty in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed. Wealth and riches are in his house, and his righteousness endures forever.

"Even in darkness light dawns for the upright, for the gracious and compassionate and righteous man. Good will come to him who is generous and lends freely, who conducts his affairs with justice.

"Surely he will never be shaken; a righteous man will be remembered forever. He will have no fear of bad news; his heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord. His heart is secure, he will have no fear; in the end he will look in triumph on his foes" (Psalm 112:1-8).

One year, the only gift I could give my close friends was a card with a specially selected verse that was meant to bless them. It worked.

As you generously give from the priceless gifts you have freely received, I pray this will be your very best year of gift giving. (BP)

Chuck Bentley is CEO of Crown Financial Ministries in Lawrenceville, Ga.

### COMMENTARY

## Lessons from financial radicals

By Jeremy White

Whether through history or personally, you may have known people who are radicals—those who live much differently than the norm. Radicals who live with a positive trait or vision can inspire us. They display a clear calling and conviction. We all can't live like a radical, or else, by definition, a norm is established and that person is no longer a radical. But we can learn from those who live radically.

I've been inspired by Mother Teresa's dedication to helping the poor. I can see some benefits in the Amish people's lifestyle of simplicity or David Thoreau's appreciation of nature.

Because this is a financial column, I decided to turn this reflection about radicals to a financial application. Here are some examples of financial radicals:

**R.G. LeTourneau.** The inventor of the most earth-moving equipment with 300 patents, this businessman was a devout tither. His radical approach was to tithe 90 percent of his profit and keep 10 percent. Convinced he could not outgive God, he said, "I shovel it out, and God shovels it back, but God has a bigger shovel."

**Jesse, a client.** He racked up 800,000 miles on his van. He didn't want to buy new cars just to watch them quickly depreciate.

**George Mueller.** The British evangelist and orphanage operator sought money through prayer alone. He actively shunned fundraising activities, yet cared for more than 10,000 orphans during his life. His personal income from unsolicited gifts rose from £151 in 1831 to more than £2,000 in 1870. However, he retained only around £300 a year for himself and his family while he gave the rest away to care for orphans.

**Kevin, a client.** He has stayed in the same house to continue reaching people for Christ in his neighborhood. Despite having an increase in income, adding five kids and seeing a decline in his neighborhood, he has resisted the American trend of moving up so that he can remain a witness where he is.

Jeremy White is a CPA with BlytheWhite in Paducah.



## Make Christmas story your story

By David Garrard

As I prepared to lead a funeral recently, I asked the family to tell me when the deceased had made a decision for Christ and was baptized. No one knew. Everyone knew the decision had been made, but no one knew the details.

I found myself wondering how many children know their parents' faith story. Unless we came to Christ late in life, our children were not present when we made our decisions. Hopefully, they know that we are Christians, but they may not know much about how or when we chose to follow Jesus—unless we have told them our faith story or unless they have heard us sharing our faith with someone else.

As we enter the Christmas season, I want to encourage parents to consider coupling the Christmas story with their own faith stories. As you hear, read and talk about the birth of Jesus, tell your children how Jesus' entrance into the world has made a difference in your own life. Use John 3:16 to talk about how God gave Jesus just as we give gifts. Then explain how this gift, like any gift, needs to be received and about the time you made that choice. If you have been baptized, tell them what you remember about that experience.

If your children are young, you can tell them that you already are praying for the day when they will choose to follow Jesus. If your children have already made decisions for Christ, you can revisit that decision with them and talk about similarities. It is possible that a conversation like this may help your child get to the next place in his or her own spiritual journey.

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



## Some 'extras' for youth pastors this time of year

By Joe Ball

Outside of the summer months—which in most youth ministry circles are absolutely nuts—this may be the busiest time of year for most churches. Between cantatas, Sunday School parties, special missions events, school functions and family events, it may be possible to have some "extra" things to do. Yet, it also brings fewer regular meetings and an opportunity for some much-needed downtime. So, take advantage of this time of year to enjoy a change of pace.

**Clean out your files.** Clean out both those files in your desk and those on your computer. You know it needs to be done, and some of those files you haven't looked at in years. There isn't a need for that file of clip art you cut out years ago—toss it. While you're at it, consolidate and back up the files on your computer. You will thank yourself when your computer crashes or if you finally get a new one. You also may want to extrapolate all the info on that 3-inch disk before the only computer that will read it quits working.

**Value family time.** Value both your time and the students' and

their families. The tendency of some of us in youth ministry is to think, "Hey, the students are out of school;

let's do something with them." Yes, this time of year is a great time for hanging with students, and many ministries are taking advantage of events during the week between Christmas and New Year's Day, but let's not so fill our schedule that we neglect time with our families or our students don't get any time with theirs.

**Make sure your summer materials are together.** Most camps and mission trips are going to require deposits early next year. Have you done the hard work of promoting it? Do parents know when camp is, when deposits are due, and how much camp will cost? Have you made those plans yet? If not, dig through the stack of camp brochures on your desk, check them out and pick one.

**Honor your volunteers.** They work with you throughout the year, love on students, challenge them to grow spiritually and put up with your idiosyncrasies. Do something this time of year to honor them.

**Teach missions.** It may seem like an odd thing to throw in here, but

### Youth Ministry Corner



Joe Ball

*"Yes, this time of year is a great time for hanging with students, ... but let's not so fill our schedule that we neglect time with our families."*

the whole world is focusing on the outcast, downtrodden and those who are doing without. The Week of Prayer for International Missions, the International Missions Study and collection of the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, gives us a prime opportunities to teach students how we, as a Baptist family, are actively seeking to take the gospel to the ends of the earth. You can order the International Mission Study from the Woman's Missionary Union.

**Take time to breathe.** The hectic pace of this season can knock our normal schedules out of whack. Read that book you have been meaning to read. Take in a movie. Take your spouse on a date—not a chaperone-the-youth event date, but a real date. Don't forget to—in the words of my good friend, Steve Coleman—"stay in the word." The adjustment in our regular routines can, if we let it, impose on our quiet time. Don't let it.

Joe Ball, a former youth minister at Edgewood Baptist Church in Hopkinsville, is youth ministry strategist for Crossings Ministries.

# Recycling as Ministry

## Women at Louisville church crochet plastic bags into sleeping mats for the homeless

By Robin Cornetet Bass

Louisville—Doris Deskins was cleaning out the information kiosk at Louisville's Melbourne Heights Baptist Church last spring when a magazine headline caught her eye. The top of the February issue of *Mature Living* read: "How plastic bags are changing lives."

Deskins was intrigued.

A few weeks before, someone at her library knitting club brought in an example of how crafters were using plastic bags as quilting material to make sleeping mats for the homeless. Now, here was a story in a *LifeWay* magazine featuring exactly the same idea.

Deskins wondered for a moment if it was a coincidence, then confidently said, "I think the Lord led me to it."

The women involved in a newly formed knitting circle at Melbourne Heights were looking for a new project, Deskins said. They had spent most of the summer crocheting scarves, necklaces and washable Swiffer covers for the church's fall festival, and managed to raise more than \$400 for the Jefferson Street Baptist Center, a homeless ministry in Louisville.

But, now it was time for something new. Perhaps something with a more personal impact—a way to use their talents to make a difference in another person's life.

"People can give money and that's fine," Deskins said, "but I like it when people give their time and talents to help others. It comes back ten fold."

The next time the women gathered at church, Deskins presented the idea of making mats for the homeless, and the notion was met with much enthusiasm.

She explained each plastic bag mat should measure 3 feet by 6 feet and would require approximately 700 plastic bags. Church members were enlisted in the effort by donating used, but

clean, plastic shopping bags from retailers, such as grocery, clothing and discount stores.

The next step was cutting 3 inch-wide loops that can be chained together into one long strand. Deskins and about seven other women gather each Monday at the church to cut, tie and wind the strands into large balls of multicolored plastic. The more time-consuming task of crocheting the mats is then completed at home.

Bevvie Neal said she prays over her mat as she sits in her recliner crocheting row after row.

"I have no idea where this mat will end up, so I ask the Lord to put blessings on it—that it will benefit the person and meet a need," she said.

Another member of the Melbourne Heights knitting circle has been crocheting her mat while undergoing cancer treatments, Deskins said.

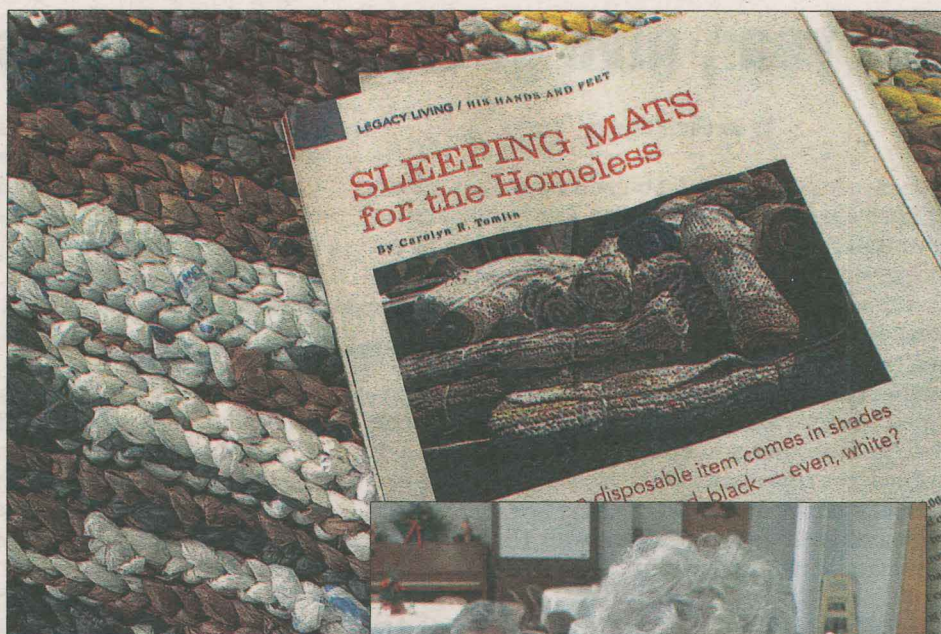
"It's a good moral builder for her, and it's also an inspiration for all of us that we can all do something," Deskins said, and then added, "You're never too old to do mission work."

The crafters have been making steady progress since beginning the project in mid-October. During a recent presentation to the congregation, the women displayed three mats in varying stages of completion.

"We are just working as hard as we can. It's a big project," Deskins said, adding that she hopes to have the mats finished by spring so men from the church can deliver them to the homeless.

"Our church has been blessed in so many ways. I just feel like we're just doing for ourselves sometimes. We need to go outside the walls of our church," Deskins said.

For instructional videos about making the plastic bag mats, log on to YouTube.com and search for "plastic bag mats for the homeless." (WR)



### RECYCLED MINISTRY

■ Above: A finished mat made from recycled plastic shopping bags and the article from the February edition *Mature Living* magazine that inspired the burgeoning ministry at Melbourne Heights Baptist Church. ■ Right: "I like to work with my hands," said Viola Probus (standing), who was helping convert plastic bags into crocheting material for making sleeping mats for the homeless. In the background, Doris Deskins nears completion of her 3-by-6 mat. Women at the church say they hope the mats will display the love of Christ by bringing comfort to someone less fortunate. (Photos by Robin Cornetet Bass)



### HANDCRAFTED

Doris Deskins, of Melbourne Heights Baptist Church in Louisville, swiftly crochets plastic bags into a durable sleeping mat for the homeless. She and a group of women from the church have been working on their mats since mid-October with the hopes of having men from the church deliver their creations to Jefferson Street Baptist Center, a downtown Louisville homeless ministry, this spring.

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# Pastor's passion for overseas missions supercedes fear factor

By Marie Curtis

**Cairo, Egypt**—Gene Brooks\* has good reasons not to return to the Middle East or Central Asia. He's been arrested twice, interrogated by gun-wielding soldiers, forced to spend a night under house arrest and worshipped secretly in homes when the church building no longer was safe. On a trip to Egypt in October 2011, he landed in Cairo the day after more than 20 Coptic Christians were killed during a protest.

These experiences might keep many away, but they're not enough to stop Brooks. His passion to encourage

believers and share the gospel drives out fear, he said. Partnering with Southern Baptist workers overseas, he's heard their cries for help: please pray; please give; please come.

Brooks has committed himself and led his church of about 60 people to be a part of God's work to reach the nations—no matter the cost.

"There is the risk, but Jesus said they hated Him, and they're going to hate us," Brooks said. "I think part of that is having the passion for missions to go and to tell people about Jesus. When that is strong in our heart, it tends to suppress the fear factor."

Despite the unrest in Egypt, Brooks didn't hesitate to ask God if his church should help fill a request for U.S. churches to partner with Egyptian Baptist churches.

Mark Ayers,\* a Southern Baptist worker in the region, explained that Egypt is strategic in reaching North African and Middle Eastern peoples. He said he feels an urgency for Christians to bring truth and encourage the persecuted church.

"Get under the Egyptian church and lift her up," Ayers urged. "Serve the church, bless the country."

With the support of his church, Brooks traveled to Egypt with Louie Smith\*, a lay leader who has accompanied him on several international trips.

During a recent visit, the two men witnessed a church under severe persecution. "They are facing death every day," Brooks said. "Yet they are joyful in their experience with Christ. ... They were not fearful to meet together. They were cautious, but yet they said, 'You know, if we must die for Christ, we are

ready to do that.'"

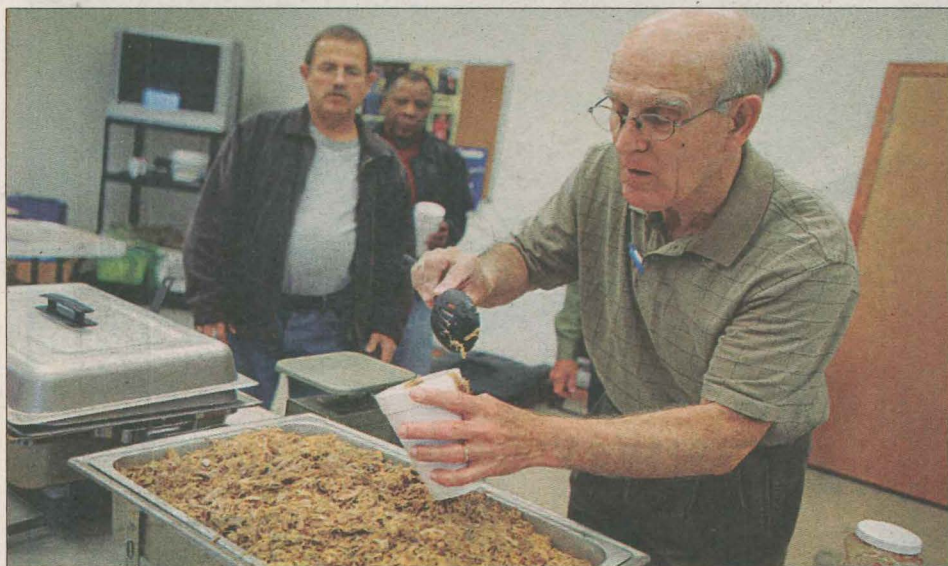
"Ever since I've been back home, I relive my steps in these countries," Smith added, referring to his multiple trips into territories largely considered dangerous. "I still remember the faces and the places, and I'm constantly praying for them."

Brooks said he is thankful to Southern Baptist workers who have facilitated the work he and other short-term volunteers have been able to accomplish. His passion to give so that their efforts can continue has become contagious in his church.

"Our people have really caught the vision and understood what it is to support our missionaries around the world," the pastor said. "We began to encourage people to find unique ways to give. Since that time our Lottie Moon giving has actually tripled—almost quadrupled."

Brooks said he knows that every prayer, dollar and plane ticket matters. And it'll take more than a couple of arrests to stop him. (IMB)

\*Names changed for security reasons



**BARBECUE FOR MISSIONS** South Carolina pastor Gene Brooks\* has encouraged his church to get creative when it comes to raising money for missions. Its largest fundraiser is a barbecue sale. Louie Smith\* (left) and Brooks say they have seen the importance of giving to missions firsthand. (IMB photo)



## THANK YOU FOR HELPING PROVIDE BRIGHTER FUTURES FOR KENTUCKY'S CHILDREN IN CRISIS

A special thanks to everyone who has supported the children at Sunrise Children's Services over the past year. Whether you have participated in the Thanksgiving Offering or Food Round-Up through your church, donated directly to Sunrise, provided Christmas gifts for the kids, or shared your time or talent with Sunrise this year, we thank you! It is only with your help that thousands of Kentucky's children find healing and a brighter future at Sunrise each year. You are saving lives!

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## Treasure amid trash

Continued from page 1

Believing education was key to a better future, Joseph was determined to go to school. His parents sent him back to Asyut to live with his grandmother during the school year until he finished high school.

It was during his teens that Joseph began attending a Bible study. As he read the word, Joseph said he felt God transforming his life—in more ways than one. He realized his worth in Christ was greater than his circumstances in the dump. At 18, he became a believer and a mentee of the study group leader. He also began attending a nearby seminary.

It was around this time that a neighborhood girl caught Joseph's eye. Hiba,\* who was born and raised in the garbage village, was a Christian when she met Joseph at a home Bible study. The two dated for five years before marrying.

As Joseph studied the Bible, the verses about God choosing the poor of the world to shame the rich resonated with him. Though he and Hiba had dreams of bettering their circumstances, God made it clear He wanted them to serve among their community.

"God put in my heart to build a church here," Joseph said. "That has been my dream" since becoming a believer 10 years ago.

In June 2011, Joseph and several other believers began building a church from discarded cinderblocks and mud. An Egyptian Baptist church heard about the undertaking and offered leadership and financial support. On Dec. 30, 2011, the church held its first worship service under a partial roof. Since that time, three people

have prayed to receive Christ.

Southern Baptist workers in North Africa and the Middle East are training Joseph and local pastors in outreach and evangelism and providing them with needed resources to support church plants.

In fact, Joseph's church is but one of many in a rich history of Baptist ministry in Egypt.

"Southern Baptists were very influential through the Cooperative Program and (the) Lottie Moon" Christmas Offering, said Ron Robinson,\* a Christian worker who served in Egypt for 29 years and witnessed the beginning of Baptist work. "When we first went, the work was evangelism that resulted in churches. That was our statement."

The work has led to a vital impact on Egyptian churches, which are answering the call to reach their own people.

"Now we have partners on the ground near cultural believers who are very capable of sharing the gospel and dreaming of reaching their country and communities for the Lord," Robinson noted.

Those partners

include Joseph. He has more big dreams for his neighborhood. He said he hopes to raise enough money to finish the church building, which will take about three months to complete. In addition to bringing water and electricity to the entire village, he wants the slum to be recognized by the government as a legal community.

His continued prayer is to demonstrate the love of Jesus Christ to all.

"In the middle of all this (garbage), where a person could be psychologically broken and worn out, I know and believe that Jesus loves the people and is looking for them. I have lived this," he said. (IMB)

\*Names changed for security reasons



**MAN OF VISION** Joseph\*, who has lived in a "garbage village" near Cairo for the past 14 years, is building a church to meet the physical and spiritual needs of his fellow residents in one of the poorest areas in Egypt. (IMB photo)

## Outside the box

### Thinking differently about students one way OBI achieves its mission

Thinking "outside the box." That phrase often is heard in our weekly administrative meetings at Oneida. The business-as-usual approach is stringently critiqued when the futures of young men and women are at stake. Our ministerial goal is to assess students' needs and all the possible ways of meeting them in a prayerful and sensitive manner, leaving no stone unturned so as to do our best to assist each of our students in becoming all that God intended him or her to be. It is time consuming and exhausting, but it is well worth it.

Thinking "outside the box" is utilized in every aspect of our relationship to our students. It allows us to accept teenagers (even non-Christians) whom other schools have rejected or who have failed to achieve academic and/or social success in another setting. It forces us to consider options that will allow us to be involved in the rescue of struggling youth from potentially future-destroying or even life-threatening circumstances within their home and/or neighborhood environments.

It permits us to admit students whose families often lack the resources to pay any of the modest school fees we charge. It challenges us to go the extra mile to help our students experience liberation from bad or destructive habits and establish new and healthy ones, and hopefully establish eternity-changing relationships with Jesus Christ, the God-man who lived "outside the box" of first-century Jewish religiosity and came as the central and integral part of His Father's "outside-the-box" plan to lovingly and graciously save the people He created.

#### This is Oneida



Paul Davidson

We serve an "outside-the box" God (Isaiah 40:18,25) who has done an "outside-the-box" work in the life of each one of us. As 1 Corinthians 1:26-30 states:

"For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of

him you are in Christ Jesus." I am convinced God wants to do the same in the life of each of our students as well.

On Nov. 13, "outside-the-box" thinking—under the Lord's leading—resulted in our entire student body and academic team saying "thank you" for the Kentucky Baptist Convention's support through a display of state and national flags and accompanying music designed to visually and aurally communicate the worldwide scope and spiritual focus of the Lord's ministry at OBI. Our students experienced an "outside-the-box" affirmation through receiving three standing ovations.

When they watched video of their presentation, they were moved to "outside-the-box" levels of excitement. The next time they sang "Mighty to Save" in chapel, their singing was "outside the box." What a joy it is to live with Jesus "outside the box." Hallelujah!

Paul Davidson is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, Box 67, Oneida, KY 40972; [www.oneida.school.org](http://www.oneida.school.org); e-mail: [president@oneidaschool.org](mailto:president@oneidaschool.org)

## Ministering to families

### New evangelism leader McAlister to lead lecture series on campus

It is apparent God has work for Chuck McAlister to do in Kentucky. Called to serve our state convention in June, McAlister brings with him both a heart for and knowledge of our state. God has kept him busy in various ministries from his South Carolina roots to pastoral work in Hot Springs, Ark., where he served as the pastor of The Church at Crossgate Center.

His fields of service have included the pulpit, the outdoors and television. McAlister saw God work in mighty ways in his pastorate, bless his outdoor ministries and wild-game dinners, and touch countless people through television with "Adventure Bound Outdoors," a popular cable TV hunting show he helped launch in 1996. He also touched lives in a special way with "Wounded Warriors," a ministry built around taking wounded Iraq and Afghanistan veterans on deer hunts.

The latest call from God to McAlister was, "Go to Kentucky." He will lead the KBC's evangelism and church planting team. McAlister's heart for "affinity

evangelism" will be a key component in that work, and his knack for relating to outdoorsmen will serve him well from elk country to the duck blinds. McAlister fully expects to see God add a "bunch of Bubbbs" to His kingdom.

McAlister also has been used by God to restore many broken families. A counseling program he developed was adopted by a local court system, and every couple who came by court order had their marriage restored and avoided divorce. This area of McAlister's ministry will bring him to Clear Creek on March 26-27 when he will lead the Lacy Lykins Lectures, an endowed lecture series on marriage and family issues. Here McAlister can share some of the insights God has given him in how to help hurting families.

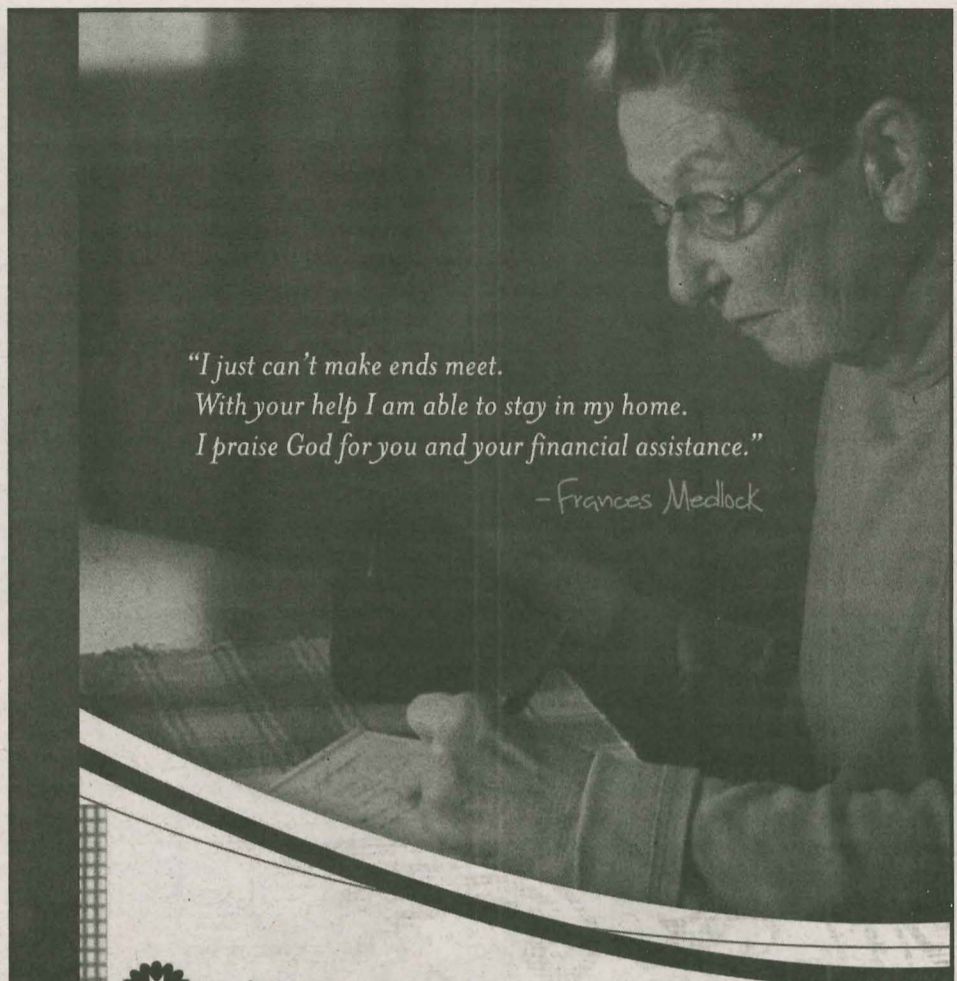
We are glad to have Dr. McAlister in Kentucky and particularly glad to welcome him to our campus. With all he is doing to further kingdom work, he will be a blessing to our students who are called to that same task.

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](http://www.ccbbc.edu); e-mail: [dfox@ccbbc.edu](mailto:dfox@ccbbc.edu).

#### Clear Creek Chronicle



Donnie Fox



"I just can't make ends meet.  
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I praise God for you and your financial assistance."

—Frances Medlock

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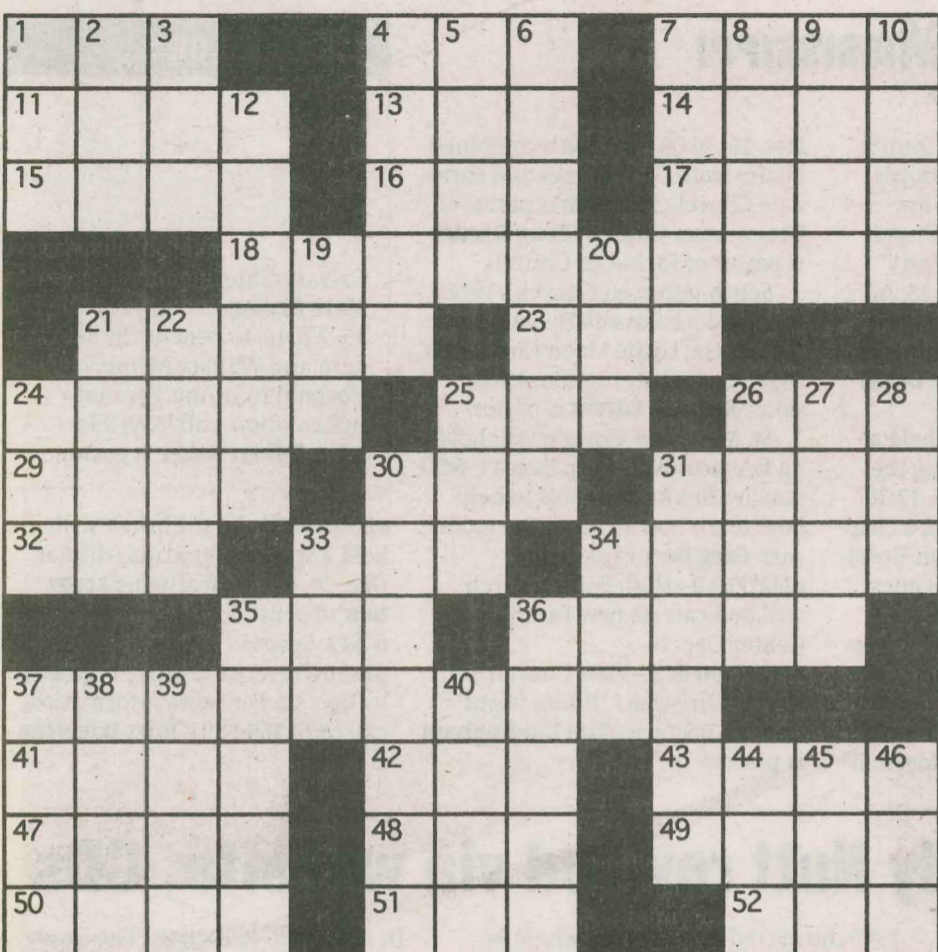
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## Bible Crosswords

By Janet Adkins

### Across

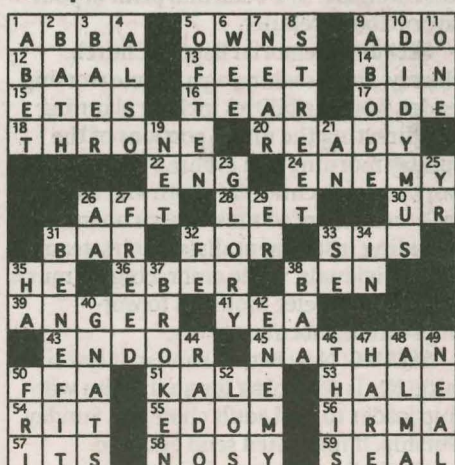
- 1 Singer Garfunkel
- 4 WWII fliers (abbr.)
- 7 Poet Teasdale
- 11 "Serve him with all your heart and with all your \_\_\_\_" (Deuteronomy 11:13)
- 13 Actress Gardner
- 14 Freshman at West Point (var.)
- 15 Father (Aramaic)
- 16 Not mentioned in another place (abbr.)
- 17 Opposite of windward
- 18 "For rebellion is as the sin of \_\_\_\_" (1 Samuel 15:23)
- 21 Nineteenth U.S. president
- 23 Vowel trio
- 24 "\_\_\_\_ and friend hast thou put far from me" (Psalm 88:18)
- 25 Take a \_\_\_\_
- 26 Article
- 29 Ancient Hebrew dry measure
- 30 \_\_\_\_ ear
- 31 Win, place, or \_\_\_\_
- 32 \_\_\_\_ capita
- 33 Form a lap?
- 34 "The Lord make his face \_\_\_\_ upon thee" (Numbers 6:25)
- 35 Masculine nickname
- 36 "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, \_\_\_\_ the dead" (Matthew 10:8)
- 37 "He smote his neighbour unwittingly, and hated him not \_\_\_\_" (Joshua 20:5)
- 41 Once more; again
- 42 Used to be
- 43 "Do good, and \_\_\_\_, hoping for nothing again" (Luke 6:35)
- 47 Animal shelter
- 48 Linking verb
- 49 "He being not a forgetful hearer, but a \_\_\_\_ of the work" (James 1:25)
- 50 Tribe of the prophetess Anna
- 51 \_\_\_\_ of man
- 52 Beans or sauce

### Down

- 1 King of Judah, after his father Abijam (1 Kings 15)
- 2 Embezzle
- 3 Vat
- 4 Carries on
- 5 Opposite of sans
- 6 "They were all amazed, ... saying, We never saw it on this \_\_\_\_" (Mark 2:12)
- 7 Show mercy
- 8 \_\_\_\_ breve (music)

- 9 Sand bar
- 10 Be a party to mischief
- 12 One who's passed the bar?
- 19 Person concerned with (suffix)
- 20 Lea denizen
- 21 Base in baseball
- 22 State unequivocally
- 24 Cut off
- 25 Bridle part
- 26 Not that
- 27 Sharpen
- 28 "Hey, \_\_\_\_!" bleated the goat
- 30 "Now the \_\_\_\_ the time of the firstripe grapes" (2 words, Numbers 13:20)
- 31 "But thou, O Lord, art a \_\_\_\_ for me" (Psalm 3:3)
- 33 Title of respect
- 34 Uncle \_\_\_\_
- 35 Ivory \_\_\_\_ (where a prof resides, maybe)
- 36 "He is \_\_\_\_!" (Easter exultation)
- 37 "Who passing through the valley of \_\_\_\_ make it a well" (Psalm 84:6)
- 38 Son of Seth
- 39 Treat like the guest of honor
- 40 Poi source
- 44 Identified with the Roman Aurora (Gr. myth.)
- 45 Latest (comb. form)
- 46 "My flesh longeth for thee in a \_\_\_\_ and thirsty land" (Psalm 63:1)

### Last puzzle's solution



## Reflecting on the past year

### Look back at 2012 reveals many blessings, certainty of the gospel

The year is almost over and, as always, time seems to move faster and faster. December is a favorite month for many reasons, the main one being the celebration of Christ. That celebration includes Christmas music for me and for all who, at some point, ride in my car as they are forced to listen to the music—like it or not. I also enjoy the fact that December is a month of reflection of the past year and a growing of excitement for the coming year.

As we do look back over 2012, there is not enough time nor words to express all the blessings we are thankful for as a ministry and as the Melber family. Even throughout this fall, looking back, I must say that the past months have been more challenging than any I can remember—and ironically, we feel like we have experienced great favor from the Lord during this time.

I am not sure what you may be facing in life right now, but there always is the certainty of the character of God and His promises that do not change,

regardless of our circumstances. The gospel is the truth that God sent His Son to make a path for our relationship to be restored—and it never changes. The gospel is the truth that each day, moment by moment, we

are in total need of the power of the gospel to enable us to live and have purpose. The gospel is the only hope for a world that appears to be getting worse and worse. The gospel is the fact that our home is not here; we only are a mist that appears for a while and then vanishes. The gospel is the fact that God loves us, and His children will spend eternity with Him enjoying Him forever.

Make the most of the opportunities you have this month. Live each day by the power of the gospel. Realize your identity is all because of the gospel. Prioritize your time so that you will share the truth of the gospel with the world around you. Christmas is filled with opportunities; live each day focused on the gospel and see what the Lord puts in your path.

### Crossings Ministries



David Melber

David Melber is president of Crossings Ministries. Contact Crossings at (502) 491-7000 or [www.GoCrossings.com](http://www.GoCrossings.com)

## Thinking globally, giving locally

### EBO's reach extends beyond state borders to reach internationals

As Southern Baptists, our annual December missions focus is on international missions. It is exciting to know that the Eliza Broadus Offering also has an impact on international missions right here in Kentucky. Let me share a few examples.

■ Baptist Campus Ministries across Kentucky work with international students on our college and university campuses. Through weekly Bible studies, English classes and many other events, we are doing international missions here. Engage, our international student conference held each November, is one way we use the Eliza Broadus Offering to do international missions here in Kentucky.

Students from around the world who have come to Kentucky to attend college often are among the best and brightest students from their countries. They will return to work in business, government, health care and many other fields. How important it is that we share the gospel with them while they are in our midst. Who knows how far the gospel shared here will travel around the world.

■ EBO helps us plant churches to reach the internationals who have come to live in Kentucky. We have churches that worship in many different languages and reach out to people of diverse cultures and ethnic groups. The exciting part not only is when internationals come to faith in Christ, but also as they share Jesus with people in their home countries.

■ EBO provides funds for the Hispanic Bible Institute which trains Hispanic pastors and church leaders. It is so important for effective language ministries to have trained leaders. Every EBO dollar invested in Hispanic

leadership development is multiplied as these trained leaders share the gospel.

■ EBO is part of a ministry called Friendship International with work in Louisville, Lexington and Paducah. Started by WMU, these ministries meet weekly for Bible study, choir, crafts, English lessons, sewing and other classes of interest.

Often the participants are wives who feel isolated while their husbands are at work. Through Friendship International, they meet other internationals and Americans who welcome them here.

■ EBO provides funds for migrant ministries to reach seasonal workers. Several of our Baptist associations are engaged in outreach to migrant workers who are in Kentucky only for a short period of time. It is vital for us to witness and show compassion during the brief stay of these workers.

So, while EBO is a state missions offering, it has an international impact. The Eliza Broadus Offering year is Sept. 1 to Aug. 31, and contributions are received all year long. Thank you for your generosity which helps us to reach the world in Kentucky.

### EBO at Work



Joy Bolton

Joy Bolton is executive director-treasurer of Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union, PO Box 436569, Louisville, KY 40253; (502) 489-3534; [www.kywmu.org](http://www.kywmu.org)



## January

**17-18** New Director of Missions Orientation, Kentucky Baptist Building, Louisville.

**18-19** Disaster Relief Chaplaincy Training—Region 1, Liberty Point Baptist Church, Cadiz.

**19** Disaster Relief Training—Region 1, Liberty Point Baptist Church, Cadiz.

**24-26** Shepherding the Shepherd, The Downtown Hilton Hotel, Lexington.

## MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **BEREA**—Valley Church recently ordained Youth Minister **Jason Brown** to the gospel ministry. **Tony Shelton** is pastor.

■ **BREMEN**—Bethlehem Church will hold a live nativity display Dec. 15, 6 p.m. **Leroy Rearden** is pastor.

■ **EDDYVILLE**—Pleasant Hill Church will present drive- or walk-through "Live Nativity Scenes" Dec. 12-14, 6 p.m. **Robin Redd** is pastor.

■ **FRANKFORT**—Buck Run Church's single women's ministry will hold a gift-wrapping party Dec. 13, 6 p.m. **Hershael York** is pastor.

■ **GILBERTSVILLE**—Bethel Church will host Blood River Association's Christmas dinner for pastors and spouses Dec. 13, 6:30 p.m. **Kyle Reeder** is pastor.

■ **GREENVILLE**—New Paradise Church recently ordained **Derek**

**Benton**, pastor of Penrod Church in Dunmore, to the gospel ministry. **Timothy Adcock** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Bethlehem Church will hold its "Jesus Is the Party" Christmas gathering Dec. 15. An auction will be held to benefit the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions. **David Hughes** is pastor.

Deer Park Church will hold a "Dealing With Grief During the Holidays" seminar Dec. 16, 12:30 p.m., with **Paul Herrington**, a chaplaincy resident with Norton Hospital System in Louisville, as guest speaker. The church's chancel choir and orchestra also will present "A Celebration of Carols" Dec. 16, 10:45 a.m. **David Platt** is pastor.

Green Acres Church will hold a presentation of "Handel's Messiah"

Dec. 16, 10:30 a.m., with combined choirs from Green Acres and Farmdale Church. **Phil Ellis** is pastor of Green Acres Church; **Doug Strader** is pastor of Farmdale Church.

South Jefferson Church's WMU will hold a bake sale Dec. 16 to benefit the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions. **Richard Carver** is pastor.

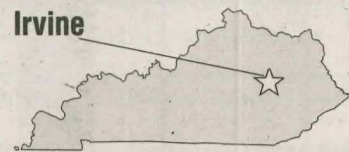
St. Matthews Church will hold an RA racer workshop Dec. 12, 6:30 p.m., with kits and tools to help boys learn how to build the model cars. **Greg Barr** is pastor.

■ **MAYFIELD**—High Point Church will dedicate its new Family Life Center Dec. 16.

■ **MORGANFIELD**—First Church will hold a Christmas "Praise Night" Dec. 12, 6:30 p.m. **Tim Leadingham** is pastor.

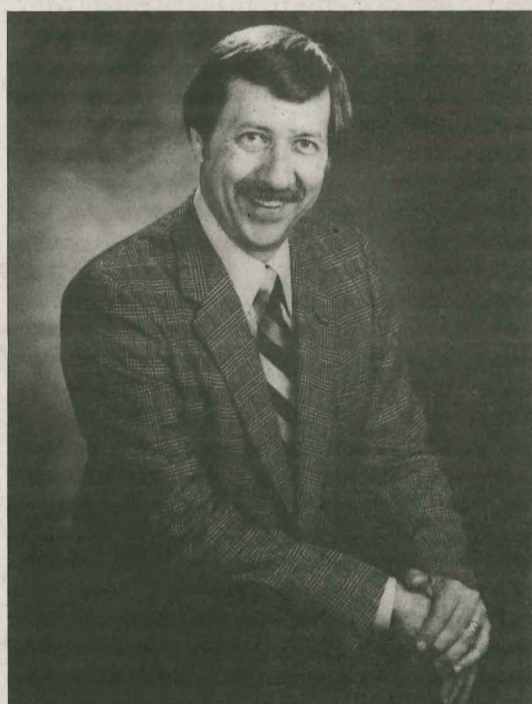
## Spotlight on ...

### Irvine



Calvary Church will host **Mark Bishop** in concert Dec. 15, 7 p.m., to benefit the Marcum and Wallace Memorial Hospital in Irvine. For more information, call (859) 254-3491. **Robert Baker** is pastor.

■ **PRINCETON**—First Church will hold a special Christmas dinner Dec. 20, 6 p.m., featuring **Leroy New** in concert. The cost to attend is \$12. Space is limited to 200 people and reservations are required by Dec. 12. For more information, call (270) 365-5591. **Russ Davidson** is pastor.



## Comedy of Grady Nutt revived via website, CDs

Louisville—The comedy of Grady Nutt, a Southern Baptist seminary graduate known as the "Prime Minister of Humor" and a regular on the long-running television show "Hee Haw," is being rejuvenated 30 years after his death via a website and commemorative two-CD collection of previously unreleased tracks.

A native of Amarillo, Texas, Nutt began his career in childhood, singing gospel music on the radio with his mother accompanying on the piano, according to a biography on GradyNutt.com. At age 12, he became an ordained Baptist minister and joked that he could perform legal weddings of his classmates.

Nutt graduated from Baylor University in 1957 and was a youth pastor at First Baptist Church of Waco, Texas. In

1960, he moved to Louisville where he enrolled at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and also became pastor of Graefenburg Baptist Church in Waddy. Friendships he made there later became part of his performances, according to the website.

Upon graduation from Southern Seminary in 1964, Nutt became a recruiter for the school, speaking on college campuses across the South. His popularity grew and led to several TV appearances, including as guest host of "The Mike Douglas Show."

His big break came in 1979, according to the website, when he was added to the cast of "Hee Haw" and was given a couple of minutes each episode to do routines. He wrote several bestselling books and released multiple comedy albums and a Southern Gospel record.

In 1981, NBC launched "The Grady Nutt Show" starring Nutt as the pastor of a local church.

Tragically, Nutt was killed in a plane crash in 1982 after a speaking engagement in Cullman, Ala.

"Over the years, we've heard from people around the world how Grady touched their lives," Nutt's son, Toby, said. We couldn't think of a better time to communicate with his fans and release some of Grady's best material."

The family said they hope to share classic Grady Nutt stories, as well as TV and radio clips on GradyNutt.com, Twitter and Facebook, giving fans opportunities for interaction, according to a news release. The commemorative CDs are available for purchase on the website. (BP)

## Jesus is Lord, but not a good password

Los Gatos, Calif.—All Christians confess that Jesus is Lord, but he's a poor choice for a computer password, according to an annual listing of passwords on the Internet most prone to hacking.

"Jesus" for the first time made the list of SplashData's "25 Worst Passwords of the Year"—the most common passwords stolen by hackers.

The list, which made its debut last year, suggests that despite several high-profile hacking incidents over the past year at major sites including Yahoo, LinkedIn and eHarmony, many people continue to put themselves at risk by using easily guessable passwords.

"Even though each year hacking tools get more sophisticated, thieves still tend to prefer easy targets," said Morgan Slain, CEO of the 12-year-old company based in Los Gatos, Calif. "Just a little bit more effort in choosing better passwords will go a long way toward making you safer online."

The top three passwords, "password," "123456" and "12345678," remain unchanged from last year's list. New entries to this year's list include "welcome," "jesus," "ninja," "mustang" and "password1."

SplashData, provider of the SplashID Safe line of password management applications, compiled the list from files containing millions of stolen passwords posted online by hackers.

To make passwords more secure, SplashData recommends using passwords of eight characters or more with mixed types of characters. One way to create longer, more secure passwords that are easy to remember is to use short words with spaces or other characters separating them. For example, "eat cake at 8!" or "car\_park\_city?"

Avoid using the same username/password combination for multiple websites. Especially risky is using the same password for entertainment sites that you do for online e-mail, social networking and financial services. Use different passwords for each new website or service for which you register.

For those who have a difficult time remembering multiple passwords, companies like SplashData sell password manager applications that organize and protect passwords.

"It just takes a few extra moments to make a password better," Slain said. (ABP)

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**RESOURCES:** Sound, projection, video, theatrical lighting; JCA Media, well known in the KBC, 20+ years of experience, installing quality equipment at reasonable prices. Jim Cottrell, owner, Elizabethtown, (270) 862-9586 or (270) 312-7492; Rusty King, project manager, Nashville, Tenn., (615) 972-8869; Amy Cottrell, operations manager, Louisville, acottrell@jcamediasolutions.com. References available. Email: jcot@windstream.net.

**RESOURCES:** "Small Does Not Mean Struggling" is an encouraging book by a small-church pastor for small-church pastors. Available in e-book and print at your favorite book retailer.

**SEEKING:** Memorial Baptist Church, Murray, Ky., is seeking a part-time worship leader. Responsibilities include planning and directing the music portions of the Sunday morning and evening services; working with children, youth and adults for a well-balanced music department, including instrumentalists, choirs, teams and individuals, while embracing all music styles. Please refer inquiries to worshipsearch@mbcmurray.org.

**SEEKING:** New Bethel Baptist of Hardinsburg, Ky., is searching for an interim worship leader to lead adult choir and Sunday worship. If interested send email to newbethelbaptist@gmail.com.

### To place an advertisement:

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



**SEEKING:** Owenton First Baptist Church is seeking a part-time minister of music. All inquiries can be made by calling (502) 484-2430. Resumes may be submitted to Owenton First Baptist Church, 213 N. Main St., Owenton, KY 40359.

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

**SEEKING:** Full-time senior pastor: Beech Haven Baptist Church of Athens, Ga., is seeking an ordained Baptist pastor. If you meet the criteria stated at [www.beechhaven.org/srpastor](http://www.beechhaven.org/srpastor) and wish to apply, send a resume and cover letter by Jan. 11, 2013, describing why you want to be considered as a candidate to [bhbcpsc@gmail.com](mailto:bhbcpsc@gmail.com).

# Rx:

## Doctor prescribes hope through Jesus

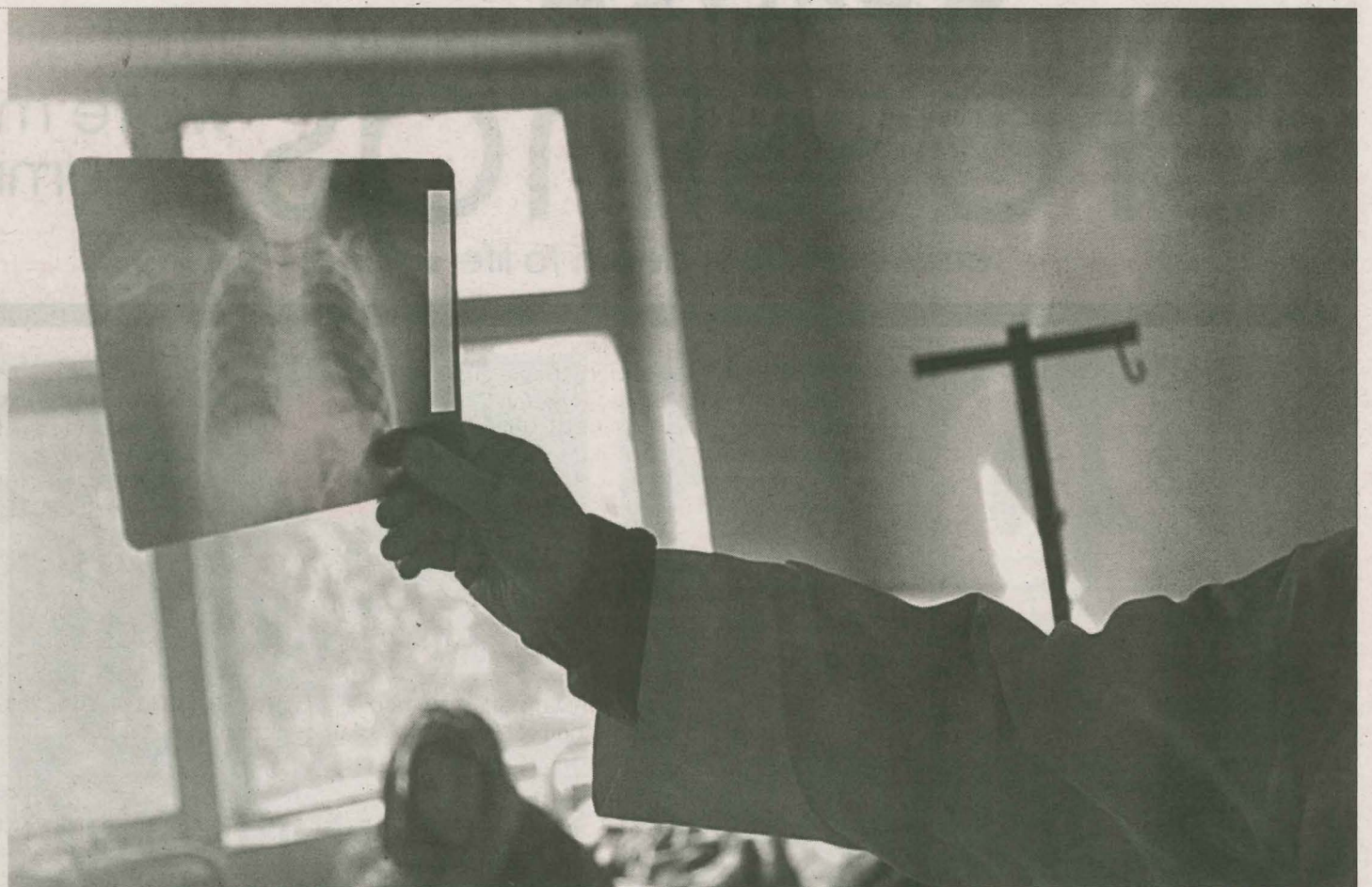
**Central Asia**—Flies circle the sparsely equipped operating room in the middle-of-nowhere Central Asia. One lands on an instrument tray, strutting the length of a scalpel just seconds before the previously sterile instrument plunges beneath the patient's skin.

The lead surgeon calls for more light, but three of the four bulbs in the operating room's lamp are burned out.

Cutting edge medicine it's not. But at the moment, the hospital has at least one ace up their collective sleeves: the man behind the scalpel is Dr. Doug Page,\* one of the finest thoracic surgeons in the country.

Page, 56, a soft-spoken, Southern Baptist doctor who came to this rugged corner of Central Asia with his wife, Alice,\* to be Jesus' heart, hands and voice among a people in desperate need of physical and spiritual healing. It's a brutal place to practice medicine, let alone share the gospel.

"There are so many walls here," Page



**OPERATING ON A BUDGET** Sunlight filters through the hospital's windows allowing Doug Page (name changed), a Southern Baptist doctor, to examine a chest X-ray for signs of pneumonia. Dirty and poorly equipped, the hospital lacks many basic necessities. Wards are lit by a single, bare fluorescent bulb. Patients lie on aging beds covered with threadbare sheets. (BP photo)

said. "There are walls around every house and there are barriers between families. ... There's fighting between villages and tribes. This isn't just fisticuffs fighting — this is blowing up homes, setting booby-trapped mines, children being maimed, crops being burned, livestock stolen. It's ruthless."

During the past several years, Page has scrubbed in for hundreds of surgeries at the hospital. The 60-plus bed facility is dirty and poorly equipped. But as the largest of only three hospitals in an area more than twice the size of the state of Georgia, it's also the best chance of good health care for the more than 350,000 people who call this province home. That's roughly one doctor for every 15,000 individuals.

Though those numbers are staggering, Page believes the need for the gospel is even greater.

Islam dominates the religious landscape. Estimates place the number of Christians here at fewer than 2,000, and most national believers are forced to keep their faith a secret.

### Another day in paradise

The Pages live in a mud home with spotty electricity. Winters are especially harsh, with temperatures dropping below -20 degrees Fahrenheit—cold enough to coat the walls inside

**"This is what Jesus did when He was on earth. He healed people."**

Baptist surgeon serving in Central Asia



**HAND IN HAND** Doug Page\*, a Southern Baptist worker in Central Asia, prays aloud for a malnourished baby. Despite the best care the hospital's staff could offer, the baby died several days later. "There's an urgency to what we need to be about here," Page says. "There are people who are dying every day and lost for eternity." (BP photo)

their house with ice. At the hospital, Page regularly treats patients for diseases rarely encountered in the U.S. like typhoid fever, tuberculosis and dysentery. He has amputated limbs from landmine victims, removed handfuls of worms from patients' intestines and helped nurse malnourished children back from the brink of death—all while patiently and persistently seeking God-given opportunities to bear witness for Christ.

But open cultural and political animosity toward the gospel also means those who share Jesus do so at great personal risk, including prison, kidnapping — even murder. Vehicles must be checked for explosives; razor wire lines the walls around the Pages' home.

"They're locked into a system of righteousness based on works. ... They have no hope of salvation. They have no understanding or sense of grace or forgiveness," Page said. "Famine, disease, injustice, abuse of women and children, human trafficking — all of these things relate to that darkness. It's a kingdom of darkness. I think Satan is very powerful here."

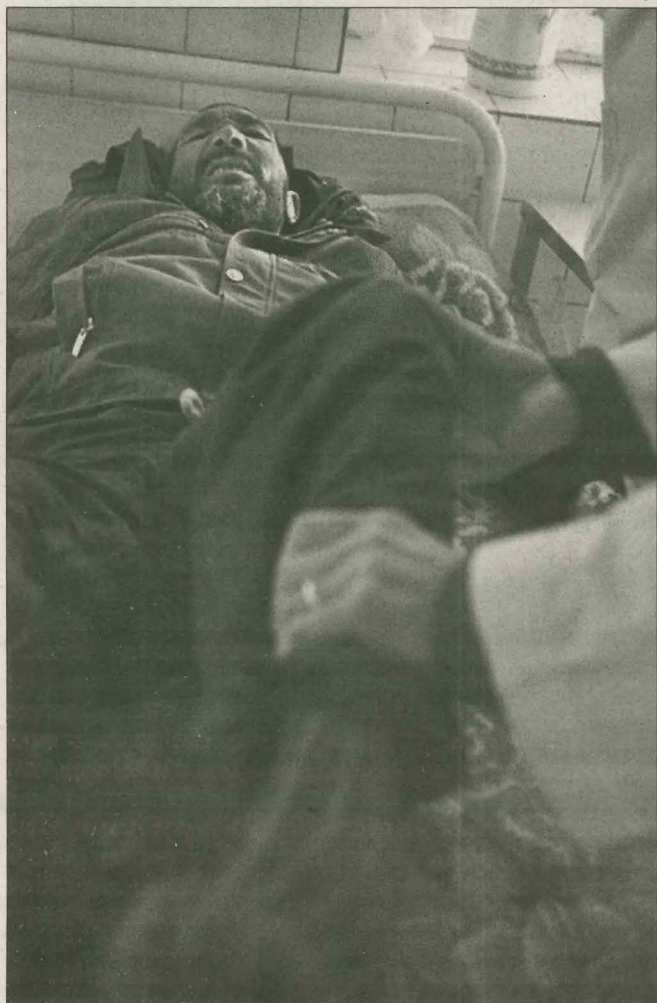
Most of the town's few thousand residents survive as farmers or shepherds,

but years of drought and conflict have withered harvests, dwindled herds and decimated livelihoods. Less than 25 percent of the area's households have access to safe drinking water and fewer than 10 percent have adequate toilet facilities. More than 30 percent of the population lives below the poverty line; one-third of all pre-school children are underweight.

But even in the midst of overwhelming need, lives are being changed. Page regularly treats patients outside the hospital, many who simply show up at his front gate — all free of charge. Alice works closely with a group of women she's befriended and runs a handicraft program to help them earn extra income.

"This is what Jesus did when He was on earth. He healed people. He went out of his way to touch people, to feed people," Page said. "And He said that when we do these things, it's like we're doing them to Him." (IMB/BP)

\*Names changed for security reasons



**GOD-GIVEN TALENTS** Doug Page\*, a Southern Baptist doctor serving in Central Asia, examines a man complaining of back pain. This sort of medicine might seem beneath a highly trained surgeon, but Page says that's not the point. "There is nothing He has given us that He doesn't ask us to give up." (BP photo)



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